

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Regular twice-weekly testing for Covid-19 is available free for everyone**

As we welcome pupils back to school after the Easter holidays, it is really important to continue to follow all the guidance to stop the spread of Covid-19. This includes:

- Socially distancing – please keep to the [current rules](#)
- Wearing face coverings where recommended
- Regular handwashing
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene – ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’
- Getting a [Covid-19 vaccination](#)
- **Testing twice weekly for Covid-19**

Around 1 in 3 people have coronavirus without any symptoms. So, getting tested regularly is one of the simplest and easiest ways we can keep ourselves and our loved ones safe.

#### **I've had my vaccination – do I still need to test?**

Even if you have already had your vaccination, everyone should still continue to test twice-weekly. This is because although the vaccine protects you, there is a chance you might still get or spread coronavirus, even if you don't feel ill yourself.

#### **I've already had Covid-19 – do I still need to test?**

If you have had a positive Covid-19 test result in the last 90 days you do not need to test twice weekly. Re-start testing when your 90 days have passed.

#### **What does the testing involve?**

For people without symptoms, you can use a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test. It is a simple process you can do yourself at home where you:

- swab the back of the throat and nose
- swirl the swab in a special solution for 15 seconds
- put 2 drops of the solution onto the test strip
- wait 20-30 minutes for the results
- report the results [online](#)

#### **Where can I get my test kits?**

From Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April everyone aged 11+ in England is now able to access **free**, regular, rapid Covid-19 testing at home or at a testing site. Children aged under 11 years (primary school and early years) do not need to get twice weekly testing.

Getting a rapid test is quick and convenient through any of the following routes:

- a [home ordering service](#), which allows people to order lateral flow tests online to be delivered to their home
- collection of packs of LFD kits at a local test site during specific test collection time windows. Click on this [map](#) to find your local collection point and opening times
- collection of packs of LFD kits from [participating pharmacies](#)
- [community testing](#) at number of sites throughout Havering
- workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- secondary school pupils are now provided with kits via their school to test themselves twice-weekly at home; however secondary schools and colleges are still able to test on-site where pupils or staff are unable to unwilling do it at home

### **My LFD test result was positive – what do I do?**

If you get a positive result on your LFD test, you and your household and close contacts must immediately [isolate](#). You should [book a follow-up PCR](#) test to confirm the LFD result.

If the confirmatory PCR is also positive, you and your household and close contacts should continue to isolate for the full 10 days from the date of your positive LFD test. If you are self-isolating, there is a range of help and support that may be available to you. Visit our [Coronavirus support pages](#) or call our resident helpline on 0800 368 5201. You may be eligible for a one-off £500 test and trace support payment or support through our emergency scheme if you meet the criteria listed. A full list of financial support is available on our [Covid-19 financial advice page](#).

If your confirmatory PCR test is negative you and your household and close contacts can be released from isolation and continue with your normal daily life.

### **I think I've got Covid symptoms – which test do I take?**

Anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – should [book a PCR test online](#) or by calling 119.

### **When should I test?**

Twice-weekly testing should take place 3 to 5 day apart. Many people are building testing into their Sunday night routine, getting ready for the new week, and again on Wednesday night.

Please help protect everyone in Havering by ordering or collecting your free test kits and testing twice a week. Thank you for your help and support.

Kind regards,



**Mark Ansell**

Director of Public Health

