



Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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Testing in School

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing regarding the plans we have in place for the implementation of rapid lateral flow testing at school over the coming weeks. This letter has a link to a consent form below, so please do read its contents and other links carefully before completing this form.

First of all I must express my thanks to those of you who have volunteered to give up some time to support us with conducting testing at school. The response to my plea for help has been incredible and I must say that your generosity of spirit has been heartwarming at a very challenging time. We will be contacting you again in the next day or so with more details as to when and how you can help. The test kits only arrived in school today and training materials have just been published so please bear with us.

The stated aim of the testing programme in schools is to 'find asymptomatic cases and break chains of transmission, making it as safe as possible to return to face-to-face education'. There are three key elements:

- Mass screening of all pupils who give their consent before pupils return to school for the Spring Term. The aim here is to test all pupils twice in the coming weeks, with 3-5 days in between tests. Any pupil testing positive must self-isolate and request a PCR test through NHS Test & Trace to confirm the result.
- 'Contact testing' of pupils who have been in close contact with a positive case at school. This will involve all close contacts who give their consent being tested daily before they join lessons for a period of 7 days. If they test negative then they can remain in school, if positive then they will have to self-isolate and request a PCR test through NHS Test & Trace to confirm the result.
- Weekly testing of school staff.

All testing is voluntary and consent is required. Pupils aged 16 and over can give their own consent, though they should discuss this with their parents/carers. Pupils aged under 16 must have parent/carer consent. **In order that we can start the process of testing as soon as possible, please could you (or your child if 16 or over) complete the following Google Form by Wednesday 6th January: <https://forms.gle/uh6NjNgphUVyqjGQ8>**

"This is an OUTSTANDING school" - Ofsted 2016



If you cannot access the form then please email the school requesting a copy. Please note that consent can be withdrawn by a pupil on the day of a test.

Pupils will not be refused admission to the school if they do not participate in the mass screening over the next few weeks. However, if a pupil is identified as a close contact of a positive case they must self-isolate if they do not participate in contact testing for the full 7 day period. When pupils take a test they will be asked to complete a registration card (this is most easily done by using a phone camera to take a picture of the test barcode which will then direct them to the registration website, so pupils should bring their phone with them when invited in for testing). This allows the pupil to be notified of the result of the test if it is positive (at time of writing it appears that the system only gives notification of positive results). The school will only contact you if a positive result has been returned as we will need to conduct our own track and trace of close contacts at school.

We hope that as many pupils as possible will give their consent to being tested as this will minimise the risk of infection in school.

The following further information may be useful:

- [How to do your test COVID 19 instruction leaflet for schools.pdf](#)
- [Copy of Privacy Notice - model school and college testing.docx](#)
- [Data protection Covid testing FAQs for parents.pdf](#)

There are a number of online videos that demonstrate the process of conducting a lateral flow test, but there may be slight variations with the swabbing process at school so I have not linked them here. A quick internet search should give you a good idea as to how the swabbing process works.

It is very important to be clear that the testing in school does not replace the NHS Test & Trace system. No one should attend school if they or anyone in their household has Covid-19 symptoms. Anyone with symptoms must apply for a PCR test using the NHS [Get a free NHS test to check if you have coronavirus](#) and remain in isolation as instructed. Parents/carers must continue to notify the school as soon as possible if their child tests positive for Covid-19.

We will be writing to each year group separately with instructions for when to come into school for their first test. The test itself only takes a few minutes to complete, but pupils may have to wait a little while before being admitted into the testing area. Pupils should not wait for their result, this will be sent by text message if positive.

As is the case with much of my communication, the above is subject to change at short notice. We are certainly being kept on our toes by the Department for Education and I will write to you again as and when needed. In the meantime, thank you again for supporting the school and for supporting your child with remote learning over the coming days. We do not underestimate the challenges that remote learning poses and would far rather have all our pupils in school, but we

must take note of the current situation and act accordingly. As I have come to know, the whole Bishop's community will no doubt work together to bring about the best possible outcomes for our pupils, staff and parents.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Wood