



# Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust

Headteacher: Sunil Chotai, BSc

15<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you in good health. As you will be aware, all children and staff have recently been undergoing LFD asymptomatic testing at school. This testing has gone well, our students have responded very maturely and sensibly.

The next stage of regular LFD testing is to offer all secondary age students regular asymptomatic Covid-19 tests to take at home. In line with all secondary schools all our students will be offered tests to take at home twice a week (every 5 days), so that we can reduce the spread of the virus.

Parents/carers may be aware that up to one in three people who have COVID-19 can spread the virus without knowing. This is because they have no symptoms. To reduce the spread of the virus, the Public Health authorities need us to identify those individuals through LFD testing and then to take appropriate action to minimise their contacts. We can do this in schools by carrying out tests at home twice every week.

## Testing pupils/students at home

To facilitate this, test kits will be distributed to students after their third in-school test from this week. If your son/daughter has not completed the in-school tests then kits will be available to collect from Student Services from 16<sup>th</sup> March. Test kits are free of charge and will contain 3 tests which should be completed every 5 days. The box also contains a leaflet on how to take the test and report the result.

The second box of tests will be distributed on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March for use during the Easter break. Please can one test be completed on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April prior to students' return.

The result of each test needs to be reported using the NHS Test & Trace self-report website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> – see page 15 of the guidance included with the test kit. Results can also be reported to the NHS site by using the school's QR code:



**Students/parents must report all results (positive and negative) to the school in the following way:**

Negative or invalid results: email the school at [negativefd@cdarwin.com](mailto:negativefd@cdarwin.com). In your email please state:

1. Your child's name
2. Year group
3. Date of test

**Positive results:** email the school at: [dpa@cdarwin.com](mailto:dpa@cdarwin.com) or phone Student Services on 01959 574043 ext. 257 / 261

If a student has a positive test result, they and their household, including any siblings, will need to stay home and self-isolate in accordance with national guidelines. If the result of the test is unclear (void) they will need to do another one.

A grid with suggested dates for testing at home is attached to this letter.

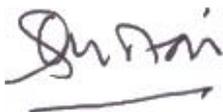
**Taking part**

Taking part in testing is voluntary and all students will be able to attend school whether they take part in testing or not. However, I would strongly encourage all students to take part in the national testing programme.

Please contact Mrs. Booth at [sbo@cdarwin.com](mailto:sbo@cdarwin.com) if you have any questions or concerns about home testing.

I would like to thank all families for their support.

Yours sincerely,



Sunil Chotai  
Headteacher

## **Some frequently asked questions**

### **What type of tests will be used?**

We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

### **Are LFD tests accurate?**

Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested.

The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

### **How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?**

There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus:

- polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab
- lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - LFD tests give rapid results, in 30 minutes after taking the test.

### **How will personal information and test results be shared?**

When students take a Lateral Flow test, they need to report the result. This is so that their test result can be traced, which means that they need to share some information about the student.

They will need to tell the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC):

- child's name
- child's test result
- the reference number on the test kit

They will also need to inform the school of their test result, positive or negative. Invalid test results should be reported to the negative email address.

Under UK law, a child's school or college can collect and store test result data because it is in the 'public interest'.

Schools and colleges will only share information with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) if the test kits used are found to be faulty. If this happens, DHSC will use our information to contact people who used the faulty tests, so that they can be tested again.

When someone reports test results online, they are sharing information with DHSC. DHSC may share the information with your GP, local government, NHS, and Public Health England. This is so that they can offer health services and guidance if someone needs to self-isolate. They might also use data anonymously (a person's name or contact information) to research COVID-19, and improve our understanding of the virus.

For more information on how personal data is used for testing please see the detailed privacy notice available on our website: [www.cdarwin.com](http://www.cdarwin.com).

**What if a child cannot tolerate a swab down their throat, perhaps due to their disability?**

A child or young person may find it difficult to take a throat swab due, for example, to their having difficulty in understanding instructions, needing to keep their mouth open during the period of swabbing or they are having a strong gag reflex. In such cases, where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils can be taken. Similarly, if a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice.

[Help and support is available](#) for students, parents and carers, including instructions in different languages on how to test and report the results and a video showing you how to take the test.