

Dear Parent and Carers,

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for Staff in Primary and First Schools

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 devices'. This letter is to help give you more information about the testing programme in our school.

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic. By testing we will help to reduce the spread in school through asymptomatic transmission.

Plan for testing

We will be offering all staff twice weekly testing at home each morning starting from the week commencing 25th January 2021.

What if my child's teacher or other staff member tests positive?

If a teacher or other staff member tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will inform the school immediately, arrange to take a PCR test and they will need to start 10 days of self-isolation as per government [Stay at Home](#) guidelines.

What if staff or pupils have been in close contact with the individual who tests positive?

All individuals will be notified by the school that they are a close contact. This is likely to be before school or as school starts and so may impact on your morning if you are required to collect your child from school. All contacts of a confirmed case must follow the national guidance, stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days. This is because it can take several days following contact with an infected person before an individual develops symptoms or the virus can be detected. Close contacts can return to school on day 11 if they are well and have no symptoms.

Other members of your household will be able to continue normal activities provided your child does not develop symptoms within the 10-day self-isolation period.

Please see the link to the National Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19

If your child develops any symptoms of COVID-19:

- They should remain at home for at least 10 full days from the date when their symptoms started;
- Arrange for a test via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing;
- Please inform the school if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 and/or tests positive for COVID-19;
- All other household members, even if well, must stay at home and not leave the house for 10 days.

The 10-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. Household members staying at home for 10 days will greatly reduce the amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

If your child has symptoms, try and keep them as far away from other members of your household as possible. It is especially important that they stay away from anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable with whom you share a household.

Symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough **and/or**
- high temperature **and/or**
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

Do

- **HANDS** wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- **FACE** cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- **FACE** wear a face covering when in indoor public spaces
- **SPACE** apply the 2m social distancing rule when outside your home

Further information

Find out more about how to protect your household against coronavirus:

<http://germdefence.org/>

Latest NHS information is available at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For COVID related support including during self-isolation, contact Here2Help on 01905 768053 or use the web link at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help

For health-related support visit Starting Well (Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health & Care NHS Trust): <https://www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk/covid19>

Yours sincerely

Bill Heptinstall