

SJF UPDATE

MONDAY 25TH JANUARY 2021



UPDATE: Testing of SJF Staff

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may have seen in the media that the Government plans to roll out Covid-19 mass testing for staff working in primary schools across the UK from next week.

The testing programme is designed to help schools continue to operate more fully for the duration of the pandemic. As a school community we hope that regular staff testing will help limit the disruption to home and school life, as well as children's learning, by reducing the spread of the virus. This is because testing will identify those members of staff who have the virus but do not have any symptoms.

Schools have been supplied with lateral flow devices (LFD) test kits so that staff can self-swab at home, twice per week. These LFD tests provide results in 30 minutes.

Staff will now do the tests each Sunday and Wednesday evening so that we all have more time to respond.

Though the government maintains that morning testing is best, it is acknowledged that this can make things difficult for schools and families to respond if a positive result is returned, especially as some results might not be notified to us until well after some children have left for school, especially those using our breakfast club.

Obviously I am very concerned about all of this and want to find a way of minimising the impact on all our busy families. I have no wish to add to the stress of parents/carers by issuing late notifications if I can avoid it.

I hope that by moving testing from mornings to evenings, the pressure on us all will be lessened. Hopefully, with notifications coming out from us the evening before, rather than on the day, parents and carers will have more time to prepare their children and make alternative arrangements for their care if they need to.

Notifications will be shared via ParentMail text and email, so please ensure that we have your correct details.

Though our focus is to limit disruption to school and home life (and children's education) as much as possible, the closing of class bubbles, on the advice of public health experts, is sometimes necessary. It has been shown to be a measure that breaks chains of transmission because it halts/reduces the spread of the virus to children, their households, their friends and members of their wider community. This remains a public health priority.

In the event that class bubbles close, parents and carers will first be notified via a short text. This will be followed up with an email which will include further details, including return dates and arrangements for remote learning. Remote learning will continue to be provided via Microsoft Teams and our own SJF Home Learning Portal, which can be accessed through the school website (password: **2020STJOHN**).

School will remain open to anyone unaffected by an order to isolate, including staff, vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers in other classes who were not contacts of the person who tested positive.

I thank you again for your patience, understanding and support during this challenging time for us all.

Kind regards,
F Barratt
Headteacher

