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Lateral Flow Testing for Staff in Primary Schools.

Dear Parents and Carers,

As some of you might have heard on the news, Lateral Flow Tests have been made available for regular staff testing in Primary Schools. This is intended to identify positive cases of coronavirus from staff who are asymptomatic. (1 in 3 people with Covid-19 don't have any symptoms).

All staff are taking their first tests starting tonight. These will then be taken twice weekly. (Wednesday and Sunday evenings) The Department for Education do not have plans currently for the regular testing of Primary School children.

We warmly welcome the introduction of rapid testing for our staff as we strive to make our school as safe as possible for everyone. All staff have agreed to take them (they are optional)

Last week, we have accessed two training sessions with the Department for Education and Public Health to ensure our school administers the tests in line with the guidance.

If a staff member tests positive following testing using a Lateral Flow Test, they then need to have this confirmed by taking a PCR test (taken at a drive through test centre) with results normally available within 48 hours. The safety of our school community is extremely important to us, therefore we would take these actions should a member of staff have a positive Lateral Flow Test:

- The Key Stage bubble would temporarily close immediately.
- Staff member would have a PCR test.
- Member of staff's PCR test is negative – the Key Stage bubble would open the following day after confirmation of the negative result.
- Member of staff's PCR test is positive – the Key Stage bubble would remain closed and with all members of that bubble needing to isolate for 10 days.

Currently, this ONLY applies to children who are attending school, because their parents are critical workers, or they are vulnerable.

I have decided to inform all parents about this development even if your child is working remotely at Home, because I believe all parents need to know what actions we are taking to take to keep everyone in our community as safe as we can.

We are receiving more requests to have more children in to school. I urge you to only put a request in if it is a last resort and you are leaving home to go to your place of work. The more children we have in school the more families are at risk of catching Covid-19. Currently we have double the number of children in school compared to the first lockdown in March. Both our Key Stage bubbles have over 15 children within them, so social distancing is not possible. If we get a positive case, Key Workers working for the NHS will be affected as I'll be sending their children home. I am trying to ensure this doesn't happen to protect our NHS and save lives.

Thanks again for your continued support.

Mrs K.Burke
Headteacher

