

14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parents or Guardians,

### **Updated Covid-19 guidance**

The government has announced that, from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May, we will be moving to Step 3 of its roadmap. For schools, this means that **students will no longer be required to wear facemasks in classrooms or communal areas**. To support our transition to these new arrangements, over the next two weeks, students can choose to wear a face mask if they wish to. However, this is not required or recommended. Any student that does decide to wear a facemask must wear it properly, covering both the mouth and nose.

From Monday, we will also be moving away from in-school lateral flow testing and we will be offering home testing for students instead. Those students for whom we have received parental consent for testing will be issued with ten home test kits to cover the next five weeks.

If you have consented to the testing programme, **we request that your child takes a test at home each Wednesday and Sunday evening** and that you notify us of the test result by completing an online form, as well as recording the result on the government website.

The instructions for carrying out home tests are clearly outlined in each test kit pack, but the process is outlined in more detail below. Links to the form for submitting results to the academy and to NHS website are also below.

If your child tests positive then do please inform us immediately.

Thank you for your support as we continue to follow the guidance aimed at keeping all the members of the Pimlico Academy community safe.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year or Pastoral Leader.

Kind regards,



Mr. D Smith

Principal








## 1. Who is being tested and why?



Testing is important because you could be carrying the virus and may spread it to others. Testing all staff and pupils of secondary age and above (11+) without symptoms will support the education sector to continue to operate. Simple and quick tests using antigen Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) enable the rapid testing of staff and secondary age pupils and students, from their home, without the need for a laboratory. Education settings will be provided with these test kits to distribute to their staff and students so that they can conduct testing at home. Testing will help to break chains of transmission and students will need to carry out twice weekly testing at home (3 to 4 days apart) over the Easter break and then twice a week (3 to 4 days apart) before coming into the education setting in the morning.

**IMPORTANT:** Tests are only for the use of the person assigned the kits, they should not be taken by anyone else.

## 2. Home testing Process

Please follow the instructions below:

1		<b>Opt-in</b> Read the information below.	
2		<b>Collect test kits</b> Test kits will be distributed to students. Initially, they will be given 10 kits that will last 5 weeks.	
3		<b>Test at home on Wednesday evening and Sunday evening.</b> Follow the instructions in the leaflet in each kit to carry out the test.	
4		<b>Check your results</b> At 30 minutes, check the result. <b>Please note that if it longer than 30 minutes to check, the results are invalid.</b>	
		<b>Positive result:</b>  <b>Self-isolate immediately and take a PCR test, following the current public health guidance</b>	<b>Negative result:</b>  No need to self-isolate, you can go to your workplace or education setting.
5		<b>Report result to NHS Test and Trace on</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result">https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result</a> Even if negative or void.	

6		<p><b>Report result to Pimlico Academy using this link:</b>  <a href="https://forms.office.com/r/2edrsh2RDA">https://forms.office.com/r/2edrsh2RDA</a>  <b>Please inform us immediately should the test be positive.</b></p>
7		<p><b>Take next test</b>  Take next test on the allocated day. No test required for 90 days after positive PCR test, unless you develop new symptoms.</p>

### 3. Key questions

#### **Why are we testing people without symptoms of COVID-19?**

Up to one in three people who have coronavirus (COVID-19) do not display any symptoms.

#### **Is this compulsory?**

Testing is voluntary, and no one is prevented from going into the education setting if you do not take part. The success of this public health measure depends on as many people participating as possible.

#### **Can children and young people swab themselves?**

No children below the age of 11 should be tested. The swab test is straightforward and students who have had in-school testing are used to this now and know how to carry out a test.

#### **How often do students need to test?**

We ask that students test at home on Wednesday evenings and Sunday evenings.

#### **How effective are these tests?**

LFD tests have been widely and successfully used to detect asymptomatic COVID-19 cases. The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested. LFD tests are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The tests are highly specific, with low chances of false positives. They are also very sensitive and able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. It is important to remember that these tests are an additional layer of health protection measure in addition to hand washing, face covering and social distancing.