

7th January 2021

Good morning,

Ruskin Mill Trust Schools & Colleges remaining open

As you are aware, following the government announcements on the national lockdown, Brantwood Specialist School has chosen to remain open for all students (except those who are clinically extremely vulnerable) to receive their school education on-site. We endeavour to ensure that students experience 'normality' wherever possible but some adjustments to the curriculum may be required (particularly in light of limitations around community and/or external work-based learning).

Our first priority remains the health and wellbeing of our whole community and we want to reassure you that we continue to take every precaution and follow the advice from all governmental bodies, especially Public Health England and the Department for Education. Should you have any concerns about your young person attending Brantwood in person, please do not hesitate to discuss these with either your class teacher or Eric Knutsen, 07812 234 338.

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students/pupils

Further to my e-mail on 4th January 2021, I want to update you on the roll-out of testing for students and staff at Brantwood Specialist School

We will begin weekly testing of staff and secondary school students who want to participate from the end of this week (with the ambition to begin on Friday, 8th January 2021). In addition, we will use the testing programme to daily test (for seven school days) any staff members and students who have been in close contact with anyone testing positive for Covid-19, thus enabling them to continue education at school, rather than isolating at home. Along with the other measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to work safely.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat test. Teaching and support staff will be on hand to oversee the swab process. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed of any positive result.

The test is voluntary and I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information to help you decide whether you wish for your child to be tested. Below, please find Frequently Asked Questions and Answers.

Next steps?

To process the tests, we will register all participating students. Therefore, if you are happy for your child to be tested, please review and complete the attached consent and registration form (one per child) and return it to the school via the e-mail address sending this letter.

I also enclose a Privacy Notice with details of what happens to your child's data.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the office on 0114 258 9062 or email enquiries@brantwood.rmt.org. We will continue to keep you updated on the latest advice and will let you know if there are any changes to the position set out in this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Eric Knutsen
Head Teacher

Tara Gratton
Director of Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What if staff member or a student tests positive?

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified.

Anyone testing positive will need to take a further 'PCR test' (those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day or as soon as possible.

- Brantwood Specialist School will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home, OR
- The student/staff member can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test, OR
- Call 119 to book a follow-up test.
- If ordering a PCR test yourself, student/staff member should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while waiting for the PCR result (via text / email), the student/staff member will need to self-isolate. If the test is negative, they can return to school.

If the result of this secondary test is positive, the student/staff member and household members will need to self-isolate for 10 days following Government guidelines. We will continue to support students with their education remotely, along with daily welfare checks.

The student/staff member should inform Brantwood Specialist School as soon as they receive test results.

2. What happens if the test is negative?

Anyone testing negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A test subject will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if they do not hear, it can be assumed it was negative.

A small number of people may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

3. What if a close contact at school tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative each time. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if the student/staff member would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, they may do so.

4. What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time, i.e.:

- high temperature, or
- a new, continuous cough, or
- a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste,

they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.