

10th January 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

We're really grateful to parents and students in supporting a really smooth in-school testing process prior to the start of term last week. The vast majority of eligible students received an on-site test and, on their return, students have responded brilliantly to the updated requirement to wear face coverings at all times indoors, all of which is of huge reassurance as we do all we can do reduce transmission and maintain continuity of education for as many students as possible.

In my letter last week, I warned of unpredictability over the coming weeks; it was only a matter of days after writing to you before the DfE changed their guidance on PCR test requirements for people who receive a positive lateral flow test. The below provides an update on this latest guidance change and some other points of clarification.

- **Changed guidance on PCR test requirements for people who receive a positive lateral flow test (from 11th January 2022)**
- **Self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 – further clarification**
- **Twice Weekly Home LFD Testing**

Changed guidance on PCR test requirements for people who receive a positive lateral flow test (from 11th January 2022)

The UK Health Security Agency has confirmed that from Tuesday, 11 January, people who receive a positive lateral flow test result and are symptom-free will no longer be required to take a follow up confirmatory up PCR test to begin their isolation period.

Under the new guidance, people who test positive on lateral flows will still need to immediately isolate for at least seven days, and will need to register their positive lateral flow results, **but will no longer take a PCR test.**

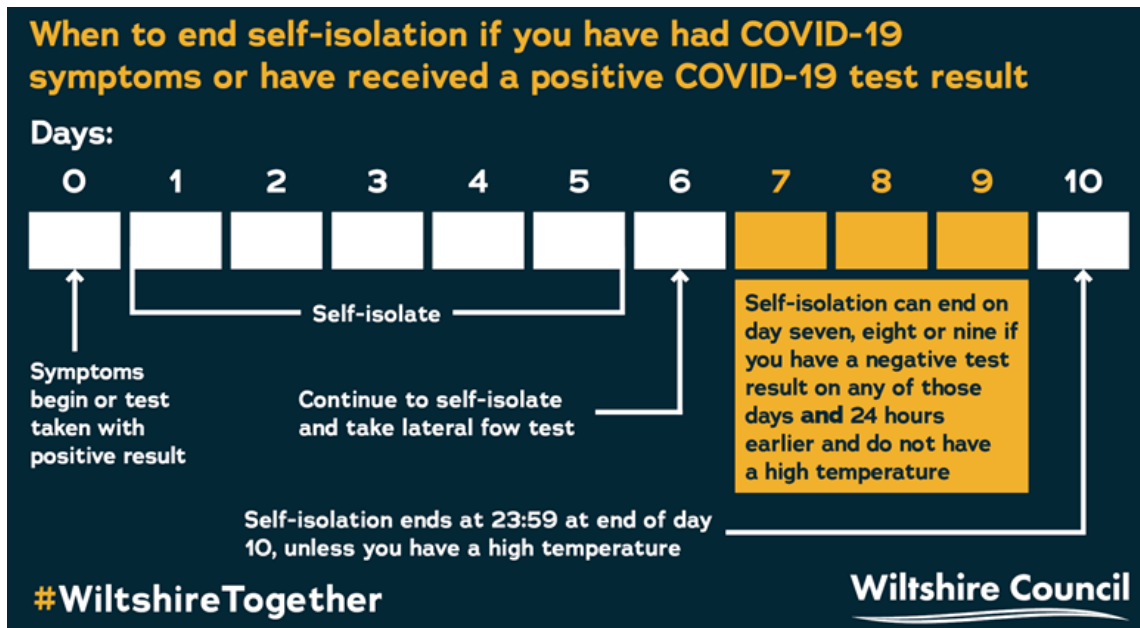
People experiencing the three official COVID symptoms - a high temperature, new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - will still need to get a PCR test.

At the moment, people without symptoms who test positive on a lateral flow test are asked to order a PCR test and to only begin their isolation period when they get the second result. This effectively requires them to isolate for longer than seven days, especially if there are delays in getting the PCR result. These new temporary changes are being brought in nationally while case rates are high.

Self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 – further clarification

The guidance from the government on 'release' from self-isolation is still causing some confusion so I hope you find the following clarification helpful. Our best interpretation of the guidance is as follows:

- The first day of symptoms (or of a positive test if asymptomatic) is 'Day 0'
- LFD testing should begin again on 'Day 6', and self-isolation ends immediately after 2 negative tests 24 hours apart (so a child could return to school on 'Day 7' with two negative tests on the mornings of Days 6 and 7)
- If still testing positive after the 10th day of isolation, individuals are still able to return to school (unless they remain unwell) irrespective of still testing positive, as they are very unlikely to still be infectious, provided they:
 - Have returned negative results on lateral flow tests taken on the mornings of days 6 and 7
 - No longer have a high temperature
 - Feel well enough to do so



Interestingly, some media reports this morning are suggesting the 7-day isolation period could be reduced further to 5 days in the future so watch this space!

Twice Weekly Home LFD Testing

It is vital that students continue to test twice-weekly. As with other organisations, we have limited supplies and, whilst we do have kits available to provide each student with their own supply, we are not in the position to be able to supply these for other family members and would ask you to try and source them directly wherever you can.

We will continue to keep you updated when anything else changes. Again, thank you for your cooperation and continued support of us and our brilliant young people.

Yours sincerely,

Rod Bell
Headteacher
The Corsham School