

31 December 2020



Saffron Walden County High School

Saffron Academy Trust

Audley End Road
Saffron Walden
CB11 4UH

Telephone: (01799) 513 030
email: info@swchs.net
web: www.swchs.net

Executive Headteacher:
Ms Caroline Derbyshire MA (Cantab)

Headteacher:
Ms Polly Lankester MA (Cantab)

Dear Parent/Carer,

Introducing Lateral Flow testing at Saffron Walden County High School

You have probably seen in the media the news that schools are being asked to introduce Lateral Flow testing.

This will help to ensure that:

- a) More asymptomatic cases are picked up and so the risk of them spreading the virus to others is reduced; and
- b) Close contacts of cases will have the choice to remain in school (subject to agreeing to 7 days of Lateral Flow testing) so that the risks to student well-being and progress are reduced.

It is proposed that all students that give consent will receive 2 tests (3-5 days apart) at the start of the Spring Term. After that point, tests would be used to help close contacts stay in school.

The test involves a self-administered throat and nasal swab. The result, which takes around half an hour from testing, will be shared directly with the participating member of staff or pupil if the coronavirus is identified in the sample. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

We would strongly recommend that our students join this testing programme as, if we have a high percentage of our students taking part, we will significantly reduce the likelihood of asymptomatic cases spreading this virus both in and out of school.

Please see the attached NHS leaflet for further official guidance regarding the test.

What will happen if my child receives a positive result on a Lateral Flow test?

You will be informed immediately. Students who receive a positive Lateral Flow test result will be asked to go and have a second PCR test at a normal testing station to confirm the result. They will need to start self-isolation. The self-isolation can end early if the PCR test comes back as negative. If the result is positive however, then they will need to complete the 10-day self-isolation period, in line with government guidelines.



How accurate are Lateral Flow tests?

You may have seen in the media that Lateral Flow tests are not as accurate as the PCR tests offered at the main testing sites, but multiple Lateral Flow tests have been shown to be an effective way to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spreading and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The tests have lower sensitivity than PCR tests, but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test close contacts frequently (once a day for 7 days).

How do I sign up my child for testing?

All those who give consent (parents must give consent for those under 16) will be included in the testing programme. Your child is likely to be offered their first test BEFORE they return to in-school lessons, with the second test taking place on the first or second day after they return to school.

Please complete the following online form if you would like your child to be included in this programme:

[LINK TO CONSENT FORM \(please complete by 9am on Monday 4th January\)](#)

Can you help?

The logistics around delivering tests for a school the size of ours are challenging. We need to ask for some volunteers to help and work alongside us. *This is particularly the case for the weeks beginning January 4th, January 11th and January 18th 2021.* We intend to run the testing clinics from 8.30am-12pm and from 12.30pm-4.30pm. There will always be school staff on hand supervising students and at no point will any volunteer be alone with students or need to make physical contact with students.

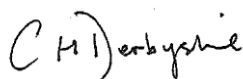
If you could offer some morning or afternoon slots to support us (training will be given), please could you fill in the online form below. If at any time after completing the training and reading the risk assessment you no longer feel happy to volunteer, then you are welcome to withdraw. Some people have already been kind enough to volunteer by email, please could they re-volunteer using this form to help us with the organisation and timetabling.

[VOLUNTEER FORM \(please complete by 9am on Monday 4th January\)](#)

We are looking forward to having all students back in school and we will use the testing system now made available to schools to help keep everyone safe and minimise the disruption caused by Covid-19.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Derbyshire
Executive Headteacher



& Polly Lankester
Headteacher

