



BLACKMINSTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dear parents and carers,

As you may be aware, the government are asking schools to consider offering COVID-19 tests to students of secondary age (ie Year 7 and above) when they return to school. They would like children to be offered two Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs), three to five days apart. The idea is to try to identify asymptomatic people so that they can self-isolate and not spread the virus unwittingly to others. The tests themselves are not 100% reliable and can produce negative results when people are infected (known as "false negatives") so all our existing infection-control measures (hand and respiratory hygiene, distancing, enhanced cleaning etc) would have to remain in place.

We have been running the tests with staff for a few weeks now and are familiar with the testing itself and the administration arrangements for adults, but these are different when young people under 16 are involved. We are therefore planning to run a "trial" of the process with the children who are presently in school to see whether it is feasible for us to roll it out to all Year 7 and 8 children when they return to the classroom.

If you are happy for your son or daughter to take part in our trial, please would you return the consent form to school on or before Tuesday February 23rd. We can then decide, based on uptake, when the trial will start. This is entirely optional - there is no obligation or expectation on you or your child at all.

I'm attaching some information about how the tests are done, which I'd be grateful if you would discuss with your child. In particular I need to stress that all children (even those under 12 who would be swabbed by an adult at a drive-in test centre) will be expected to swab themselves, so your son or daughter needs to be prepared to do that.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a restful, safe half term.

Kind regards,

Linda McQuone
Acting Headteacher

