



DEAN CLOSE
FOUNDATION

1 March 2021

UPDATE ON COVID-19 MASS TESTING IN DC CHELTENHAM SCHOOLS

Correction Notice – This letter replaces the previous version dated 26.02.2021 due to incorrect information regarding the testing plan at DCS. Apologies for any confusion. Please note that there are no changes to DCPS testing.

Dean Close Health Centre
Shelburne Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL51 6HE

Dear pupils, parents, carers, and colleagues,

We are really looking forward to welcoming you safely back to Dean Close. Thanks to a colossal team effort by numerous departments across the Foundation, and many of our generous community members volunteering their time and expertise, we are pleased to offer a robust lateral flow testing programme in line with Public Health England guidance.

We have been fine-tuning the testing programme since the start of the Lent term and our team have performed well over 1000 lateral flow tests in that time. Here is what we know: **the testing works**. We have identified several confirmed positive cases of coronavirus and isolated them from the school environment at the earliest opportunity. Some of these cases have been completely asymptomatic.

The tests are convenient and easy to self-administer, and play an important role alongside other public health measures such as 'Hands, Face, Space' (increased handwashing, face coverings, and social distancing). I am confident that frequent home testing is the way forward to keeping our school safe for staff and pupils, likely for the duration of the pandemic until the vaccines can be fully implemented.

The goal is that, eventually, everyone on-site (including pupils of Year 7 and up) will be able to test themselves twice a week at home or in their boarding house. Due to a shortage of official home testing kits, and government requirements for returning pupils to have their first three tests in a testing centre, we will maintain our testing centre for the next few weeks to ease the transition.

Here's what you can expect from us and the lateral flow testing process over the coming weeks, depending on available supplies.

Daily Schedule

Friday 5th March – **DCPS Day Pupils Initial Test**

- 2.00-4.00PM: DCPS Years 7 and 8 day pupils are invited to **book their first lateral flow tests** via the booking link at the end of this letter, at the Old Gym testing location (details below).

Saturday 6th March – **On-site Boarders Regular Testing**

- 8.00-11.30AM: DCS boarders who are already on-site **book a slot** to be tested at the Old Gym. DCPS boarders already on-site are tested in-House.



Sunday 7th March – DCPS and DCS Returning Boarders Initial Test

- 5.45-8.00PM: DCS returning boarders **book a slot** to be tested at the Old Gym (first test of 3).
- Same time: DCPS boarders are tested in-House (first test of 3).

Monday 8th March – DCS Day Pupils Initial Test (all at the Old Gym)

- 8-8.30AM: Upper 6th Form
- 9-9.30AM: 5th Form
- 10-10.30AM: Lower 6th Form
- 11-11.30AM: Remove
- 12-12.30PM: 4th Form
- **These will not require pre-booking** as pupils have been assigned an approximate time for their test. Once the test has been administered, the pupils will need to wait 30 minutes for the result to be known.

Tuesday 9th March – DCPS & DCS Catch-Up Test

- 8.00-11.00AM: DCS on-site boarding pupils are tested at the Old Gym (for regular testing). DCPS on-site boarders are tested in-House.
- 11.00-12.00PM: DCS and DCPS catch-up time for pupils who missed their original slot (1st test of 3). **Please book a slot in advance** so we know who to expect.
- 2.00-4.00PM: DCPS Year 7 and Year 8 day pupils come to the Old Gym for their 2nd test.

