

14/01/2022

## **ADDITIONAL LATERAL FLOW DEVICE TESTING AS PART OF COVID-19 CLUSTER INVESTIGATION**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Public Health Agency has been notified of a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in St Patricks Primary School. We are working closely with the school principal and management team to review all the cases as part of our overall risk assessment in the school. All those who were high risk close contacts of the cases have already been identified, advised on self-isolation and testing.

Even though the school is taking actions to reduce transmission, we are investigating the cluster to reduce the risk of further spread. To help with this we would like to find out if other students who are not currently off school with COVID infection might also be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Even if your child has no new symptoms, we are asking pupils in P6 class at St Patricks Primary School to undertake a lateral flow COVID test (LFT) at home before coming back into school.**

**If the lateral flow test is positive your child should isolate immediately and is now to be treated as a case of Covid-19.** It is extremely important that you report your child's positive lateral flow test online. [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/report-a-covid-19-rapid-lateral-flow-test-result). This will trigger contact tracing processes to alert people your child has been in close contact with and to

provide them with advice regarding their potential to become infected and spread the virus. You should also inform the school.

Most people do not need to take a follow-up PCR test, but if your child is over 12 and has certain conditions e.g. Down's Syndrome, they may need a follow-up PCR test to see if they are eligible for new antibody or antiviral COVID-19 treatments. You can check here to see if this applies to your child [Treatments for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | nidirect](#) . If it does apply please do book a PCR test as soon as possible.

If the Lateral Flow test is negative, your child can return to school.

### **How to order a lateral flow test**

You can order a Lateral Flow test kit, which includes seven individual tests, online at [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](http://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests), or by phoning 119. You should receive your Lateral Flow home test kit within two days. You can also collect Lateral Flow test kits from local pharmacies.

### **The test**

Please follow the instructions in the kit. This is a self-test although younger children will need help with the test. You can find out more information on rapid tests online at

[Rapid Tests | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/information/rapid-tests)

[How to do a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow test at home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-do-a-coronavirus-covid-19-rapid-lateral-flow-test-at-home)

### **How to book a PCR test if your child develops symptoms**

If at any time your child develops new symptoms, they should isolate immediately and book a PCR even if the lateral flow test is negative.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell. [Symptoms - COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Northern Ireland \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net/coronavirus/covid-19/symptoms)

Please book a free PCR test, even if an earlier one was negative. Your child should stay at home and self-isolate until you receive the result. Please see [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): self-isolating and close contacts | nidirect](#) for guidance on whether other people in your household also need to self-isolate and take tests while you are waiting for your child's PCR result.

You can book a test online at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or by phoning 119.

You can choose your closest testing site or request a postal kit which will be sent to your home. Going for a COVID test is one of the reasons your child can leave home during the self-isolation period, however they should not use public transport. Please order a postal test if you do not have private transport to a test site.

### **Help stop COVID-19 spreading**

If you or your child are eligible, getting your free vaccination and taking part in regular lateral flow testing if that is offered to you will help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19. More information on protecting yourself and your family is available at: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): keeping your household safe from COVID-19 | nidirect](#)

I know that organising tests and staying at home waiting for results may be hard for you and your child but it is vital to help reduce the risk of transmission in the community.

Your support is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Stephen Bergin**  
**Director of Public Health (Interim)**