



Our Ref: LTM/kmd/hometesting

16 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update on Lateral Flow Testing and switch to Home Testing for all students

Following our successful return to school for students, including undertaking Lateral Flow Testing for all those across the school community, we will now be moving to Home Testing. All students will be provided with Home Testing Kits on Friday of this week and will arrive home with them ready for their first use on Sunday, 21st March. We will be providing testing kits to all students to ensure that families receive the relevant information regarding the roll out of the Testing Program.

This letter outlines key information you need to be aware of as we move into the weeks ahead; more information on testing can be found on the school website:

<http://www.oldburywells.com/parent-information/covid-update>

Twice weekly COVID-19 testing at home for students: Students (who opt into the testing) will be required to test twice weekly at home. Up to 1 in 3 people who have COVID-19 have no symptoms and could be spreading it without knowing. Getting into a regular habit of testing twice a week will help stop the virus spreading, keeping your family and friends safer. Your child should also continue testing twice a week at home throughout the Easter school holidays; we will be sending home extra kits for the Easter holiday before term ends.

Testing students at home: All students will be provided with 2 packs of test kits (each containing three tests) on Friday, 19th March. The tests are free of charge. The packs include a leaflet on how to take the test and report the results. The result of each test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

We are asking students to take the test on a Sunday and Thursday evening, with Sunday, 21st March being the first day of testing.

If the result of the test is unclear (void) they will need to do another one. If a student has a positive test result, they will need to stay home and self-isolate. Should a positive test be returned then we would ask that in addition to recording the result, you also contact the school's absence line or email covid.support@oldburywells.com to confirm that your child is self-isolating while awaiting a further PCR test.

All positive results from rapid tests undertaken at home need to be confirmed with a standard PCR test. This is because these tests are not conducted in a controlled environment and will not have trained staff on hand. Following a positive LFD test at home, a confirmatory PCR test should be booked online or by calling 119. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD result and your child can return to school.

Similarly, the home testing kit does not replace testing for those with symptoms. If you have symptoms you must self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

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Reporting results: It is really important that results of test are reported online straight away, even if your child's result is negative or void. It is easy to do at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result. Results can also be reported via telephone by calling 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm.

We are also asking you to inform the school of your result; this can be done following each test by completing the form on the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=2s8TOK9SpUy44yMVeXcKuiGj9ZJeAHFLiw-LVxPtYgZURVI3WFFGMIVaNDNTQIFHWVYxR1o2S1pLMY4u>

Taking part: Taking part in testing is voluntary and all students will be able to attend school whether they take part in testing or not. We are however strongly encouraging all students to take part in the national testing programme to help keep our community safe.

Testing for parents, households and bubbles twice a week: A reminder that regular rapid testing is now also available for parents, their households and support or childcare bubbles. The Government is encouraging all families to participate in twice weekly testing to help stop the spread. Parents and other adults in the household can access tests by:

- Ordering tests online at www.gov.uk/order-school-household-tests
- Getting an assisted test at work, (if it is available)
- Attending a test site to get tested (where you will be able to see how to take the test) or pick up tests to do at home.

To find out more on school household testing visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

Can I thank all families for their continued support, we are very much hoping that the high numbers engaging in the LFT in school will be mirrored through use at home and we would encourage all families to ensure that twice weekly testing becomes part of the norm in the weeks ahead.

As always should you have any questions, please contact the school, although please find to follow some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's).

Yours faithfully



Mr Lee Tristham
Headteacher

FAQ's to follow on next page

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – COVID HOME TESTING



Oldbury Wells

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.

How will personal information and test results be shared?

When students take a Lateral Flow test, they need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that they need to share some information about the student. They need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- their name
- their test result
- the reference number on the test Kit

They will also need to tell the school or college their test result.

Under UK law, a 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 a person reports test results online, they are sharing information with DHSC, who may then share the information with a GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer health services and guidance if someone needs to self-isolate. They might also use data anonymously (a person's name or contact information) to research COVID-19 and improve our understanding of the virus.