

Dr Tony Hill
Interim Director of Public Health

03302 226065

tony.hill@westsussex.gov.uk

www.westsussex.gov.uk

County Hall
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RQ

01243 777100



March 25th 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Subject: COVID-19 testing for families

This letter provides important information about COVID-19 testing for people in households with primary aged children or children under 5 who are going to nursery or to a childminder.

Thank you for continuing to following the latest restrictions to help Keep West Sussex Safe. Though cases in West Sussex are currently low, COVID-19 remains in our community and will continue to spread and could pick up again if we relax. So please continue to remember **Hands. Face. Space** and follow the latest government guidance, even if you have had your vaccination.

The government has now expanded the offer of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) COVID-19 home test kits. Parents, carers and adults in households where a child attends nursery, is cared for by a childminder or attends primary or secondary school are recommended to test twice weekly. LFD tests are for people who are symptom free. They can identify people who have COVID-19 but have no symptoms who could be passing it on to others without knowing.

Who are COVID-19 LFD home test kits for?

- Adults in households with nursery, primary and secondary school and college age children, and childcare and support bubbles.
- Children and young people who are in secondary school and college (tests are provided by the schools)
- They are NOT for children of primary age or younger

What's the purpose of the test?

Adults and secondary school pupils in the household who do not have any symptoms are asked to test twice a week in order to increase the chance of identifying someone who has COVID-19.

Which test should I use?

If you, your child or anyone in the household has symptoms that could be COVID-19, they should get a PCR test (this is one that is sent to a laboratory to be processed), to check if they have coronavirus.

Please do not send your child to nursery or school if they have symptoms, they and the whole household will need to isolate at home while they wait for a result – to book one of these tests go to: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> Do not use an LFD home test if you suspect you may have COVID-19. Use LFD home tests only for twice weekly routine symptom-free testing of adults and secondary-age pupils.

What's the difference between LFD home tests and PCR tests?

The PCR test is for people with symptoms of COVID-19 and are sent to a laboratory to be processed. The results take a day or two to come back. The LFD test is for people without symptoms of COVID-19. You can do the test at home and get the result in around 30 minutes. If the result is positive you or your child will need to isolate immediately and get a PCR test to confirm the result.

How can I get my COVID-19 LFD home test kits?

Eligible adults can get kits to begin twice-weekly asymptomatic testing:

- by finding their local collection site using this link and [collecting them from there](#), from 1.30pm-7.00pm (this is for collection only between these hours and tests won't be carried out at the site)
- through a [new online home ordering service](#) or by calling [119](#) (for people who cannot get to a collection site).

If you test positive you should not test again unless you develop new Covid symptoms for 90 days, following which you can recommence testing. This is because the swabs can pick up inactive material in the nose or throat and may give a positive result within the 90 days. [More information is available on our website.](#)

Dos and Don'ts of asymptomatic testing

DO take the LFD test twice a week and report your result whether it is positive or negative following the instructions in your test kit.

DO confirm a positive LFD test result by getting a PCR test

The household should start self-isolating immediately. Book a PCR test appointment or order a PCR test kit to be delivered to your home. Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus At: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. If the PCR test is negative, the household can stop self-isolating.

DON'T use the LFD test for your primary or pre-school aged children

If they have been instructed to self-isolate as a contact of a COVID-19 case – a negative result (either LFD or PCR) will not allow your child to return to school or nursery before the end of their 10 day self-isolation period.

DON'T use the LFD test if your child or anyone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms

If you, your child or anyone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms, they must book a PCR test. A negative LFD home test result only shows a reduced risk of having COVID-19. A positive LFD home test result requires a PCR test to confirm.

Thank you to you and your families for your support and understanding at what we know is still a challenging time.

Kind Regards,



Dr Tony Hill
Interim Director of Public Health