

05<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child's school is taking part in a study to monitor infection and transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a sample of primary and secondary schools.

### Why are we doing this study?

We want to find out how many school pupils and staff have COVID-19 infection, how many have already developed antibodies against the virus and how this changes over the course of the year. The information we collect will help inform policies to protect school pupils and staff.

The study is being conducted by Public Health England in partnership with the Office for National Statistics, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, working with the Department for Education and is funded by the Department for Health and Social Care. IQVIA, a healthcare company, are also supporting the study.

### What does the study involve?

If you would like your child to take part, we would like you to complete a consent form and a short questionnaire about each of your children invited and all other household members. Once this is completed, your child will be enrolled into the study. The study workers will visit your child's school twice before Christmas and then once every half term of the current school year to collect a nasal swab and an oral fluid (saliva) sample to test for the virus and antibodies against the virus.

The study is voluntary, you or your child does not have to take part and you can withdraw from any round of testing without giving a reason.

### How can my child take part?

**Complete the steps below, they work best on a computer or tablet, and we are working to improve how the surveys appear on a smartphone:**

1. Go to <https://www.oc-meridian.com/Desktop/Portal/signup?id=cisschools&referralcode=140412> to create an account. As a parent, please simply select 'NO' to the initial questions asking if you are a student or member of staff and then fill in the remaining fields, providing consent as required. You will then receive 2 emails; one to validate your email address and one confirming your registration.
2. Please validate your email address by clicking on the link in the sign-up validation email.
3. Login to the system by entering your email address and password. Click on 'Child Registration Page' and register your child/children, providing consent as required. Your school code is: **140412**
4. After registering your child/children, click on 'home' and complete the enrollment survey for each child.

**Please note that for nasal swab virus testing, our priority is to contact participants that test positive for the virus as soon as possible – this will most likely be by telephone.** We may not be able to send the results of negative swab tests for the first round of this study – if you don't hear anything in the days after the test, please assume you tested negative. There is no need to contact us to chase a result. We will aim to send results of antibody tests to all participants within two months.

**If you have any questions, please contact the IQVIA helpline on 0800 91 79679 or email [schoolinfectionsurvey@nhs.net](mailto:schoolinfectionsurvey@nhs.net)**

Thank you for contributing to this important study. Your help will inform policies to manage risks of transmission in schools and identify ways to protect children and staff.

Yours faithfully,



Shamez Ladhani  
Consultant Epidemiologist  
Public Health England



Iain Bell  
Population and Public Policy  
Office for National Statistics



James Hargreaves  
Professor of Epidemiology and Evaluation  
London Schools of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine