LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parent or Guardian

I wrote to your recently to share the news that The Portsmouth Academy is taking part in an exciting new Hampshire and Isle of Wight COVID-19 Testing Programme this term.

This new test is very simple and involves collecting a sample of saliva in a plastic pot. The test used is the one featured in a [BBC News piece in July](#). Free tests will be offered to **all pupils** and **all staff** at the school.

When schools return for all pupils, you will receive a testing pack which contains pots and a leaflet that shows your child how to collect a sample at home, to be dropped off in school. If your child is currently attending on-site provision, you receive this next week.

Why is this important?

Knowing who has COVID-19 is vital to stopping its spread.

We hope that you are as excited as we are about the potential for this test to help us manage the risk of COVID-19. Alongside all the other measures we are taking to control the virus, it could help us to keep our communities safe and well and keep our schools/colleges open. We will also be paving the way for this test to be used to help in the recovery from COVID-19 across the country.

Testing is not compulsory, but I strongly encourage you take part. We will be in touch soon with further details of how your child can take part in this exciting programme.

How will the testing work?

We will inform the parents of students accessing on-site provision when testing will start.

There will also be students a series of virtual engagement lessons so that the children can learn about how the test works and how regular testing can help keep them and their community safer.

Students will then bring their test kit and labels home from school the day before their first test as well as a leaflet giving step by step instructions. They will be given enough sample pots and labels for eight weeks of testing. **It is important that your child takes the test when they wake up - before they have anything to eat or drink and before they brush their teeth.**

Once the sample has been labelled and bagged, your child will need to bring it to school with them and put it into the collection box at the entrance as they go into the building. The tests will be collected and taken to the test centre on the same day. Test results will be returned in the next 24-48 hours and you will receive a text message telling you the result of your child's test.

If your child tests positive, everyone in the household must start isolating immediately. The programme team will contact you and ensure you get the help and advice you need. Please note that this test is for testing children who do not have symptoms of COVID-19. If your child does have COVID-19 symptoms they should not attend school/college and you should order a test through 111.nhs.uk or by calling 119.

If your child is absent from school or forgets to bring in their test, they can bring it in on the next collection day – their teacher will tell them where to take their sample pot. The school will have some spare packs to hand out to anyone who loses their sample pots but we would encourage you to keep them somewhere safe as spares are limited.

Important information about your data

To enable the partnership running the COVID-19 Testing Programme between University Hospital Southampton, local government, and the University of Southampton to deploy the test kits to the school and to manage the collection of samples from schools, our school will be sharing contact details of pupils and their parents or guardians, as well as staff, with University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust.

As you know from our school's Privacy Notice
https://www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk/legal/privacy/ we are very serious about protecting the personal data of all members of our school community, and we will maintain this approach in relation to this data sharing. We will only be sharing limited contact details. The NHS will share confidentially with nominated senior leadership within the School positive test results to enable immediate initiation of contact tracing to minimise the risk of the virus spreading.

The Privacy Notice for this COVID-19 Testing Programme has been included with this letter. Please do take the time to read this. If you have any questions or would like to exercise your right to object to this data sharing, please call the contact centre on the number below.

You should find answers to any questions on the testing programme on www.hiowsalivatest.nhs.uk. Alternatively, you can call the contact centre on **0808 196 2282** (lines are open Monday to Sunday 8.30am to 5.00pm).

While this testing is not compulsory, I would urge all of you to take part. Knowing who has COVID-19 is vital to stopping its spread, and regular testing will help us keep our community safe and keep our school/college open.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R Grey

Principal