



The Henry Cort Community College

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Our ref: CDC/LCD

19 October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Hampshire and Isle of Wight COVID-19 Saliva Testing Programme

Thank you for participating in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Saliva Testing Programme. Alongside other steps being taken to keep classrooms open and as safe as possible for your children and teaching staff, high uptake and regular participation in asymptomatic testing is vital to identify those most likely to spread COVID-19 to others without realising it.

How prevalent is COVID-19?

- In the last few weeks, there have been more than 34,000 cases per day, meaning COVID-19 is spreading quickly in the community
- The rate among Year 7 - Year 11 has risen sharply since the new academic year
- ONS estimate that 4.6% of this population to have COVID-19 (25 September 2021).
- Local Directors of Public Health are seeing the highest number of positive COVID-19 cases in the 10-19 year old age group since the pandemic began

New recommendation

As a result of higher transmission rates, **twice-weekly saliva testing** is now recommended. This recommendation is supported by the saliva testing programme's Scientific Advisory Group, as well as local Directors of Public Health. It will apply until rates of infection become more stable at lower levels, at which point it will be appropriate to revert to once weekly testing for ongoing surveillance and screening purposes.

Minimising disruption this winter

COVID-19 transmission is expected to increase, coupled with general respiratory illnesses and infections. We want to keep your children, their teaching staff, parents, guardians, vulnerable friends, family members and the wider community safe and well as we approach the festive season. The vaccination programme is underway, but not all children will be protected in this way.

We hope that more frequent testing will give you additional reassurance, confidence and peace of mind. Please remind your child to participate **twice-weekly**. With more of our college community participating and regularly testing, the more likely we are to prevent the virus from spreading and causing disruption in our college community. It is more important than ever that we all do our bit to keep everyone safe and in college. Make every sample count.

We will be distributing some more testing kits shortly. **Please note the days for collection and the collection points will be changing after half term.** Students should bring their samples to **their tutor bases** in on **Monday and Thursday**.

PRINCIPAL: Ms C Cabbage BSc (Hons), Dip Ed, MBA, CMgr FCMl

SENIOR LEADERSHIP: Mr T Mitchell BSc (Hons), MSc, Mr B Parker BA (Hons), Ms L Ferrier BA (Hons), Miss C Gudgeon BA (Hons) Mrs K Cook BA (Hons), ADSBM

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If your child has recently had covid we have been informed that **they can participate in this testing programme** and do not need to wait 90 days. We recommend that all members of the community should still continue to test twice weekly using lateral flow testing kits and submit their results to the NHS.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Ms C Cabbage
Principal

www.hiowsalivatest.nhs.uk