



Dear parents/carers,

In addition to the information relating to the college risk assessment and the protective control measures we have taken to ensure the campus is as safe as possible in the context of COVID, I would like to now share some important information regarding testing.

We have received information from Public Health England and NHS Track and Trace, providing further advice around testing and shielding. In particular:

- When students should access tests for coronavirus
- When students on the shielding patient list should return to college

#### Testing:

The Department for Education has worked closely with Public Health England (PHE) and NHS Test and Trace to ensure that they are doing all they can to minimise the potential risks of transmission. A key part of this is the appropriate use of testing to help identify people who are positive and subsequently their contacts. Testing has been made available throughout the country and anyone with symptoms can book a test online or over the telephone through 119 to get the certainty they need to protect themselves and those around them.

Crucial to overall support for our College is ensuring that everyone with coronavirus symptoms has access to a test as soon as they develop those symptoms. The aim is to prioritise the testing capacity for those students **with symptoms** and to avoid students and their families self-isolating unnecessarily.

To ensure that those with coronavirus are identified, while avoiding a huge increase in demand for tests from people without coronavirus symptoms, students should only be tested if:

- 1) they develop one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms: **a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or the loss or change of their sense of taste or smell**; or
- 2) they are recommended to get tested by a healthcare provider (e.g. GP or nurse).

If a student develops one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms described above, **only** they should be tested. There is no need for the entire household to have a test, unless they are also symptomatic.

Students should not book a test if they do not have one of the symptoms detailed above, for example if they feel unwell with a sore throat, stomach upset or a headache. These students don't need to book a test, although they may need to stay off college and seek medical advice through their GP or pharmacist as usual.



**Shielding students:**

Specialists in paediatric medicine have reviewed the latest evidence on the level of risk posed to young people from coronavirus (COVID-19). The latest evidence indicates that the risk of serious illness for most young people is low. In the future, they expect fewer young people will be included on the shielded patient list and far fewer young people will be advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high.

However, young people will only be removed from the shielding patient list by their GP or specialist, following consultation with the student and their family and other clinicians where appropriate. So young people who received a shielding advisory letter early in the epidemic will be encouraged to talk this through with their GP or specialist at their next appointment.

For those few students who do need to remain on the shielding list for the longer term, details will be retained so that they and their families can be assured they will be contacted again should community transmission rates rise in the future.

Therefore, the advice is that we welcome back students who have previously been shielding unless they are:

- in a local lockdown area with specific shielding restrictions; OR
- have been advised to self-isolate because they, their family or a close contact have Covid-19 infection; OR
- they have recently been specifically advised to remain off college – for example with a new serious diagnosis such as active cancer.

I hope you find this information useful. Further advice and information are available on the COVID section of our website, which is regularly updated.

Remley Mann  
**Principal**