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One of the great delights of being a Member of Parliament is to see excellence being delivered by many organisations in the constituency. Last week I took the opportunity to visit the new rapid Covid 19 testing system for pupils and staff put in place by Ivybridge Community College.

This is designed to test all pupils and staff on a regular basis to enable schools to get up and running as soon as the wider incidence of Covid 19 in the community allows. We still do not know when that will be. It is an absolute priority to get children back to school and rightly so, because we all get only one shot at education and it is the gateway to our future lives. This cohort have been disrupted enough.

Ivybridge Community College (ICC) has modelled this rapid testing system in a most impressive way. The 10% of their pupils who are still attending school (children of key workers) and all of their staff have been able to both be guinea pigs and beneficiaries of this system. The project has been helped by advice from the First Regiment Royal Horse Artillery based near Salisbury, and it was a joy to discuss his role with Staff Sergeant Campbell last week. The school have also been helped by a specialist sports physiotherapist Gill Chapman who works with the English Cricket Board. Strong leadership, collaborating with those with specialist knowledge has produced an excellent outcome for our children. Congratulations to all involved. It shows what positive leadership can achieve.

This model can now be rolled out around the Multi Academy Trust that ICC is part of in good time for children to return when the government gives the go-ahead. I know that other schools are also putting in place similar systems. It will be a challenge to ensure supplies of the testing chemicals and Personal Protective Equipment to every school, but the goal of getting children back in the classroom is worth the massive effort.

I want to thank all teachers once more for their heroic efforts. They deserve our grateful thanks. Let's all work together to get our children back in the classroom as soon as possible.

[Ivybridge Community College](#)

