



The Forest School
Every Child, Every Chance



4th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are all very ready to have all the children back in school next week; I know that there are a few anxieties, it's totally understandable isn't it when everyone has been home for so long. We do have to move forward though don't we and I can see that these are our first steps towards a more normal life. That being said of course we are not there yet and so we will continue to maintain high levels of COVID security in our school including the requirement for continued testing.

For our secondary children, as I mentioned, we will do two lateral flow tests in school - please do return the consent form as we are not allowed to test your child without this, and we want to ensure that we have as much safety in school as possible.

I mentioned to you before that from Monday 15th March we will not be carrying out the tests in school. The expectation is that this will move to home testing for students and so I have attached information that will help with this. The reason that I am sending this out so early to you is so that you will have a full week to look over things and to contact me if you have any questions, queries, worries etc. This way I thought it would give us time to help if there is anything that you need.

You will have a box that contains sufficient home testing kits to take you up to the Easter holidays (we will send these home with your child). It is the intention that additional kits will be provided to school before the Easter break, and we will ensure that these are with you before then. Please note that there are only sufficient tests for yourself and not for others in your household. Others in your household are eligible for tests but these have to be ordered separately should you wish to have these. I have put the document link below to help and support.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

It is the expectation that children will be tested twice weekly, and the guidance asks that you do it on a morning where possible but if not possible then to do it the evening. I am asking that everyone does in the evenings (Sundays and Wednesdays) and I will give my reasons below.

It takes all in all about 45 minutes to set up the test, conduct the test and then wait for the results (it's the waiting of the results that takes most of the time so please don't worry about it being overly time consuming). That being said I am mindful that for many people mornings are already really busy with getting themselves and others in their households

Headteacher: Michelle Farr

Address: Park Lane, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, HG5 0DQ

Tel: 01423 864583 **E-mail:** admin@forest.n-yorks.sch.uk **Web:** forest.n-yorks.sch.uk



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ready and the night before gives more time for you to do this. But also, in the event of a positive result, if you let me know in the evening it gives us time to do our track and trace and organise any isolation bubbles before everyone comes into school the next day. Please be aware that if your tests positive at home they are still required to attend a COVID test centre to undertake a PCR test for confirmation purposes.

The results of all your tests need to be recorded online - we have created a "step by step" guide which is attached here but I am mindful that for some of you this may feel a little overwhelming. Please do not worry - we are all in this together and so in the event that you are worried about recording online please let me know (headteacher@forest.n-yorks.sch.uk) and we will help further. Just a reminder that testing is for our secondary pupils only. You are not required to notify me of any negative test results but obviously as a matter of urgency you are required to notify me of any positive results.

As I said before if you feel that this is not something that is possible for your child then please let me know and I will support your decision but obviously the more children we have who are tested then the safer it is for all.

More staff have now had their first dose of the vaccine which is another layer of safety in school but as I said earlier this has not meant that we have changed any of our existing system of controls for COVID security.

We are nearly there now; the light is very firmly at the end of the tunnel and I imagine that after all of your sacrifices this last year you will be more than ready!

I hope that all of this helps as always, if you need anything then you know where I am.

Michelle Farr
Headteacher
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