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Dear Parents and Carers

Following on from yesterday's ParentMail about the closing of our Reception Class year group bubble, and in light of Government guidance, we would like to remind our parents about COVID testing.

Access to free, regular, symptom-free rapid coronavirus testing is a significant step forward to stop the spread of coronavirus. You can access free, rapid flow tests (FDs) for yourself and your family to use twice a week, in line with clinical guidance. Children of primary age or younger within your household are not asked to test at this time.

One in 3 people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately. Since rapid testing was introduced, over 120 000 positive cases that would not have been found otherwise have already been identified by LFDs.

LFD tests are for people who are symptom free. They can identify people who have COVID but have no symptoms, and who could be passing onto others without knowing.

Who are COVID LFD home kits for?

- All adults
- Children and young people who are in secondary school and college (tests provided by the schools).

Primary school aged children or younger children are **NOT** currently part of the Government's LFD testing programme.

How can I get my COVID LFD home test kits?

There are a number of ways of getting kits, depending on your circumstances. They can be collected locally or ordered for home delivery. There are also testing sites for LFD testing. See link for details: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>

Rapid testing and kit collection can be collected each Wednesday, in the Market Square in Winslow.

What is the purpose of the LFD test?

Adults and secondary school pupils who do not have any symptoms are asked to test twice a week to increase the chance of identifying someone who has COVID-19 and reduce possible transmission.

A negative LFD test is not a reliable way of ruling out COVID. You should therefore continue to take the additional measures, such as social distancing and using facemasks. If you or your child are identified as a contact of a case, you should not be accessing a test unless you are symptomatic. In these circumstances, you should take a PCR test. Isolation as a contact of a case should only end after the 10-day period, regardless of whether you have accessed a test and the result.

If you have symptoms of COVID

If you, your child, or anyone in the household has symptoms that could be COVID, no matter how mild, you need to get a PCR test. **Do not use a LFD home test.**

Parents and Carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their education setting, or by NHS Test and Trace, are now able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment of £500. This helps to ensure that parents receive financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibility.

We hope that this information is useful. Thank you to all our families for your on-going support and understanding during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely
Mrs C Colmer

Let your light shine