

Dear Parents / Carers

In school Lateral Flow testing

As you know we have almost completed the three Lateral Flow tests at school that we have had to provide. This was a significant challenge but it was, eventually, a really rewarding experience for all involved. The process was supported by a small but wonderful group of parents who gave up their time to help, for no other reason than so others could benefit from their involvement. Indeed, some of the group have a medical background, so their presence was really reassuring as well as practically helpful. To those of you who helped, thank you.

Home testing

As you may be aware, the testing process now moves to the home environment. From now on, the school will receive deliveries of home testing kits to distribute to you. We will pass these to your child to bring home, and in the first instance we will give out enough tests for at least two weeks, testing twice per week. Testing needs to be done throughout the Easter break and we ask that you conduct a test on the morning of the first day of next term. This testing does not replace tests you would do if symptoms appear; if that is the case, please book a test in the usual way. These home tests are to test those without symptoms. We do need to know the test results, and another email will follow with instructions on how to do this. Additionally,

- each packet of tests has three tests inside, and we will initially send at least two packets home, hopefully more
- you should carry out two tests per week on your child
- we would like you to do these on Mondays and Wednesday mornings before coming to school, or Sunday and Tuesday night if more convenient
- if your child tests positive you must book a test at a government testing centre to confirm the positive result, and inform the school straight away
- if this confirms a positive result you must isolate your child for 10 days, and inform the school so we can identify close contacts who must do the same
- you should also book a test at a government testing centre at any time your child develops symptoms, because the test we send home are asymptomatic tests
- as said above, testing should continue through the Easter break, and we will provide enough tests for this
- if your child tests negative it doesn't mean they are not carrying the virus, so should continue to follow all distancing and other virus control measures

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- you should log your results with the government as per the instructions given in the test kits
- used test equipment can be disposed of in your usual household waste

WE WILL START DISTRIBUTING HOME TEST KITS ON THURSDAY, AND YOUR CHILD WILL COME HOME WITH ENOUGH TESTS TO DO TWO PER WEEK FOR 8 WEEKS.

Instructions will come with the test kits. Although self swabbing your tonsils is recommended, it is also rather difficult, and can mean an accurately performed test is hard to achieve. So, at school we have been self swabbing both nostrils. If you and your child feel confident about swabbing tonsils please do, but if you do not please swab both nostrils. Of course, participation in this home testing is voluntary.

Taking part in testing is voluntary and all students will be able to attend school /college whether they take part in testing or not. I am strongly encouraging all students to take part. Testing at home will allow your child and other students to attend school/college as safely as possible.

If you have any questions about this please get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Gibbs

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