

FAQs - Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form - Covid-19 Test Centre

Dear Parent/Carer/Student

A Covid-19 Asymptomatic Test Centre has been established at the school. Many of you and your children will have anxieties about returning to school in the first instance, as well as undertaking the lateral flow device test if you haven't had any experience of it.

I have put together some frequently asked questions (FAQs) which I hope will go some way to alleviating your concerns.

If, after reading, you still have concerns, do not hesitate to get in touch via email at imair8kq@yare-edu.org.uk and I will endeavour to assist you.

Kind regards

Izzy Mair
Covid-19 Test Centre Co-ordinator

1. What type of test will be administered?

Asymptomatic testing is done via simple and quick tests, known as Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They enable us to rapidly test students and staff, without the need for a laboratory. No test is 100% accurate, but the LFD, when done as part of a testing regime is very good at picking up those with high viral loads (i.e. those that are the most contagious).

2. Who will be administering the test?

We have trained over 15 staff to be able to run the testing process. The testing process is known as self-swabbing. The tests will be undertaken in the school's Covid-19 Test Centre, specifically set up for the purpose.

3. Is this test a legal requirement for my child to attend school?

No - It is not a legal requirement that your child is tested before they attend school. It is our effort to support the global pandemic in breaking the chains of transmission, as Asymptomatic testing is a further and critical tool to help mitigate the transmission of Covid-19.

4. How many times a week are they going to be tested?

Initially, students will be tested 3 times on their return to school, with 3 to 5-day intervals. So, if a student returns on a Monday and is tested, they will receive the second test either Thursday or Friday of that week; and then the third test between Monday and Wednesday of the following week.

5. Will they have to do testing at home and if so how will this be managed?

Yes - once the three tests have been completed in the test centre, we will turn to a home-test kit scenario where students will self-test at home twice a week. More details of this will be issued when we are in receipt of the home test kits.

6. My child tested positive for Covid-19 within the last 90 days - what is the guidance for them and their return to school?

We have been advised that if you have tested positive for Covid-19 within the last 90 days that you are exempt from tests. However, a student can still opt to undertake a test as part of the testing process in school but you need to be aware that if they test positive on a lateral flow device (LFD) they would need to self-isolate.

If they choose not to have a test, this does not affect their ability to return to school as normal when all students return to school after their first test.

7. If my child tests positive do they need to get a PCR test done?

No - Current advice is that PCR testing is suspended for confirmation of positive lateral flow devices (LFD).

8. My child has had a Covid-19 vaccination, do they still need to have a LFD test?

Yes – current advice states that anyone who has received the vaccination may still be asymptomatic and can transfer to other people, so will need to take an LFD test.

9. Does this mean that on the days my parent/s has/have booked us in for a test we cannot come into school and must study online?

Throughout the testing days the school provision for vulnerable students and the children of key workers will continue and live blended learning lessons following the student's timetable will be operating for all.

The first question is are you coming into school currently, as either a vulnerable student or a child of a key worker? If the answer is yes, you come into school as normal. If the answer is no, then you come into school for your test at your booked arrival time and at other times continue with the blended learning online.

10. If a student does not have consent and refuses testing, can they still come into school or must they study online?

Testing is not mandatory but advised by the Government and Public Health England - from the school's perspective, it is our effort to support the global pandemic in breaking the chains of transmission, as asymptomatic testing is a further and critical tool to help mitigate the transmission of Covid-19. All students, regardless of testing are expected back at school on Wednesday 10 March, unless they start to display symptoms of Coronavirus, in which case you will need to self-isolate.

11. Are we notified of both a positive/negative result or only if it's positive?

The Test Centre team will register the fact that you will be taking a test - this registration includes the mobile telephone number and email address we hold on file as your primary contact. Once the test is processed, this generates an email and/or text, normally within 24 hours of the test, and provides you with the result. If your test is positive, the school will contact you immediately and a member from your household will have to collect you from school as public transport cannot be used and the whole household should self-isolate immediately for 10 days.