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Dear Parent/Carer

We hope that you and your families have had a fun and restful summer and that your children are looking forward to returning to school next Tuesday.

In order to bring everyone back to school safely and without us having to stagger the start days for our pupils we are asking that you support us by testing your secondary and post 16 age students twice for Covid-19 before school starts on Tuesday. The Government have asked schools to test all secondary and post 16 age children twice in school before the start of term. We do not feel that this is appropriate for our pupils and hope that you will support us to keep everyone safe by carrying out these tests at home.

One test could be done on Friday/Saturday and another on Monday night/Tuesday morning.

If you need more lateral flow test kits we have plenty in school and these can be collected from the school office this Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, or on Monday 6<sup>th</sup>. We also have a limited supply of nasal only swab kits if you feel that these would be easier to use.

Current guidance has also stated that testing should continue to be carried out twice weekly until the end of September when this will be reviewed.

We understand that each child has individual needs. Many children will have already adapted to testing becoming part of their routine, others will find it more challenging. Taking part in testing is voluntary and all children will be able to attend school whether they take part or not.

This does not replace symptomatic testing. If you have symptoms you should self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

### **What should you do after the LFD test?**

If anyone tests positive you should book a confirmatory PCR test. In the meantime you and your household should follow the most up to date Government guidance.

You need to report your result to both [NHS Test and Trace](#) and school, even if the test is negative or void you still need to report it.

A negative result does not guarantee that you are not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask in crowded places and regularly washing your hands and observing social distancing.



### **You need to report each test result**

The result of each test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>.

You will also need to tell the school the result of each test by emailing [covid@priorywoodsschool.com](mailto:covid@priorywoodsschool.com) or by ringing school on 01642 770540.

### **Why testing is important**

Taking part in testing is voluntary and all children will be able to attend school whether they take part in testing or not.

We are strongly encouraging all children to take part. Testing at home will allow your child and other children to attend school and help to reduce the spread of the virus.

Please contact Emma Fox our COVID Coordinator, if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

Thank you for your support.

Janis French

Head Teacher

## **Some frequently asked questions**

### **Do I need to give consent?**

Students and parents do not give written consent to take part in the home testing programme. Please read the information below on how personal information and test results are shared and the enclosed privacy notice

Once you open the kit you should take and report the results of the tests to [NHS Test & Trace](#) and school, regardless of the result (positive, negative, or void).

### **Reporting problems or issues with testing**

If there is an issue with the test kit, for example something is missing, please report it by calling **119** and please also tell the school.

If an accident or injury happens whilst using the test kit, please seek medical care by calling 111 (or 999 if it is an emergency). Please also report what happened using this website: <https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

### **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.

### **What does it mean if my child has a positive result?**

If your child has a positive antigen LFD test result they **should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days**. You need to report your result to both NHS Test & Trace and your school.

You should book a confirmatory PCR test if you are testing at home.

### **What does it mean if my child has a negative result?**

A negative result does not guarantee that your child is not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands.

### **What if my child has a void result?**

If the result of the test is unclear (void), they should do another one. If the next test is also void, your child should take a PCR test.

All test results need to be reported to both [NHS Test & Trace](#) and school.

### **Do I need to send the test to a lab?**

No. The LFDs supplied do not need to be sent to a laboratory to get a result and can give a quick result in around 30 minutes. Guidance on self-testing is contained in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet, which comes with the test kit.

### **How do you report the result?**

Once your child has taken the test, you will need to report the result online (whether it is positive, negative or void). You also need to tell the school the test result. You will receive a text or email from NHS Test & Trace confirming that you have reported your test result.

### **What if my 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 reason a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice. Nasal swab only test kits are now available.

### **How do I swab my child?**

If you are assisting with swabbing as your child needs support, for example due to their special education needs or disability, you can find guidance on doing this here - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/934735/coronavirus\\_test\\_guide\\_how\\_to\\_test\\_on\\_a\\_child.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934735/coronavirus_test_guide_how_to_test_on_a_child.pdf)

## **How will personal information and test results be shared?**

When your child takes an LFD test, you need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that you need to share some information about your child.

You need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- your child's name
- your child's test result
- the reference number on the test Kit

You will also need to tell your child's school or college their test result.

Under UK law, your 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 you report test results online, you are sharing information with DHSC. They may share the information with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer your family health services and guidance if your child needs to self-isolate. They might also use your child's data anonymously (without their 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 enclosed.