



North Tyneside Council

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As the new term starts, with high rates of COVID-19 we would like to clarify some of the recent updates to national guidance to help reduce the spread of the Omicron variant.

### **1. PCR testing requirements**

Any pupil who has symptoms of COVID-19 must not attend school. They should book a PCR test immediately and self-isolate until the result is confirmed.

Secondary school pupils should continue to undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing with a lateral flow device (LFDs). LFDs should not be used for those who have symptoms.

From 11 January 2022 **anyone without symptoms testing positive with an LFD will no longer need to confirm this with a PCR test.** However the LFD result must be reported as instructed to [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and the person must self-isolate immediately.

### **2. Self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

Any pupil who has received a positive COVID-19 test result from either an LFD or PCR test must self-isolate at home for 10 days.

They may be able to leave the self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days by taking a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test from the sixth day of the isolation period, and a second LFD test taken at least 24 hours later. If both these test results are negative, and the child or young person does not have a high temperature, they can end their self-isolation after the second negative test result.

For example:

- Tested positive or symptoms started on 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- 21<sup>st</sup>: Take an LFD test day on 6 at 7.30am – negative.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Take an LFD test 24 hours later, day 7 at 7.30am – negative.
- The pupil can attend school at 9am on day 7.

This guidance also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. Any pupil who is unable to test using LFDs must isolate for the full 10 days.

### **3. Children and young people aged 5 to 18 years 6 months who are identified as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case**

All pupils aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are no longer legally required to self-isolate. They are strongly advised to take an LFD test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their education setting as normal unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms themselves. Children under 5 years are exempt from self-isolation if they are identified as a close contact and do not need to take part in daily testing.

We are aware that getting hold of LFDs is difficult currently, but the advice is to keep trying as LFD stocks are released through the day.

More detailed information is also available in the updated government guidance [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

We would again like to thank you for your continuing support, which really does help to minimise disruption to all our children and young people's education in North Tyneside.

Yours faithfully,



Wendy Burke  
Director of Public Health



Diane Buckle  
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