

20 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: COVID-19 Testing (Lateral Flow Tests)

As you know it is a Government expectation that COVID19 testing is rolled out in secondary schools this term, with pupils being offered two tests (within a 5 day period) and staff being offered tests on a weekly basis. The testing uses lateral flow devices.

Many people who have COVID-19 do not have any symptoms (are asymptomatic) and so the testing programme is intended to identify those people such that they can isolate. This should help to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus to others.

If you would like your child to be tested for COVID-19, please complete the on-line consent form no later than 9am on Friday, 22 January: <https://forms.gle/XWW6goj6CfHpMBZ28>

Please note that testing is only being offered to those pupils currently attending the onsite provision (vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers).

We have posted further information regarding lateral flow testing on our website (<https://springfield.uk.net/index.php/school-life/coronavirus-information/test-menu-item>). This information has been produced by Government and I must forewarn parents/carers that it is somewhat wordy! (Some elements are also redundant due to the current national lockdown.) I will, therefore, try to summarise how the testing will work for you here:

- Pupils taking the tests will be supervised by trained staff wearing appropriate PPE - at present all of the staff involved are already employed by the school and will be known to most pupils.
- Pupils 'self-swab' - this involves them gently rubbing a swab inside their throat and nostrils.
- The swab is then passed by the pupil to a member of staff who processes it using a lateral flow test device – results take just under 30 minutes to come through.
- If a pupil's test is positive they will be sent home and will need to complete a PCR test for COVID-19 (the school has been provided with some PCR tests for pupils to take home) – pupils will need to self-isolate while they wait for their PCR test result.
- Parents/Carers will be informed by text of their pupil's lateral flow test result.
- We intend to run the two tests for pupils over the fortnight beginning 25 January 2021.

(Please note that Springfield School will not be using lateral flow tests as a means of 'serial contact testing' in place of asking 'contacts' to self-isolate at this time. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school, close 'contacts' will be identified and asked to self-isolate as per the national guidelines.)

Finally, please be aware that COVID-19 testing in school is not mandatory; it is for families to decide whether or not they consent for their child to take part in the scheme. Our staff will take care to support the pupils throughout the process.

Yours sincerely



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