



St Michael's Catholic College

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Principal: Ms Felicity Corcoran

Vice Principal: Ms Charlotte Sayed

Vice Principal: Ms Kathleen Faherty

4th January 2021

Dear Parent/ Carer,

RE: Onsite Covid-19 Testing for Students

As you know, the government has asked schools to undertake one off testing of all students before they return to college for on-site teaching. The purpose of this is to ensure that the college is as safe as possible for everyone, by breaking trains of transmission and ensuring that we are able to identify students or staff who may be asymptomatic. In addition, the use of rapid tests (lateral flow tests) means that we will no longer need to send home contacts of students who have tested positive: instead we will be able to offer them a daily lateral flow test and they will be able to remain in college and in lessons as long as this remains negative.

In order to provide these tests for your child, we need your consent. You will need to give consent to two things:

- Firstly, the one-off lateral flow testing, which we are due to provisionally begin on 11th January
- Secondly consent for us to use the lateral flow tests to test your child should they be named as a contact of someone in the college who tests positive for the virus.

If you do not consent to the testing, then your child will need to isolate for 10 days should there be a positive covid case within their bubble (isolation for 10 days will be required on every occasion they are identified as a contact)

What you need to know about the process:

- The rapid tests are a swab test and are taken in the same way as tests sent through the post or provided at testing stations: you swab your throat and then your nose. Students will be able to take the swab themselves, unless they request assistance.
- Results are delivered within 45 minutes of taking the test.
- If your child tests positive, we will provide them with a PCR test and this will need to be sent off for confirmation of the positive result. Your child will need to isolate until they receive the result of this.
- All staff involved in the testing process have undergone training and are DBS checked. Please note we are not using volunteers.

The benefit of being able to offer these tests is that we can identify asymptomatic cases of covid – i.e. people who did not even suspect that they may have it and could therefore unwittingly infect people in the college and wider community. This means that although you may have read questions about the reliability of these tests in the media, every positive case detected makes the college a safer environment for everyone.

Students who have symptoms of Covid-19 will need to get tested in the usual way AND SHOULD NOT COME INTO COLLEGE. The lateral flow tests are not a replacement for the National Test, Trace and Track system.

In order to provide consent you are asked to read and complete the consent form on Google forms which is available using the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfDpekI5jpQCmJkY-GZCNSzrF7THZdb2qLMJi7aB9ohYN6qNA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Please note if your child is 16 or over they will be required to complete the consent form themselves and parents/carers cannot complete it or provide consent on their behalf. We request that you complete the consent form by **Thursday 7th January** since any delay in our ability to test the students means a potential further delay to students returning to college. We will send you details of the times that your child should attend college to receive their test, once we have confirmation of the return dates for each year group.

We also attach a FAQ sheet from the DFE to provide you with more information. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr S. Kelly if you have any further questions.

As a college, we are confident of our ability to deliver these tests safely; we are also confident of the benefit that they will provide to our community, particularly those students who will not have to miss college due to the need to isolate. We look forward to your support in ensuring that the college is as safe as possible for our students and staff.

Yours faithfully



Ms F. Corcoran
Principal

