

# St Matthew Academy

St Joseph's Vale, Blackheath, London SE3 0XX

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



25 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Re: COVID-19 testing for Pupils on return to school from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021.**

You may be aware that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms will take place when pupils return to schools across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme at St Matthew Academy.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school settings through asymptomatic transmission. I am therefore strongly encouraging those returning to St Matthew Academy to be tested.

### **Plan for testing**

We will be hoping to test all secondary age pupils as they return to the Academy. The initial three tests will be carried out in school at our on-site Asymptomatic Testing Centre. All subsequent tests will be taken at home. Only pupils who have taken three on-site tests will be eligible to take part in home testing. I will contact you again with more details about home testing arrangements in the next couple of weeks.

### **How the on-site tests work**

Pupils taking the test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant. Tests are free of charge and I enclose a leaflet with further information. All lateral flow tests are registered with NHS test and trace.

### **What if my child tests positive?**

We will inform any pupil who receives positive test result. Parents or legal guardians will also be informed. If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow device when taking a test at school, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

### **What happens if the test is negative?**

While a small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, pupils who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Parents or legal guardians will be informed of negative test results via text/email from NHS test and trace.

### **What if staff or students have been in close contact with someone in school who tests positive?**

The staff member or pupil will be notified that they are a close contact by staff and will need to self-isolate for 10 days in line with Government guidance.

### **What if my child develops symptoms?**

This testing programme at the Academy is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time which include 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 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

 : 0208 853 6250  : [info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk)  : [www.stmatthewacademy.co.uk](http://www.stmatthewacademy.co.uk)  : @stmattacad

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### How can my child take part in the on-site testing?

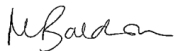
Consent from a parent or legal guardian is required for each child to take part in the on-site Covid testing programme. This can be given by completing and submitting a google form using the link below. Please ensure that you read the attached privacy notice before doing so.

<https://forms.gle/VfWkZVbw54TgeVwv9>

If you have already given consent for your child to participate in the Covid testing programme whilst attending key worker school during lockdown, you do not need to give consent again.

We will support our pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can contact the office by emailing [info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk)

Yours faithfully,



**Ms M Baldwin**  
Headteacher

*F Walker*

**Ms F Walker**  
Covid Team Leader