



Solihull
METROPOLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL

To:
Parent / Carer

CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SKILLS

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Your Ref.

Please ask for: Louise Rees/Ruth
Tennant

Our Ref. LR/RT/sm

Date: 20 May 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

Firstly I want to thank you for all your help in keeping children, young people and staff safe during the Covid-19 pandemic. Your efforts have been very much appreciated. However, we must emphasise that although the cases of Covid-19 have thankfully reduced, the pandemic is not over and we need your support and help to further ensure the safety of our communities in Solihull.

If your child or young person has any **symptoms of Covid-19** and you are asked to take them for a **PCR test** by their school/education setting, it is **extremely important that you comply with this request**. In some cases, if there is an outbreak in a school/setting, a test may be requested for one of the lesser known symptoms, rather than for the three main Covid-19 symptoms of a new, continuous cough, high temperature and loss/change of taste/smell. Unlike the rapid home tests, PCR tests will also detect new variants and it's critical that we identify these to stop any spread very rapidly.

There have been occasions recently when refusal to test children has led to precautionary isolations of pupils and staff from schools/settings. This has been extremely stressful and disruptive for the families and staff concerned. Whilst there is no alternative but to take this action at times to ensure everyone stays safe, families co-operating with requests to have PCR tests avoids unnecessary isolation for contacts of the symptomatic pupil. Equally, if you are instructed to **isolate**, you **must comply** with this request to ensure the safety of others. Your help with this is very much appreciated.

We fully understand that the pandemic has been long and challenging but we need to ensure that protective measures, such as having tests, isolating when someone in the household has Covid-19 symptoms or tests positive, wearing face coverings at the school gates/public places and good hand hygiene are hugely important to help us get back to normal.

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If you or someone in your family has **Covid-19 symptoms, please get a PCR test** by booking online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test If you test positive, good ventilation, avoiding sharing plates, cutlery, mugs or towels, careful cleaning and staying at least 2m apart from household members and, if possible, in a separate room can help stop other people in your family getting it. Help is available from Solihull Council if you do test positive so that you and any close contacts can self-isolate for the 10 days that is legally required to protect others.

If you don't have symptoms, you can get tested free at our testing centres or collect kits for home testing. The centres are open 7 days a week and tests can be booked online at www.solihull.gov.uk/COVID-19/covid-testing. If your child/teenager is at secondary school, please support them to test twice a week using the kits your school will have given them. Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) should only be used when a person has no symptoms and **a PCR test is required for people with symptoms.**

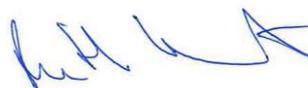
It is also very important that, when you or a relative are offered a Covid-19 vaccination, please do have one. **Anyone over 36 is now eligible for vaccination** and so should book in when invited to do so. More information is available at www.birminghamandsolihullcovidvaccine.nhs.uk/ If you have any concerns about having the vaccine, accurate information and advice is available at www.birminghamandsolihullcovidvaccine.nhs.uk/what-you-need-to-know/

Thank you for everything you and all our schools/settings are doing to help tackle Covid-19.

Yours sincerely



Louise Rees
Director of Children's Services



Ruth Tennant
Director of Public Health & Commissioning