



RC/JAE

25 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Planning for all students to return to school COVID-19 Lateral Flow Testing from March 2021

Information for Parents/Carers

A key strategy to support the safe return of all students to school is the implementation of Lateral Flow Testing for all students and staff. I can understand that some parents and students maybe a little anxious about this.

We have been testing both students and staff on-site safely since January this year. We are using the tests as a screening process so that our whole community remains safe. This includes our Nursery and Pre-School, where staff are tested regularly. Testing is not 100% perfect. Since starting testing in January, we have recorded a huge number of 'negative' results and a small number of 'positive' results that have been countered by 'negative' PCR Tests – therefore, being 'false positives, and a small number of 'positive' tests that have prevented further spread of COVID-19 and, therefore, helped the school community remain safe for students.

Testing for those without coronavirus symptoms continues across the country using COVID-19 tests known as 'Lateral Flow Tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing, we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but we would encourage everyone to take it.

We started testing staff and students attending school on the 4 January 2021.

We are hoping to have the HLOW Saliva Testing Programme up and running shortly. We will continue to run Lateral Flow Testing alongside this. The intention of the Department for Education is that all students will be issued with 'home testing' kits once students have completed a small number of on-site tests.

Students will be given clear instructions on how to use the test.

Trained staff will supervise those taking the test. The Lateral Flow Tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. Staff oversee the swab process.

We are using the Lateral Flow Tests as a regular screening process to detect individuals that are not displaying symptoms, but may have a higher viral load and will, therefore, be directed to take a PCR Test.

Results will be shared directly with staff and students (over 13 years of age) via the Track and Trace app later in the day. We will always contact parents if a student has a positive Lateral Flow test result.

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Children with SEND

We recognise that the self-swabbing part of the test may cause significant concerns for some children and young people with SEND and their families. Some of these concerns may be alleviated by discussing them with school and agreeing strategies to help reduce anxiety and putting in place any reasonable adjustments (if the individual has a disability).

Parents and carers may want to look at the Mass Testing Guidance for Specialist Settings for further information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/mass-asymptomatic-testing-in-specialist-settings>

How the tests work

Trained staff will supervise those taking the test. The Lateral Flow devices are easy to undertake, using a swab of your nose and throat. Results will be shared as above.

Recording your consent

We require consent from parents for all year groups. Please click on the link below to access the online consent form. If you would prefer a paper copy, please contact student reception. Students in school during lockdown have already given their consent.

All families will need to complete the form, regardless of whether you wish your child to participate in COVID-19 Mass Testing. There is an option to decline your consent.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=nmtgkvSQcEqfP6Sn6ltddzmRCYPk1rErFgIoIMnNKVUQjNKR0l2TEgzSkVXQ05YNFZMNTJNQzhMSi4u>

Testing is **not** mandatory and we will not perform testing on any child unless we have received written consent from a parent or carer. We will also not perform any testing on a child if they withdraw their consent.

You can withdraw your consent at any point by e-mailing the school on office@portchester.hants.sch.uk or telephoning 023 9236 4399.

If you are unable to complete the form, or if there are any technical problems, paper-copies will be available from the school office.

Your data

As part of this programme, it is necessary for the school to process some additional data for your child. Information concerning this data, how it will be processed, and with whom it will be shared, can be read on our website. **Please click [HERE](#) to read the privacy notice.** If you require a paper copy of this document, please contact the school.

Thank you again for your continued support and patience.

Yours sincerely

R Carlyle

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Headteacher

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