

Dear Parents/Carers,

Covid 19 testing for primary aged pupils who do not have symptoms (asymptomatic)

I am writing to you as your local Director of Public Health to thank all of you who followed my advice and took a PCR test before your child returned to school after the October half term holiday. This made a really important contribution helping keep schools safe and protecting the wider community.

I am now encouraging all pupils who are attending primary school after Christmas to get a test before they come back to school in January. These tests will help to reduce the risk of people without symptoms spreading the virus to others in the school and in their community.

I strongly encourage anyone they live with to get a test also to make sure that anyone who may be infectious does not come to school with the virus and potentially start an outbreak.

If possible, please take your child for a PCR test a few days before the start of term, in time to get the results back before your child goes back to school. The PCR test is the most sensitive and reliable test.

If you can't take a PCR test please take a lateral flow home test if your child is in Y1 to Y6.

Home tests are not for children in Nursery and Reception – they need to be taken to a test centre.

The useful questions attached tell you how to book a PCR test, where to collect lateral flow home tests, and what to do if your child is in Nursery or Reception.

As the weather is now colder, we are also seeing more colds, flu and sickness bugs. The best way we can stop the spread is by regularly washing our hands. Please encourage your family to continue to keep hands clean to avoid the spread of infection.

Thank you for your support during these difficult times. By working together we have supported schools to keep open and as many children attending as possible. Covid-19 is being spread rapidly by young people so your continued efforts will help us protect those who are vulnerable in Barking and Dagenham.

Yours faithfully,



Matthew Cole
Director of Public Health

1. How do I book a PCR test if I don't have symptoms?

Go to the government website <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> where you'll be asked some questions. Select the following options:

- NO to essential worker
- NO to having symptoms
- NO to being part of a trial or pilot
- YES - **My local council or health protection team has asked me (or someone I live with) to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms**

You can book your whole family by choosing 'add family members'.

I can't get to a testing centre, can we get tested at home?

Yes, you can ask to receive your test by post. When you are making your booking, answer 'Yes' to 'Is the person who needs a test part of a trial or government pilot project' and select the option that says 'The person is taking part in community testing'.

2. Can I take a Lateral Flow Test at Home?

A second option is to use a lateral flow test at home. You can pick these up for free from most pharmacies or from:

Barking Learning Centre Town Hall Square, Barking, IG11 7NB – 7 days a week 10.00am to 6.45pm
Dagenham Library, 1 Church Elm Lane, Dagenham, RM10 9QS – 7 days a week 10.00am to 6.45pm
Both sites are closed on 25th and 26th December and New Year's Day.

You can order test kits to be delivered to your home at this link <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Home tests are not for children in Nursery and Reception – they need to be taken to a test centre.

3. My child has tested positive recently, do they need to take another test?

If your child has tested positive with PCR in the last 90 days, they should not be tested using either PCR or rapid lateral flow tests (LFT) for 90 days, as the dead virus may still be in their system; unless they develop new symptoms during this time – in which case they should be retested immediately using PCR.

What if my family is already self-isolating?

If you've been asked to self-isolate by the NHS Test and Trace Programme or by our Public Health team you can still get tested by ordering a home testing kit. You still need to complete your period of self-isolation, even if you test negative as symptoms can take 10 days to show.

For the most up to date information please check the government's website. [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)