



Smithdon High School
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Dear Parents/Carers, Governors and members of our local community,

You may have seen in the press this week that the Government has announced it is launching rapid Covid-19 testing in schools and colleges from January.

This may involve initial testing of staff and students in January followed by regular weekly testing of staff only (at first) and also an immediate seven days of daily testing for identified close contacts of any positive case, rather than a 10-day isolation period (all on a consent-only basis) enabling students to attend school with as limited disruption to their normal education as possible. No testing is confirmed at this time whilst we await further information from the DfE and Public Health England and we will communicate further in the New Year when we have more detail.

However, the guidance requires us to set up a "small team to support the work" including "volunteers". As such, I am writing to you to invite you to become part of our team of volunteers at Smithdon, involved in the testing process. If you feel this is something you would be able to help us with, please complete this survey with your details – or forward on if you know someone who might be interested.
<https://forms.gle/WYbTdurqhaRvFAvU9> The survey will close on **Wednesday 30 December**.

Completing the survey is an expression of interest only, as we have no further information to share at this time. However, anyone who has completed the form will be contacted on Monday 4 January to discuss further and then arrange for the relevant training to take place, if you agree to volunteer at this stage. The usual volunteering checks for being in an educational environment will also need to be completed following this agreement to volunteer.

The benefits of this testing will not only support a more consistent continuation of our students' education by keeping staff and students in school as much as possible, avoiding unnecessary isolations, but also our community. In enabling early detection of potentially positive cases (especially given the growing number of people nationally who are testing positive but remain asymptomatic – showing no symptoms) it will also help to protect the local community.

Thank you in advance for considering supporting us in delivering this testing.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Gibbins
Head of School

