

25 February 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Consent for COVID-19 Testing (Lateral Flow Tests)

As you know it is a Government expectation that COVID19 testing is offered in secondary schools as part of the phased return to face to face teaching from 8 March. The testing uses lateral flow devices and, ideally, all children will have three tests at school. The Government has indicated that home testing kits will subsequently be used.

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; it is therefore strongly recommended.

If you would like your child to be tested for COVID-19, please complete the on-line consent form no later than 8am on Monday, 01 March 2021: [\[https://forms.gle/tWC6gETP2dvyGDzt7\]](https://forms.gle/tWC6gETP2dvyGDzt7)

As you will appreciate, in a very large school like Springfield, arranging testing in a safe and controlled way is quite a logistical challenge, and so we would politely ask for your support in responding by this deadline.

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 – the majority 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 required to self-isolate in accordance with Government requirements.
- Parents/Carers will be informed by text of their pupil's lateral flow test result.

Please note that 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; this includes cases identified by the onsite lateral flow testing.

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.

I will write to you with further information regarding the phased reopening when all arrangements have been confirmed.

Yours sincerely

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