

Longton Hall Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. ST3 2NJ

Tel: 01782 882900 | Email: office@stmca.org.uk | www.stmca.org.uk | @StThomasMoreCA

Headteacher: Mr M Rayner BA(Hons) NPQH

Monday 12th July 2021

COVID-19 testing for students September 2021

Dear Parents and carers

We are looking forward to welcoming your child to St Thomas More Catholic Academy on the **6th September**, and to seeing some of them sooner at the summer school. All students return at 9am on this date.

The government guidance is that secondary school students should have 2 Lateral Flow Tests before or upon returning to school in September. Following this, secondary school pupils will return to the twice weekly at home testing that we have seen in place this summer term. Testing remains voluntary but strongly encouraged.

We know this will be the first-time testing for a lot of students and we will support them through this process. We are planning on testing all students the week before they return to school, to avoid any disruption during normal term time.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please follow the instructions on the enclosed consent form. Any student who is over the age of 16 can self-consent but I would encourage you to discuss these tests together.

You will need to access your Parent Pay account to give consent. For safeguarding reasons, we cannot accept emails or other forms of communication instead of the Parent Pay response as we know that only you have access to your Parent Pay account. No test will be conducted on your child if they are under 16 and we have not got your consent. Similarly, we will only conduct tests on those students who are over 16 with their written consent. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff.

Consent needs to be provided before Friday 16th July 2021.

When and where will tests take place?

Tuesday 31 st August – 9.00am – 12.00pm:
Thursday 2 nd September 9.30am – 12.00pm:

Testing will take place in the school gymnasium. Students can arrive anytime within their allocated day and time slots. Please be aware there may be a wait if we are busy, but this will be

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fully staffed, and our own support team will be there for students too. Testing will not be provided if consent has not been received before Friday 16th July.

What if a student tests positive?

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

You will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace and seek a confirmatory PCR test.

What happens if the test is negative?

You will be able to resume your activities as normal. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can call the office on 01782 882900 or email office@stmca.org.uk

Thanks for your continued support

Yours sincerely



Mr M Rayner
Headteacher