

1 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – PCR testing required

I have been informed by colleagues in the Manchester Public Health Team that there have been a number of positive COVID-19 cases at Northridge High School, Manchester.

Our priority is keeping all students and staff safe and well, whilst minimising disruption to education, so we are asking for your help in how we address this situation.

As a precautionary measure, I need to be certain there is no asymptomatic transmission by asking all pupils and staff at the school to take a PCR test, which is when the sample is sent off to the laboratory for the results to be analysed.

Testing is a vital tool in helping us detect cases that we would not otherwise know about. These tests will help make students and staff safer by helping us quickly identify many people who are unknowingly carrying high levels of the virus, preventing them from passing it on to others.

By identifying cases quickly, it will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within our community and lead to less disruption in school.

How to take a test

It is really important that people take part in this testing as part of these important outbreak control measures. The only people who are not required to take part is anybody who has tested positive using a PCR swab test in the last 90 days. They do not need to take another test.

COVID-19 PCR tests can be booked online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test (clicking, when asked, the box that says your local council has asked you to do this) or by calling 119. The test results will be communicated directly to you as the parent or guardian of the child taking the test. In order to assist the school, I would ask you to inform them of the result of the test by email or phone call.

School leaders have acted quickly to work with us, and the measures Northridge High School has put in place to prevent COVID-19 spread are excellent. This additional testing is a precaution so that we do our utmost to keep everyone well and not disrupt education. These PCR tests are different to the normal lateral flow tests more commonly used as part of the routine asymptomatic testing. By using PCR testing, positive results can be sent for genomic sequencing at specialist laboratories, helping us to identify variant of concern cases and their spread.

I would strongly encourage you to take part in this testing. The more cases we find, the better chance we have at stopping the virus spreading and minimising disruption to education.

Thank you for your cooperation and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for working with us to help keep everyone safe and to those of you who have already taken a test.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Doran".

Sarah Doran
Consultant in Public Health

On behalf of
David Regan
Director of Public Health for Manchester