



## “Believing is Achieving”

Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parents & Carers

We are currently busy preparing for the rollout of mass testing for all Shepwell students in January. This will mean that all Shepwell students will be tested twice in their first couple of weeks back at school, all staff will be tested weekly, and should we have a positive case, all close contacts will not be required to isolate as long as they have a negative test every day for 7 school days (and isolate at the weekend). Any positive Lateral Flow Test will then have the more familiar Covid-19 PCR test on the same day and will be asked to isolate until the result of the PCR test is received. If this is negative the student can return to school. If positive, the student, and everyone in their household, will need to isolate for a period of 10 days. This should not only help to make school safer but also significantly reduce the number of days students would need to isolate following a positive case.

The rapid lateral flow tests will be delivered to school on January 4<sup>th</sup> and we are creating our testing centre following strict safety guidelines ready for our return in January. Whilst we are still working hard on planning the logistics of testing students, it is important that the consent process is completed ready for our return. We believe the sooner we get into the actual testing programme, the safer our school, and subsequently, our school community will be.

There is a risk of an escalation in the number of positive cases of Covid 19 in schools in the new term. Following the Christmas break and the likelihood of significantly increased transmission rates, particularly within the secondary cohort, an opportunity to remove as many positive but asymptomatic cases from circulation presents an important and time sensitive opportunity. For us to carry out the tests we require parental consent and I encourage you to complete the consent form attached to this letter.

If parents do not consent to their child being tested they will need to self isolate for 10 days if in contact with a positive case.

Germs can be spread from person to person, or by touching unclean equipment or surfaces. To help stop the spread of coronavirus please focus your efforts on educating your child about the importance of good hygiene. We continue to follow advice from Public Health England and students have been spoken to in school about the important hygiene messages; however, not all students adhere to the advice and guidance and this putting the Shepwell community at risk.

### Lateral Flow Testing in School Aim and Process

Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) are rapid tests that can process COVID-19 samples on site without the need for laboratory equipment and are able to generate results in around half an hour.

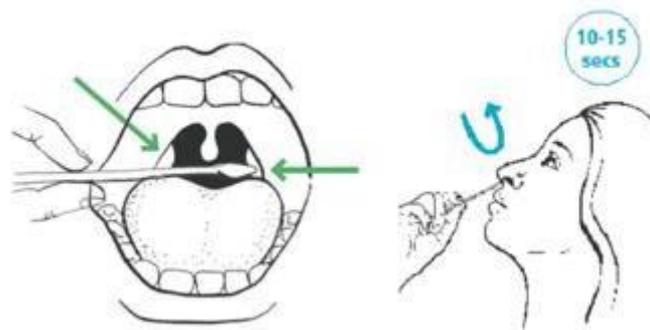
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They help identify COVID-19 infections for asymptomatic people (those who may be affected but do not display symptoms). The fast turnaround of these tests allows positive people to self-isolate quickly and further reduce the risk of transmission of the virus.

Testing will take place in a dedicated area which will be set up in School following strict safety guidelines.

On arrival students and participating staff should wear or will be provided with a face covering at all times and will be directed by school staff when to attend for testing. Trained personnel will welcome them to the test area and provide full information on how to register and complete the test.

The tests involve taking a swab from the back of the throat and nose. This can be done by the person themselves depending on age and ability to do so.



The sample taken is transferred to an absorbent pad on the testing device by a trained test assistant.

After half an hour this then shows the result in a small window (similar to a pregnancy test).

Step by step instructions will be provided to all together with support throughout the process. Following each test, staff will let each person know how and when they will receive their result. If a test is positive, the person will need to take and register a confirmatory PCR test on site. A PCR test is conducted in the same way by taking a swab from the throat and nose but this sample requires to be sent away for laboratory testing.

Parents will be contacted then students should return home and isolate immediately. If their confirmatory PCR is positive, their household or bubble will also need to self-isolate and NHS Test and Trace may be in touch to contact trace.

The whole process is guided and samples processed by trained personnel following safe operating procedures and wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).



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The tests are completely voluntary, free of charge and will require parental consent for students as mentioned above.

I want to be totally honest with you. My staff and I are extremely worried about being able to keep your child safe from Covid-19 in school and we have done everything we can to help keep the community safe but as a parent you need to think very carefully about the lateral flow test. You will have my 100% support whatever you decide and whilst in school all staff will endeavour to afford your child as much protection as possible, but I urge you to agree for your child to be tested.

Whilst the timing may have been poor, we do see this as a positive development, and we will fully embrace the process.

Thank you for your support and understanding at a time of uncertainty. Please feel to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards

*Stephen Pritchard-Jones*

Mr. S Pritchard-Jones  
Headteacher

**PLEASE SEE CONSENT FORM BELOW**



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## Mass Symptomatic Lateral Flow Testing for Coronavirus/Covid-19

### **CONSENT FORM**

Please discuss this with your child or young person, then complete this form and ask the student to provide it when they arrive for their test. If we do not receive your recorded consent, your young person will not be tested.

Student's full name (first name and surname):	Home address and postcode:	
Date of birth:	Year Group	

<p><b>For students under 16 years old - Consent for Coronavirus/ Covid-19 Test.</b> <i>Please complete either YES or NO, and return to the school office ASAP but no later than Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020.</i></p>	
<p><b>YES</b>, I have discussed this with my child, I give consent for them to be tested for Coronavirus/ Covid-19</p>	<p><b>NO</b>. I have discussed this with my child, I do not give consent for them to be tested for Coronavirus/ Covid-19</p>
Name	Name
Signature Parent/guardian	Signature Parent/guardian
Date	Date
If 'No' please give reason(s)	