



24th January 2022

WARN AND INFORM LETTER FOR PARENTS/CARERS ABOUT COVID CASE(S) IN SCHOOL

Dear Parent/Carer,

Information and advice about COVID-19 cases in school

We continue to be advised that there are confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school community, almost every class has at least one confirmed positive case. We know that you may find this concerning, but we are continuing to monitor the situation and are working closely with Newcastle City Council's Public Health Team and the UK Health Security Agency. This letter is to inform you of the current situation and provide advice on how to support your child.

Parents/carers continue to be asked not to send any child with a confirmed case of COVID-19 into school until the end of their self-isolation period. Schools are no longer required to carry out routine contact tracing of anyone that has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This is now carried out by NHS Test and Trace. They will work with either the positive case or their parents or carers to identify close contacts.

Anyone between the ages of 5 and 18 years and 6 months who is **told by NHS Test and Trace** that they are close contact of a positive case are strongly advised, to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test **every day for 7 days** from their last contact with the person who tested positive. They should attend school as normal, unless they get a positive result or have symptoms, in which case they must self-isolate. If they have symptoms, they should get a PCR test as soon as possible and self-isolate.

For every LFD test your child takes, you should report the result at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

As well as doing daily LFDs close contacts should also take a precautionary approach by limiting close contact with people who are vulnerable and try to avoid crowded or enclosed spaces as much as possible out of school. They should also follow government guidance on wearing a face covering.

Children under 5 years are exempt from close contact self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts unless you wish to help them to do this.

Where to get Lateral Flow Device Tests

There are different ways to get LFDs for use at home.

- Go online to order for home delivery to <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>
- Pick one up from a local pharmacy or collection point – put in your postcode at <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/> to find your nearest one. Alternatively call into a local pharmacy and ask if they have any LFD home test kits.
- Go online to <https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits> and put in your details to get a 'collect code' to give to the pharmacist to receive a free home test kit. If you cannot go online, you can get a code by calling 119 (free from landlines and mobiles. Lines are open from 7am to 11pm.)
- Call 119 for free and request a LFD test kit.

Each test kit contains 7 tests. They are free of charge and can be re-ordered as often as you need them. Occasionally supplies of test kits run short. You are advised to keep checking locally or online to obtain supplies.

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

For most people, especially children, COVID-19 will be a mild illness.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

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

However, these symptoms do not always present themselves and COVID-19 may appear in other ways, including in some cases cold-like symptoms. If your child develops any of the symptoms of COVID-19, no matter how mild, they must **not** attend school. They **must** remain at home and get a PCR test as soon as possible. They should do this even if they have received one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

To book a PCR test, either call 119 or go to the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test

If the test is positive, they must self-isolate.

If the test result is negative your child can attend school as normal.

If the PCR test is positive, your child must self-isolate for up to 10 days from the date the symptoms first started. If your child does not have symptoms, but tests positive for COVID-19 using a Lateral Flow Device they must self-isolate, from the date the test was taken (report the result at [For every LFD test your child takes, you should report the result at https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result)).

NHS Test and Trace will confirm the dates of isolation with you. In this time your child **must not** go to school or to public areas: they must remain at home and must not mix with anyone outside of their household. They may be able to leave self-isolation early before the end of 10 full days if:

- They take two lateral flow device tests on consecutive days (12-24 hours apart) **no earlier than the 5th** after the day their symptoms started (or the date of their test if they did not have symptoms), and another LFD test on the following day.
- Both test results are **negative**
- They do not have a **high temperature**

They can leave isolation and return to school after their second consecutive negative test result. For example: If the first test is taken on Day 5 and another the following day (Day 6) and both are negative, and your child **does not** have a high temperature, they can end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school on Day 6. If, however the test on Day 5 is positive, but a negative the next day (Day 6) is given, they must take another the next day (Day 7). If this is negative, they can return to school after the second negative result.

They should only end their self-isolation after they have had 2 negative LFD tests taken on consecutive days from Day 5. They should stop testing after they have had 2 consecutive negative test results.

If your child is not released from self-isolation early, they should not take another LFD test after the 10th day of their isolation period and can stop self-isolating after this day. This is because they are unlikely to be infectious after the 10th day of their isolation period. Those who continue to feel unwell after the 10 days period should seek medical advice.

Your household must follow the 'Stay at Home' guidance at www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection

Your child should not take a PCR test if they have had a positive PCR test result in the last 90 days, unless they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. This is because it is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection.

Support to Self-Isolate

If your child is entitled to an income-based Free School Meal this will still be provided. If you need further support on this please contact Mrs McDine, School Business Manager.

If you need support with self-isolation Newcastle City Council's Welfare and Wellbeing Team may be able to help you. If you can, you should try to seek help from your friends, family and community first, or look online at www.newcastle.gov.uk for local support services. Where this is not possible, the Welfare and Wellbeing team can help.

Visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/welfare or call 0800 170 7001 (8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-3pm Saturday) to get the support you need.

You may also be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment. Apply online at <https://newcastle.gov.uk/TestandTraceSupportPayments>

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:

Remember; **'Hands, Face, Space, Let Fresh Air In, Test Regularly, Self-isolate when advised, Get Vaccinated'**:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.
- 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.
- Try to stay apart from anyone you don't live with as much as possible.
- Use a face covering when you are indoors in crowded places such as supermarkets and public transport
- If meeting others, try to do so outside as much as possible. If inside, open the window to let fresh air in
- Take part in regular Lateral Flow Device testing especially if you are meeting others you do not live with. This helps to identify those who do not have symptoms of the virus and helps prevent it spreading to others. You can get free LFD test kits from most pharmacies or by ringing 119 or online at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>. Twice weekly testing is recommended for all those aged 11 years or above. Primary aged

pupils should test daily if they have been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive.

- Take up the offer of the COVID-19 vaccine. It is safe and effective and gives you the best protection against the virus. There are locations across the city where you can be vaccinated; for details go to www.newcastle.gov.uk/covidvaccine

Further information

Further information is available at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Thank you for your support. Your efforts do help to reduce the further spread of COVID-19 to others in the community.

Yours sincerely,

A D Thorpe

Mrs A. D. Thorpe
Head Teacher