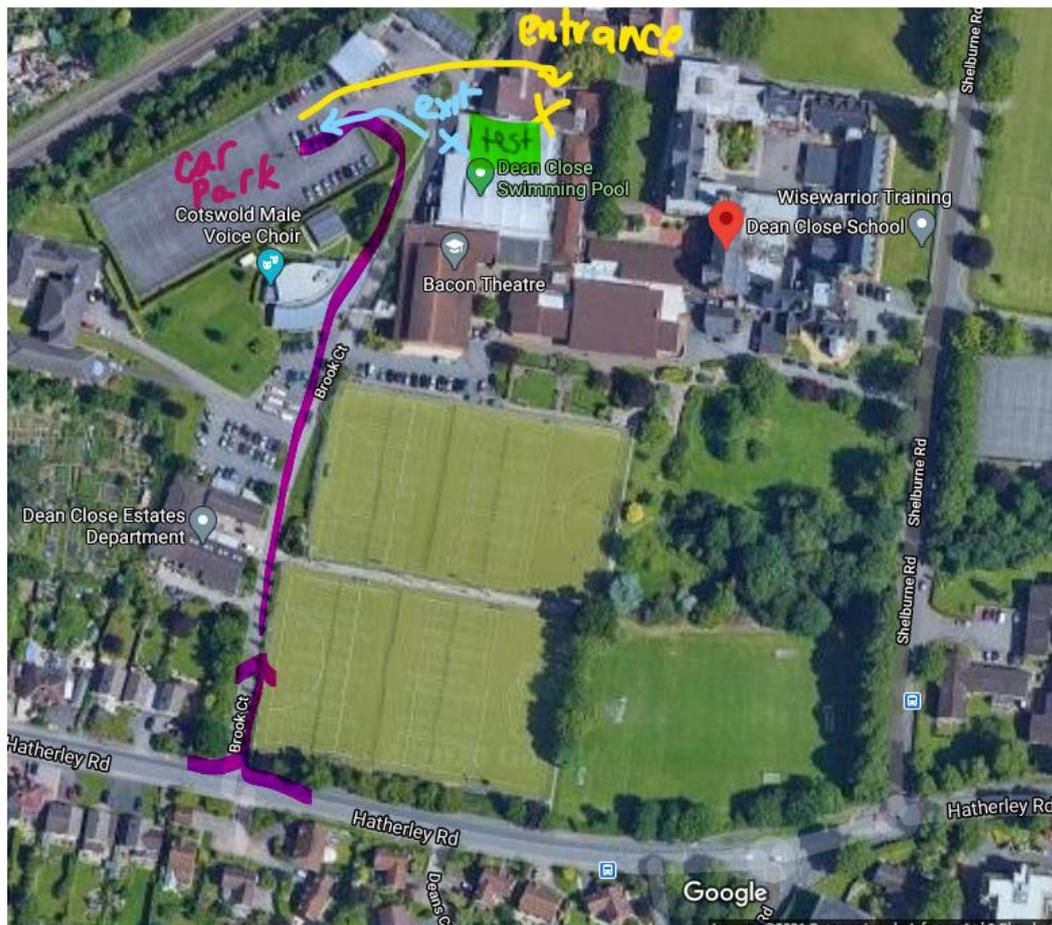
Wednesday 10th March and onwards

- Further testing arrangements will be confirmed in the days to come; this will depend largely on the timing and quantity of testing kits that we receive.
- All returning pupils will need 3 lateral flow tests on-site at our testing centre or by other trained staff before they are transitioned to in-House or home kits (depending on availability).



Location

The testing centre is in the Old Gym, located near the Bacon Theatre and the swimming pool at Dean Close Senior School. The entrance is next to the silver globe sculpture.



Booking Link

If you have been instructed to book a time for a lateral flow test (e.g. returning boarders or day pupils initial tests) please book your slot at <https://deanclose.youcanbook.me>, using the date and time instructions outlined above.

Important: The booking software is not able to block off dedicated testing times for a specific group; all slots will be visible to book. **Please take care you are booking within the date and time outlined above.**



FAQs

- If you or your child have coronavirus symptoms, **do not** come to the testing centre. Contact us right away to arrange a PCR (laboratory) test, or if you are at home, please book a test at one of the [NHS testing sites](#).
 - Your household must immediately self-isolate.
 - New or worsening continuous cough
 - Fever or chills
 - Loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste (anosmia)
- If any pupil has a positive first test they should immediately return home, where possible, to complete their isolation period (along with other members of the household).
 - If you have a positive test and develop symptoms later, the 10 days starts again from the time of your symptoms. If you are isolating with your household and someone else develops symptoms or has a positive test, the 10 days starts again. The person who has had the positive test does not need to keep isolating after their 10 days has finished.
- The testing centre staff and volunteers are there to **support children doing the swab independently**, except for younger children, as they would at any NHS testing site. Our team will help if they are not sure what to do.
 - Some pupils will require special accommodation for the lateral flow testing, such as a quiet private space, or swabbing only the tonsils or only the nostrils. Please contact covid@deanclose.org.uk if your child may need some extra support, or if you have any questions about the testing process.
- Parents or children over 16 must provide written or electronic consent – this is both to conduct the test and also to permit NHS Test & Trace, and the school, to hold your personal data. If you have not yet provided a consent form, but come for a test, we will ask you to complete it then. We will send out electronic consent forms via Evolve in the coming days.
- The NHS notification system is not reliable so pupils will need to wait the 30 minutes until their test results are known.

In Closing

Thank you for your continued support in what continues to be a rollercoaster of a year. We are working closely across the Foundation ensure that we are adhering to the guidelines and sharing best practices amongst each school and other organisations.

With everyone's cooperation we will continue to navigate the pandemic and what lies ahead; we are very much looking forward to seeing everyone back at school and doing everything we can to keep it a safe and welcoming space for all.

Yours very sincerely,



Danielle DeVuyst RN MPH

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