

6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

**COVID-19 Testing for Students in Secondary Schools in January 2022 – *registration and consent* needed:**

- from parents of students aged 11-15
- from students 16+, or from their parents

**PLEASE NOTE THAT FRESH CONSENT IS REQUIRED. PREVIOUS CONSENTS ARE NO LONGER VALID**

You may have seen in the news that the government is once again asking all secondary schools and colleges to carry out lateral flow testing for COVID-19 when students return in January, in order to detect individuals who have the virus but do not have any symptoms. By identifying these individuals and requiring them to self-isolate, it will be possible to break some of the chains of transmission of the virus, keep our communities safer and help to keep our schools open for in-person learning.

Our secondary schools, *Riddlesdown Collegiate* and *The Quest Academy*, will establish and run an *Assisted Testing Site* in January at each school to carry out these tests. I would like to emphasise that it is then a personal choice for the family of each student as to whether to take part in this testing; individuals who remain symptom free will still be able to come to school even if they do not take part in this testing programme. I should also emphasise that **these tests are only for individuals who do not have symptoms of COVID-19**; anyone who has symptoms must **not** come into school and should arrange to have a PCR test.

Alongside this testing programme, we shall continue to maintain good hand hygiene routines, extra cleaning in each school, and as much ventilation as possible in classrooms. We shall also maintain a requirement for all students and staff – other than those with an exemption – to wear masks in communal areas in school, as long as advised by the Government.

If you are happy for your child to take part in this programme, please fill in the ***registration and consent form*** below which will automatically come back to us when you click on **submit**. Students over the age of 16 may complete this form for themselves, following consultation with a parent. Please note:

- i. **no student will be tested unless the *registration and consent form* has been completed.**
- ii. tests will be carried out during a normal working day at the start of term in January; students for whom we have consent will be escorted from lessons to the test site in school.

To access the **REGISTRATION AND CONSENT FORM** – [please click here](#).

In order that we can make the correct preparations to carry out tests in January, please **complete and submit this *registration and consent form*** by 9am on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

The tests will be supervised by trained adults. The *lateral flow tests* are quick and easy using a swab of the nose. An adult will oversee the swab process, although the student will carry it out for themselves.

Included with this letter is the *privacy notice* which explains what happens to the data we collect on the registration and consent form and through the testing process,

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### **What if the test result is positive?**

Participating students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. For these students the parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Those receiving a positive test result will need to take a further PCR test (carried out in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). You can go to [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or call 119 to book a PCR test. Whilst waiting for the PCR result (via text / email) the individual will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a **positive result** the individual **will have to self-isolate** and members of the household must follow the guidance from NHS *Test and Trace*. If an individual does not take a confirmatory PCR test, s/he must self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the positive *lateral flow test*.

### **What if the test result is negative?**

The individual will be able to stay in school and carry on their activities as normal.

A student will only be told by the school if s/he tests positive on a *lateral flow test*, although you will also receive an official confirmation of the result (positive or negative) by text / email. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

### **What if my child develops symptoms?**

This testing programme at school is for people with **no** symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Alongside this test, we shall provide home testing kits for those students for whom we have received consent, to carry out twice weekly testing at home; we hope that you will be happy to participate in this process.

We will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact your school if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



**Mr Gordon Smith**  
Chief Executive