

24th January 2021

Saliva and Lateral Flow Testing Programmes – An update

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have been informed by the University of Southampton that the saliva testing programme will be up and running in the next few weeks. As soon as it is available, we will be asking all staff and all critical worker children and vulnerable children, who are on-site at the moment, to perform the tests weekly. When the full school returns (and I still have no idea when that will be!) all students will be asked to perform the test weekly. For years 7-9, the completed saliva tests will need to be brought into school on Mondays and placed in the year group postbox, and for years 10 and 11 the completed saliva tests will need to be brought in on Thursdays and placed in the year group postbox. More information to follow.

I have been asked by the university to pass on some further information concerning saliva testing. Therefore I attach the saliva testing programme newsletter! And here is the link to the website:

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/covid-testing/how-testing-programme/>

In terms of lateral flow testing, we are currently delivering this to all staff weekly and will continue to do so until saliva testing becomes available. We have no intention of running a full lateral flow testing programme for all students. Therefore we do not need to ask volunteers to support us with the testing programme. My sincere thanks to those parents who did volunteer.

The accuracy of lateral flow testing has now been called into question so much that the DfE have updated their guidance. We are to withdraw 7 day lateral flow testing for students in contact with positive cases. This means that if a student, who has been in school tests positive, we will need to identify students who have been in close contacts and send them home for ten days as we did previously. We cannot offer lateral flow testing to keep the students identified in school. This is an important point to note. This guidance is in place now for those critical worker children and vulnerable children who are on-site at the moment. If there were to be a positive case within one of these bubbles, we may have to send students home or even close that bubble. Therefore, please remind your child to follow our social distancing rules.



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If you have any questions concerning the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr Alan Chipping', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mr Alan Chipping
Headteacher