

Dear parents and carers

23/03/2021

As you may have seen, members of a household (family bubble) who have school-age children are now able to collect Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) for adults to test themselves at home on a twice-weekly basis.

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at nursery, school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are different ways for a household, childcare or support bubble to take an asymptomatic test, twice-weekly:

- an employer, if they offer testing to employees;
- Community Testing via asymptomatic testing site;
- by collecting a home test kit from a Collection Point (RTS / LTS / MTU / CT);
- by ordering a home test kit online www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Children of nursery and primary school age without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

Q and A on Lateral Flow Device testing

Where can I collect a home test kit in Portsmouth?

In Portsmouth, LFD tests for use at home can currently be collected (in packs of 7 test kits) between 1.30pm and 7.00pm from Eldon Car Park, Southsea, PO1 2DJ and between 1.30pm and 7.00pm Unit 9, North Harbour Road, Cosham, PO6 3TL,

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with two packs being given out per person. Both sites are giving out tests for collection and use at home seven days per week. No ID is needed, and there is no need to book an appointment.

You can also order tests online www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

Who should use the tests?

These community tests are provided for adult members of the household only. **It is really important to note that Public Health England advice is that primary age children (and younger children) should not be part of the regular asymptomatic testing programme.** Secondary age pupils will receive tests from their school.

LFD tests for use at home are intended for asymptomatic testing only. Anyone in the household, including children, experiencing possible symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss of sense of taste or smell), should book a PCR test via the [government website](https://www.gov.uk/government).

What to do if an LFD test is positive

Parents must inform the school where any member of the household tests positive using an LFD test, and the whole household should immediately begin a 10 day self-isolation period.

Positive results from LFD tests used at home should be followed up with a PCR test. Self-isolation begins with the positive LFD test - families should not wait for the PCR test to begin self-isolation. If the subsequent PCR test is negative, the self-isolation can end.

What happens if I have had Covid before, or have had a vaccination?

LFD tests should not be used within 90 days of a positive PCR test. If you get a new set of coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms within those 90 days, you will need to self-isolate again for 10 days and get a new test.

LFD tests can and should be used by anyone who has received either one or two doses of the vaccine. The vaccination will not affect either an LFD or PCR test result. It is still important to follow hands, face, space and other prevention advice following vaccination as it is still possible to get COVID-19 and pass it to others.

To keep up-to-date with information about testing in Portsmouth, search "testing" on www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Take care.

Rob Jones

Headteacher