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Dear Parents/ Carers,

### **Lateral Flow Testing for Staff (LFD test)**

The Department for Education has recently announced that it will start a programme of asymptomatic Covid-19 testing in primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, testing will allow us to take further measures to help children, staff members and our community to be in an environment which is as safe as possible. Up to one in three people who have Covid-19 have the virus without symptoms so could be transmitting the virus unknowingly. Tackling the pandemic requires identifying asymptomatic, infectious individuals. By testing, we will help to reduce the spread in the Centre. Taking LFD tests is a voluntary process.

Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals. No test is perfect, but the speed and convenience of LFD tests supports detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals who would not otherwise be tested. They are clinically approved and are crucial in the fight against the virus. As the tests are more sensitive with higher viral loads, there is a risk of returning a negative result when viral loads are low (e.g., in the early stages of infection). Therefore, Public Health England recommend two LFD tests 3 to 4 days apart to enhance detection by picking up any cases which were not detected during the first test and to catch any new infections.

Staff will conduct LFD self-test at home, before coming into work, once or twice a week, dependent on working hours. The LFD tests do not require laboratory processing and can provide a quick result in around 30 minutes. All staff have received a comprehensive guidance on self-testing which contains the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet.

Once the test has been conducted, staff will log the test result with NHS test and trace as well as inform the Centre of the test result.

If the staff test POSITIVE using LFD test, it is likely that they are infectious at that moment, whereas people testing positive on a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or lab-processed test could be in the less infectious early or late stages of disease. This means that by using the lateral flow test we can identify staff with a high viral load who are the most likely to spread the virus further. Staff who test positive using LFD test will be required to book for PCR test. While waiting for a PCR test result, close contacts will be identified and ask to self-isolate. If the positive result is confirmed, the self-isolation will continue, if not, the self-isolation will end.

If the staff test NEGATIVE using LFD test, it is not a guarantee that the staff does not have coronavirus, but it is likely that they were not infectious at the time of the test was taken.

We will strongly encourage all staff to take part in this crucial programme which will help to reduce the spread in the Centre.

Staff who decline to participate in this testing programme will still attend the centre, if not symptomatic. If they show symptoms, they will continue to follow the usual national guidelines on self-isolation and book for PCR tests.

In case of shortage of LFD tests, the staff working directly with the children across the centre, both nursery and day care, will be prioritised.

We should receive LFD tests sometimes at the end of this week or beginning of next week latest. As soon as we receive the tests, we will start the testing programme.

This additional protective measure to our existing COVID-19 Risk Assessment will significantly contribute to reducing risk of transmission. Once the LFD testing is established, hopefully by the end of half term, we might be in a position to fully re-open the Centre, subject to national and local guidance.

Please find attached our Risk Assessment for Lateral Flow testing. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,



Mrs Katarina Bingham  
Head of Centre