

5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear parents/guardians and staff,

Schools continue to work closely with Public Health England and Birmingham City Council to follow national guidance and promote a COVID-secure environment within their school. Your school is in an area of enhanced support at the moment, this means that there is lower uptake of testing, rising case rates and low levels of vaccination, which puts us all at risk of ongoing outbreaks.

We must all take individual responsibility to do everything we can to enjoy the extra freedoms we have, while remaining cautious and following the '*Hands, Face Space and Fresh Air*' guidance when mixing with loved ones and socialising.

This is most important as the city of Birmingham is now under government enhanced support due to increasing numbers of people getting infected with the Delta variant which is more infectious.

It is important for all staff, pupils and families to continue to follow all coronavirus safety measures and guidance to minimise the risk of spreading infections across the staff and pupils in the school. The safety measures include testing, isolation, vaccination, good hand hygiene, wearing face coverings, social distancing, good ventilation for all person regardless of whether they have had their coronavirus vaccines.

## Testing

We are aware that some parents are sending children to school without carrying out their twice weekly Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. Please remember that all secondary school aged children, staff and their households should be testing twice a week using the rapid Lateral Flow home testing kits. Even if you have had both doses of the vaccine or have mild symptoms, it is important to keep testing to help identify anyone who is infected with coronavirus as the vaccines reduce the risks of becoming seriously ill or dying from the virus.

### Ordering a test is simple. Please follow the 3 options below:

- [Individuals can order 1 pack of Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests \(contains 7 kits\) per household per day](#) or by calling 119 (open 7am-11pm). Delivery is within two days.
- [Find a pharmacy where you can collect Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests](#)
- [Find a local site where you can collect Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) tests](#)

Your school is also happy to help to support you with getting tested, please do speak to the staff.

## Isolation

There are some children who continue to come to schools when they should have been isolating. Sometimes, we know that people are unaware of the reasons to isolate which are due to displaying COVID-19 symptoms or if you are a contact (e.g. part of a household or school bubble) of someone with symptoms or confirmed coronavirus infection. It is also important that if you test positive for COVID-19 after taking an LFD test, you self-isolate immediately and request a PCR test, which gives a more accurate result to confirm if someone has COVID-19. There is an isolation support pack to help households access the correct information to enable them to choose rightly and remain at home to stop the spread of coronavirus.

### **Please use the isolation pack here:**

- [https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/4207/self\\_isolation\\_support\\_pack](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/4207/self_isolation_support_pack)

## Vaccination

It is also important that people take up the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you are invited to do so. **Please use our local vaccine toolkit to inform yourselves about the COVID-19 vaccines facts and also use trusted NHS websites here:**

- <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine-toolkit-download>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination>.

Parents and guardians should continue to remind their children to follow the guidance provided in school even when they are outside school, to help everyone remain safe and enjoy the end of school term.

Your school can offer ongoing support to any pupils and staff and local public health and education partners will continue to liaise with the school and provide advice when needed.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation throughout this difficult period.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Justin Varney**  
Director of Public Health