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16 March 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

We have been involved in the Covid 19 mass testing programme for our students since the new year. The rationale behind testing is based upon, up to one in three people, who have COVID-19, can spread the virus without knowing they actually have the virus. This is because in many cases, no symptoms are present. To reduce the spread of the virus, we need to identify any positive cases. The schools mass testing programme is nearing completion and students will be required to carry out the tests at home, twice every week, 3-4 days apart.

Taking test kits home

Your child will be given three testing packs, with Lateral Flow tests in each box. A separate leaflet will be supplied detailing how and when to take the tests and how to report the test result. **The instructions which are inside the box are no longer accurate.**

Taking the tests

Make sure your child has enough time to complete the test before going to school. Preferably the test would be completed in the morning. However, we understand that for some people this may be challenging. Therefore, tests can be taken the evening before school, if required. You need to report the test results at the following site <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Help and support is available, including instructions in different languages, on how to test and report the results at www.gov.uk/covid19-self-test-help

This does not replace symptomatic testing. If you have symptoms you should self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

Students should complete the test themselves with supervision from an adult. Each test result needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website as mentioned above or by calling **119**. You will also need to inform school if the **result is positive**, where we will begin our own track and trace system, to identify any close contacts.

Taking part in testing is voluntary and you will be able to attend school, whether you take part in testing or not. We strongly encourage all students to take part with testing. Testing students at home will allow us to reduce the spread of the virus and keep everyone as safe as possible.

Thank you for your continued support.

Your sincerely

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Frequently asked questions

Do I need to give consent?

Students and parents do not give written consent to take part in the home testing programme. Please read the information below on how personal information and test results are shared and the school privacy notice on the school website [Privacy-Notice-Covid-Testing.pdf \(boldonschool.com\)](#).

Once you open the kit you should take the test and report the results to [NHS Test & Trace](#). If the result is positive you must report it to the school also.

Are LFD tests accurate?

Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested.

The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?

There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus:

- polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab
- lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - they give rapid results within 30 minutes

You can [book a test here](#).

Can someone else in my household use a test kit sent home from school?

No, however whole families and households with primary school, secondary school, and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, will be able to test themselves twice every week from home. This testing can be accessed through the following channels:

- get a rapid test at work, through workplace testing. Ask your employer for more information

- attend a test site to get tested where you will be able to see how to take the test or pick up tests to do at home (you can find your nearest test site via the postcode checker www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site or check your local council website)
- collect tests to do at home, find your nearest collection site [COVID Test Finder \(test-and-trace.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-19/test-finder)

If these options are not possible, there will be a supply of rapid tests for order online for people who need them the most. More information can be found on www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

There is [more information available about testing for households and bubbles of students](#).

How will personal information and test results be shared?

To report your result, you will need to share some information about yourself, so that your test result can be traced.

You need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- your name
- your test result
- the reference number on the test Kit

Schools and colleges will only share information with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) if the test kits used are found to be faulty. If this happens, DHSC will use our information to contact people who used the faulty tests, so that they can be tested again.

When you report test results online, you are sharing information with DHSC. They will share it with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer you health services and guidance if you need to self-isolate. They might also use your data anonymously (without your name or contact information) to research COVID-19, and improve our understanding of the virus.

For more information on how personal data is used for testing please see the detailed privacy notice on our school website.