



Acting Head of School: Mr P White
Acting Executive Headteacher: Mr P Weir
CEO: Mrs B Mabey

Our Ref: HCO/scl

Date: 23rd June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Saltley Academy continues to work closely with Public Health England and Birmingham City Council to follow national guidance and promote a COVID-secure environment within their school. However, despite this effort, there have been several cases of the COVID-19 variant of concern known as Delta VOC-21APR-02 associated with the Academy.

We must all take individual responsibility to do everything we can to enjoy the extra freedoms we have, while remaining cautious and following the '*Hands, Face, Space and Fresh Air*' guidance when mixing with loved ones and socialising.

This is most important as the city of Birmingham is now under government enhanced support due to increasing numbers of people getting infected with the Delta variant which is more infectious. It is important for all staff, pupils and families to continue to follow all coronavirus safety measures and guidance to minimise the risk of spreading infections across the staff and pupils in the school. The safety measures include testing, isolation, vaccination, good hand hygiene, wearing face coverings, social distancing, good ventilation for all person regardless of whether they have had their coronavirus vaccines.

Testing

We have been advised by Public Health England to continue with our on-site testing whilst Birmingham remains an area under enhanced support. As you may be aware, we had a number of cases last week where a Positive Lateral Flow result was later negated by a negative PCR result. We investigated this matter fully, and as a result have discarded the current batch of LFD devices and are now using a new brand of lateral flow test. It is still possible, however, that on occasion these tests can produce inaccurate results, which is why positive results always need to be confirmed by PCR test. Likewise, any pupil with symptoms associated with COVID-19 will be required to take a PCR test, even if they have recently had a negative lateral flow result.

Under the current government guidelines, it is our responsibility as a school to isolate any contacts of a positive case (be that lateral flow or PCR) immediately, and this is when bubble closures happen. In order to try and minimise inconvenience to parents, we will now offer a supervised PCR test on site to any pupil that tests positive on a lateral flow device in school. This will avoid parents having to take their child to a test centre and will significantly reduce the waiting time for results, which will also allow us to minimise the time spent out of school for the pupil and their bubble should the PCR result be negative. All lessons and resources will be on Microsoft Teams in the case of bubble closures, and we have a laptop loan scheme in operation should your child not have access to a device.

We are aware that some parents are sending children to school without carrying out their twice weekly Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. Please remember that all secondary school aged children, staff and their households should be testing twice a week using the rapid Lateral Flow home testing kits. Even if you have had both doses of the vaccine or have mild symptoms, it is important to keep testing to help identify anyone who is infected with coronavirus as the vaccines reduce the risks of becoming seriously ill or dying from the virus.

Ordering a test is simple. Please follow the 3 options below:

- [Individuals can order 1 pack of Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests \(contains 7 kits\) per household per day](#) or by calling 119 (open 7am-11pm). Delivery is within two days.
- [Find a pharmacy where you can collect Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests](#)
- [Find a local site where you can collect Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests](#)

The school will also continue to provide home testing kits to pupils on a regular basis.

Isolation

There are some children who continue to come to schools when they should have been isolating. Sometimes, we know that people are unaware of the reasons to isolate which are due to displaying COVID-19 symptoms or if you are a contact (e.g. part of a household or school bubble) of someone with symptoms or confirmed coronavirus infection. It is also important that if you test positive for COVID-19 after taking an LFD test, you self-isolate immediately and request a PCR test, which gives a more accurate result to confirm if someone has COVID-19. There is an isolation support pack to help households access the correct information to enable them to choose rightly and remain at home to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Please use the isolation pack here:

- https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/4207/self_isolation_support_pack

Vaccination

It is also important that people take up the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you are invited to do so.

Please use our local vaccine toolkit to inform yourselves about the COVID-19 vaccines facts and also use trusted NHS websites here:

- <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine-toolkit-download>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination>.

Parents and guardians should continue to remind their children to follow the guidance provided in school even when they are outside school, to help everyone remain safe and enjoy the end of school term.

Your school can offer ongoing support to any pupils and staff and local public health and education partners will continue to liaise with the school and provide advice when needed.

Thank you for your continued support and co-operation throughout this difficult period.

Yours faithfully

H Cooper

Miss H Cooper
Assistant Headteacher