



Archdiocese of Birmingham
St. Gerard's Catholic Primary School and Nursery
Headteacher: Mr A Crehan



Yatesbury Avenue, Castle Vale, Birmingham, B35 6LB

28th January 2021

Dear Parents

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing for Staff

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 for **members of staff only**.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, testing will allow us to take further measures to help your children and other staff members to work in as safe an environment 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 our staff, we will help to reduce the spread in schools.

Staff attending school or nursery will be conducting these tests at home twice a week. **Should a staff member's result indicate that they are positive, we will need to close their bubble down.** Staff are conducting these tests in the evenings so that parents will be informed on **the night before** if it affects your child attending school the following day.

Bubble Closures

During this lockdown, we will inevitably have bubble closures as Covid cases are so high at the moment, and we should be prepared to do what is expected of us by the Government.

The Government guidance states that if you have been a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you **must stay at home and not leave the house for 10 days** and therefore **we would not expect to see any isolating children accompanying parents and younger siblings on the 'school run'**. I understand that this may mean you cannot leave the house either, but I'm afraid that is part of our legal duty.

It is very important that you follow the advice even if your child feels well, as symptoms can take up to 10 days to appear from the last contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19. Self-isolating in this way will help protect your family, friends, the wider community and the NHS.

Anyone who is notified that they are a contact of someone who has tested positive and is advised to self-isolate **has a legal duty to self-isolate**. Failure to comply may result in a fine, starting from £1,000. **Please note that notification from school is the same as notification through NHS Track and Trace.**

As inconvenient and frustrating as isolation is, it is an effective way of reducing the spread of the virus. The more we abide by these rules, the better chance we have of getting back to normal sooner.

We are in this together.

A Crehan
Headteacher