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Dear Parents and Carers

Regular asymptomatic (no symptoms) COVID-19 testing has been in place for all staff and students at schools and colleges since January. Up to one in three people who have COVID-19 can spread the virus without knowing. This is because they have no symptoms. To reduce the spread of the virus, we need to identify those individuals. We can do this by carrying out tests at home twice every week.

Over the last two weeks, we have offered all students three COVID-19 lateral flow device tests (LFD tests) in college. [The Government has recently announced that](#) all secondary aged students will also be offered regular asymptomatic COVID-19 tests to take at home using LFD testing kits. Students should take two tests per week so that we can reduce the spread of the virus. Whilst these tests are voluntary, I urge parents and carers to work with us, as they form a crucial part in strengthening protective measures for students, staff and members of our communities.

Testing students at home

Today students have brought two packs of LFD tests home (a total of six LFD kits) along with a leaflet on how to take the test and report the results. Students should take their first test of the week on a Sunday evening after 6pm and their second test on Wednesday evening, also after 6pm. Students should continue to test twice weekly in college holidays.

We understand that each child has individual needs. Many children will adapt to testing becoming part of their routine, others will find it more challenging. We have undertaken over 2000 tests in college and students have been exceptional in their responses – we have had fewer than five void tests during this process. Students are now well rehearsed in how to carry out their swabs but will need help in processing the sample.

There is a short video to support people in carrying out LFD tests which can be viewed here: [How to do a COVID-19 Self Test \(rapid antigen test\) - YouTube](#)

Test Results

The result of each test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. Parents and carers are also asked to tell the college the result of each test by completing this form <https://tinyurl.com/583hbnas>

for each test taken by each child at Springwell.

If the result of the test is unclear (void) they will need to do another one.

Below you will find a quick reference flow chart to help you navigate the reporting process.

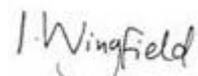
Positive LFD Test

If a student has a positive test result, they will need to stay home and self-isolate. This applies to everyone within the household. A PCR COVID test should be arranged at the nearest test centre in order to confirm the test result.

Please contact the college by email to enquiries@springwellcc.org or by telephone on 01246 473873 if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely



Ian Wingfield
Headteacher

Some frequently asked questions

What type of tests will be used?

We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

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 - LFD tests give rapid results, in 30 minutes after taking the test.

How will personal information and test results be shared?

When students take a Lateral Flow test, they need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that they need to share some information about the student. They will need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- child's name
- child's test result
- the reference number on the test kit

They will also need to tell the school or college their test result.

Under UK law, a child's school or college can collect and store test result data because it is in the 'public interest'.

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 someone reports test results online, they are sharing information with DHSC. DHSC may share the information with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer health services and guidance if someone needs to self-isolate. They might also use data anonymously (a person's 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; <https://tinyurl.com/ya3jdjga>.

What if a child cannot tolerate a swab down their throat, perhaps due to their disability?

A child or young person may find it difficult to take a throat swab due, for example, to their having difficulty in understanding instructions, needing to keep their mouth open during the period of swabbing or they are having a strong gag reflex. In such cases, where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils can be taken. Similarly, if a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice.

[Help and support is available](#) for students, parents and carers, including instructions in different languages on how to test and report the results and a video showing you how to take the test.

LFD Test Result Flow Chart

POSITIVE

RECORD with NHS

RECORD WITH COLLEGE

WHOLE HOUSEHOLD SELF ISOLATE

ARRANGE A PCR TEST

NEGATIVE

RECORD WITH NHS

RECORD WITH COLLEGE

ATTEND COLLEGE AS NORMAL