

Dear Parent/Carer

We are working to keep Balshaw's as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without Coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have Coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

We will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 11th January 2021.

Please see the image on page 2 for more information.

If you are happy for your child to be tested, [please fill in this form and consent statement](https://forms.gle/BEivux78bopcaRqD7) (one per student): <https://forms.gle/BEivux78bopcaRqD7>

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

Testing will be offered free of charge.

Kind regards

Mr Steven Haycocks

HEADTEACHER  
BALSHAW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path. (Psalm 119, vs 105)

## HOW TO DO YOUR TEST

WHILE THIS IS A SELF-SWAB TEST, THERE WILL BE A TESTING HELPER WHO WILL OVERSEE THINGS AND PROVIDE HELP IF YOU NEED

**1** YOUR COVID-19 TEST WILL BE SCHEDULED. IF YOU ARE UNDER 16, YOUR PARENT / CARER WILL HAVE CONSENTED

**2** YOUR TEST WILL BE FAST AND WHILE IT MIGHT FEEL A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, IT WON'T HURT YOU

**3** BLOW YOUR NOSE IF NEEDED. WASH AND DRY/SANITISE YOUR HANDS. REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO TOUCH THE SOFT PART

**4** OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE AND USE A MIRROR TO LOOK AT THE BACK OF YOUR THROAT, THEN USE THE SWAB TO RUB FIRMLY 4 TIMES ON EACH SIDE

10 SECS

The infographic consists of four numbered steps. Step 1 shows a checkmark icon. Step 2 shows a speedometer icon with 'FAST' and 'MEDIUM' labels. Step 3 shows hands being washed. Step 4 shows a person using a swab in their mouth with a mirror.

**5** REMOVE THE SWAB CAREFULLY WITHOUT TOUCHING YOUR TEETH, TONGUE OR GUMS

**6** GENTLY PLACE IT ABOUT 2-2.5 CM INSIDE ONE OF YOUR NOSTRILS. ROLL THE SWAB 4-5 TIMES ALONG THE LINING OF THE NOSTRIL. THIS WILL TAKE 10-15 SECONDS

**7** AFTER THIS, YOU'RE DONE, GENTLY REMOVE THE SWAB BEING CAREFUL NOT TO LET ANYTHING TOUCH THE TIP

**8** YOUR SWAB CAN THEN BE PLACED IN A TUBE FOR TESTING, THIS TAKES ABOUT 30 MINUTES

**9** YOUR SCHOOL / COLLEGE WILL CONTACT YOU OR YOUR PARENT / CARER WITH THE RESULTS AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The infographic consists of five numbered steps. Step 5 shows a hand holding a swab. Step 6 shows a swab being inserted into a nostril. Step 7 shows a hand holding a swab. Step 8 shows a swab being placed into a test tube. Step 9 shows a smartphone displaying an envelope icon.