



Sidonie Kingsmill
Chief Customer Officer
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Dear Parents and Carers

RE: COVID-19 Daily Contact Testing Trials

As you will know, Notre Dame High School has been participating in a COVID-19 clinical trial known as Daily Contact Testing (DCT). This is one of two clinical trials of DCT, funded by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), to inform a future policy on using DCT as a means to improve identification of cases, and break chains of transmission in school, while reducing the social and educational impacts of self-isolation by offering DCT as an alternative.

The trial is to help us understand if offering people, the option of daily testing, if they have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, can help stop the spread of the virus and avoid the need for contacts to self-isolate. DCT works by helping to identify more cases of COVID-19, rapidly identifying people with the virus and then rapidly tracing and testing their close contacts. By finding and isolating more cases we can help to stop the spread of the virus.

Contacts of individuals with confirmed or probable Variants of Concern (VoC) were initially excluded from the trial as there were uncertainties about the behaviour of new variants. However, we have reviewed the growing evidence on the variant first identified in India (now named by the World Health Organisation as the Delta variant) and are now advising that contacts of the Delta variant can be included in the trial.

There is currently no evidence that this variant causes more severe illness. We have evidence that vaccination remains highly effective after two doses. We have also considered the science which suggests that this variant in particular will be the most common form of the virus throughout England by the end of June. In light of this our public health clinical advice recommends that it is important for the trials to continue and that the trials should include contacts of people with confirmed or probable cases of this new variant. DCT provides a mechanism for finding more COVID-19 cases and the more cases we find, the better chance we have at stopping the virus spreading.

If you have been offered the vaccine against COVID-19, and not yet taken this up, we urge you and your family members to please arrange to have your vaccine as soon as possible. More information about the vaccine can be found on the main government [website \(Booking your coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination appointments - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)\)](https://www.gov.uk/booking-your-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-appointments).

If you would like to discuss this further, or have any questions, please contact your school in the first instance.

Kind Regards
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Department of Health & Social Care