



12 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Home Test Kits

Further to my letter dated 26 February 2021 regarding COVID-19 testing for students, I write with further information regarding the home testing kits which we will start to roll out to students over the next week.

Important information regarding LFD tests in school

It has come to our attention that in the last 48 hours that Test and Trace are giving out incorrect guidance regarding a positive test result from an LFD test in school.

We have thoroughly investigated this and spoken to *National Test and Trace Specialist Team* and *Essex and Southend Contact Tracing Team*. I can categorically confirm that the government guidance is correct and any positive result recorded in school from an LFD test must be adhered to. **It cannot be overridden by a PCR test taken afterwards or disregarded by Test and Trace.** I understand this may be frustrating, however we have to follow the guidance as it stands for testing in a school setting.

LFD Testing at home

As you are aware all students that have consent for testing are carrying out tests in school and will then be asked to continue testing at home as per government guidance.

Ideally, tests should be 3-5 days apart so please test your children on Sunday in preparation for the new school week and then again on Thursday if possible.

The in-school testing will finish next week. Below is a schedule of when we are sending your child home with their LFD home test kits:

Friday 12 March	Sixth Form
Wednesday 17 March	Year 11
Thursday 18 March	Year 10
Friday 19 March	Year 8 and 9
Monday 22 March	Year 7

We are still awaiting some deliveries but the intention is to send home 2 boxes of 3 tests each but we will inform you if this is not possible. As we receive more tests from the government over the coming weeks we will forward them on to you to enable you to continue testing.

Please follow the instructions on the leaflet provided in the home test kit and report your results to NHS Test and Trace. [Report your test result online](#) or by calling 119. You do not need to report negative tests to school. Report every result to NHS Test and Trace on the same day you take the test in one of the following ways:

Be The Best You Can Be

- [Report your test result online](#)
- Calling 119

Negative test result – LFD test at home

A negative result means the test did not find signs of COVID-19 but this does not guarantee you do not have the virus, so you should keep following all COVID-19 advice including:

- regular handwashing
- social distancing
- wearing a face covering where recommended

Positive test result – LFD test at home

All positive results from rapid tests undertaken at home **do 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 positive LFD test at home:

- Inform the Year Administrator and Head of Year as soon as possible as well as emailing enquiries@st-martins.essex.sch.uk
- Prepare your child to tell a member of staff their movements in school (who they were with at break and in lessons etc) to enable us to carry out a track and trace procedure.
- Self-isolate immediately and take a confirmatory PCR test. Book online or by calling 119. The student and their close contacts should continue to self-isolate.
- If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test (taken at home only) and your child can return to school. Please confirm the PCR result with the appropriate year office before returning to school.
- Click [here](#) for the follow the stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection:

It is very important to remember that this is a key time for us all. The R rate is down, hospital admissions are down and the number of new COVID-19 cases being reported every day is down. However, as we know from before Christmas this can change very quickly and the indicators will soon go in the wrong direction if we all do not continue to follow the social distancing guidance and test ourselves regularly. Schools will feel the effects of this very quickly and the last thing we all want is to have to self-isolate or go into lockdown again.

Thank you for your extremely positive feedback and your continued support of the school at this most challenging of times. Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Ian Smyrk
Headteacher