

11 December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) for COVID-19

We are writing to let you know that we are planning to offer Lateral Flow Testing for Covid-19 at the beginning of the new school term in January 2021. This is in advance of the national programme for mass testing, and we are planning to do this with a pilot group of some Cumbrian secondary schools.

The reason we want to offer this is that the Christmas period is likely to see more people coming into contact with each other, potentially transmitting Covid-19 without realising, and increasing the number of cases without any symptoms when children come back to school in January.

By testing children for the virus *before* they re-join their schools, we would be able to remove as many cases as possible from circulation, and avoid disruption to lessons later on in the term with further closures of school bubbles. Not to mention the health implications of greater transmission in schools, which could lead to a higher rate of infection in the community, and more people becoming seriously unwell.

We will write to you again early next week, to provide more details about how things will work at Furness Academy, but hope you welcome the latest position of our plan now. We wanted to advise you of this at the earliest opportunity, to maximise time to prepare.

In our communication next week, we will of course provide you with further information and consent letters, without which, we will not be able to proceed with testing.

Any offer to complete a test is absolutely voluntary, and no student would be asked to progress a test without consent.

Mr Laheney will write to parents and carers with supplementary details about the start of next term following the release of this letter.

Thank you very much in advance for your support in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Barton

Assistant Director, Education & Skills



Colin Cox

Director of Public Health



Simon Laheney

Headteacher, Furness Academy

