



Tuesday, 02 February 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

Lateral Flow Testing

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep children, families and staff as safe as possible during the coronavirus pandemic, we are in the process of setting up Lateral Flow Testing for staff across all our academies. This has been introduced by the Government to support our response to the pandemic.

This is a voluntary process which allows staff to test themselves for Coronavirus twice per week. We expect the vast majority of results to be negative but should there be a positive test, the staff member will self-isolate and we will close the bubble if necessary according to guidance.

A positive Lateral flow test will be confirmed by the more detailed PCR test (the test which all members of the public would take if they showed symptoms with results analysed in a laboratory). If this also comes back positive then the self-isolation will continue for the required period. If it comes back negative then the self-isolation can end and the bubble will be able to come back into school.

Using Lateral Flow Testing is one of many ways we are working to keep our school communities safe from Coronavirus. All our other safety measures remain in place as well. These include:

- Nobody coming onto site with symptoms of coronavirus
- Children and staff being in bubbles (minimising contact to as few people as possible)
- The wearing of face coverings in communal areas
- Enhanced cleaning throughout the day
- Focus on handwashing and good respiratory hygiene
- Making sure ventilation is as good as it can be

At the moment, as instructed by Government, there is the additional measure of schools only being open to vulnerable pupils and those of critical workers who require a place and have no other childcare alternative. **It is vitally important we *only* have children on site who need to be there** as whilst high levels of the virus are found in the community there could be cases brought into school which increases the risk to all. Please can we therefore continue to ask that parents consider the Government's guidance that: "Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required, but parents should keep their children at home if they can".

Once again, thank you so much for your support, patience and understanding during this challenging time.

Antony Hughes, CEO