



## BLACKMINSTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Acting Headteacher: Ms Linda McQuone BSc(Hons), MA(Ed), PGCE, NPQH, MCCT

Station Road, South Littleton, Evesham  
Worcestershire, WR11 8TG  
Telephone: 01386 830311  
office@blackminster.worcs.sch.uk  
www.blackminster.worcs.sch.uk

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Dear parents and carers,

As you may be aware, the government have asked schools to offer COVID-19 tests to students of secondary age (ie Year 7 and above) when they return to school the week commencing Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. They would like children to be offered three Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs), three to five days apart after which parents will be given a kit to test their child at home.

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, and we have run a "trial" of the process with the children who are presently in school. We have decided that we will NOT be asking children to swab their throats and will ONLY be asking them to conduct a nasal swab.

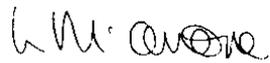
If you are happy for your son or daughter to take part testing in school, please would you complete the [consent form](#), also available on the website under letters, on or before Friday February 26<sup>th</sup>. **Please complete the form even if it is to indicate that you do NOT want your child to be tested.** We will be sending reminders the morning of Friday 26<sup>th</sup> if you have not completed the form.

This is entirely optional - there is no obligation or expectation on you or your child at all. We would like to offer a test next week before children are due to start school, then the second and third tests during the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March. This is so that we can get children back as quickly as possible but ensuring that children are back in classrooms once they have received a negative test result. We will be advising on dates and times later – at present we just need to consent or refusal to testing.



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.

Kind regards,



Linda McQuone  
Acting Headteacher

