

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG
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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



December 6th, 2021

Dear Parent

Christmas holiday: lateral flow testing

We are looking forward to welcoming all pupils back to school, after the Christmas holidays, on Tuesday 4th January.

The Department for Education has written to schools: *"We would like all secondary schools to prepare to test their pupils once on-site on return in January. We understand that this is a significant additional ask but testing continues to play a vital role in keeping Covid-19 out of schools. Testing all pupils in school boosts testing participation and will help reduce transmission after a period of social mixing over the school holidays."* This recommendation would involve all pupils attending the school site, to self-administer a single lateral-flow test under staff supervision. Although well-intentioned, this would inevitably require a 'staggered start' for pupils returning to lessons.

Informed by discussions with local Public Health officials – balancing the risks of disruption due to individual infection and/or outbreaks *as against* the importance of limiting disruption to learning; and recognising the challenges of a widely-dispersed pupil population – **every pupil must complete the two lateral flow tests supervised at home: once, on Thursday 30th December, and then, a second time on Monday 3rd January.**

- In order to confirm compliance rates, we will provide a swift email survey for parents to complete at the time.
- Pupils have already had access to home-testing kits: please use any spares first.
- Home-testing kits will be distributed at school over the last two days of term.
- *If any pupil will need assistance in self-administering the test please email enquiries@shsb.org.uk to arrange a time to attend the school site. There is no requirement to attend the school site, if the test can be undertaken competently and under supervision at home.*

This programme of self-testing is for one simple purpose: to protect our school community from further transmission of Covid and, as a result, ensure uninterrupted educational provision from the start of term. **We need every family to support us: every pupil must undertake two tests before term resumes.**

Yours sincerely

Robin M. Bevan
Headteacher

