

CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN SCHOOL SETTING – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF

Where a case of confirmed COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has been reported in a person with links to a school setting, all close contacts of the case who need to take specific actions with regard to testing and self-isolation will be identified, contacted and advised by the Public Health Agency (PHA) Contact Tracing Service.

If you are contacted by PHA Contact Tracing Service, please follow the guidance that they provide to you. Information on the latest self-isolation requirements can be found on NI Direct (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-selfisolating>).

If the school has been notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in your child's class, even if your child has no new symptoms, we are asking pupils to undertake **a lateral flow COVID test (LFT)** at home **before coming back into school**.

If the Lateral Flow test is negative, and your child has no symptoms, your child can return to 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. They do not need to have a PCR test.

It is extremely important that you report your child's positive lateral flow test online using the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

This will trigger contact tracing processes to alert those 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.**

With regards to the isolation period: If your child is negative on a Lateral Flow Test on **Day 5 and Day 6**, they can return to school earlier than the 10 days isolation period as stipulated in previous Alert Letters.

How to order a lateral flow test

You can order these tests online, ring 119, or collect from a local pharmacy. Details are available on the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/rapid-tests>

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of 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)

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 | nidirect](#) for guidance on whether other people in your household also need to self-isolate while you are waiting for your child's PCR result.

How to book a PCR test if your child develops symptoms

If the lateral flow test is negative but your child develops new symptoms, please book a PCR test online at 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.

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:

- **Please get vaccinated if you are eligible and haven't already done so**
- 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
- 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

Further information

For further information, please see the NI Direct website [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): self-isolating | nidirect](#) the Public Health Agency website <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus> or contact NHS 111. If your child feels unwell and you are worried about their symptoms or about anyone else in the home, please contact your GP.