



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

**County Hall
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**Kevin Gordon Corporate Director for
Children's Services**

Date: 26 April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

This letter provides important information about COVID testing.

Access to free, regular, symptom-free rapid coronavirus testing is a significant step forward to stop the spread of coronavirus, paving the way for businesses and society reopening. You can access free, rapid lateral flow tests (LFDs) for yourself and your family to use twice a week, in line with clinical guidance. Children of primary school age or younger within your household are not asked to test at this time. Further information about symptom-free testing in Oxfordshire can be found at [Symptom-free testing | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

One in 3 people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately. Since rapid testing was introduced, over 120,000 positive cases that would not have been found otherwise have already been identified by LFDs. By making rapid tests available to everyone, more cases will be detected, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives.

Alongside the rollout of the vaccine, regular testing is going to be an essential part of the easing of restrictions as it will help us quickly suppress the spread of variants. Through new testing technology, positive cases of variants of concern are being detected faster than ever before. More people getting a test will increase our ability to identify and control variants.

LFD tests are for people who are symptom free. They can identify people who have COVID but have no symptoms, and who could be passing it on to others without knowing.

Who are COVID LFD home test kits for?

- All Adults
- Children and young people who are in secondary school and college (tests provided by the schools). Primary school aged children or younger children are **NOT** currently part of the Government's LFD testing programme.

How can I get my COVID LFD home test kits?

There are a number of ways of getting kits, depending on your circumstances. They can be collected locally or ordered for home delivery. There are also testing sites for LFD testing. See link for details. [Regular rapid coronavirus \(COVID-19\) tests if you do not have symptoms - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

What's the purpose of the LFD test?

Adults and secondary school pupils who do not have any symptoms are asked to test twice a week to increase the chance of identifying someone who has Covid-19 and reduce possible transmission.

A negative LFD test is not a reliable way of ruling out COVID. You should therefore continue to take the additional measures, such as social distancing and using face masks.

If you or your child are identified as a contact of a case, you should not be accessing a test unless you are symptomatic. In these circumstances you should take a PCR test. Isolation as a contact of a case should only end after the 10-day period, regardless of whether you have accessed a test and the result.

If you have symptoms of COVID

If you, your child or anyone in the household has symptoms that could be COVID, no matter how mild, you need to get a PCR test.

Get a PCR test - www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test **Do not use an LFD home test.**

Parents and carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their education setting or by NHS Test and Trace are now able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment of £500, if they meet the eligibility criteria. This helps to ensure that parents receive the financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibilities.

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

The PCR test is for people with symptom of COVID. The results take a day or two to come back.

The LFD test is for people without symptoms of COVID. You can do the test at home and get the result immediately. If the result is positive you will need to get a PCR test to confirm the result.

Whilst the booklet accompanying some home test LFD kits do say that they are suitable for children under 12, using them for primary age children or younger is not currently Government policy.

Do's and Don'ts for Adults and Secondary school pupils - Summary

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

Book a PCR test appointment or order a PCR test kit to be delivered to your home.

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 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 symptoms. If you, your child or anyone in the household has COVID symptoms, they must book a PCR test.

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

Yours sincerely



Kevin Gordon
Corporate Director for Children's Services