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17th January 2022

Dear Parent,

Covid-19 Update on Testing and Isolation times

I would like to update you on recent guidance from the Department of Education and the NHS.

Temporary suspension of confirmatory PCR tests in education and childcare settings

Confirmatory PCR testing following a positive result on a lateral flow device (LFD) will be temporarily suspended. This means that for all education and childcare settings, staff and students who have tested and reported a positive LFD result will no longer be advised to get a confirmatory PCR test.

Students should be strongly encouraged to test twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and to their setting. Anyone with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate and follow self-isolation guidance.

Information on the new arrangements can be found in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

Changes to the self-isolation period for those who test positive for COVID-19

From Monday 17th January, people who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period after 5 full days if they test negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature. For example, if they test negative on the morning of day 5 and the morning of day 6, they can return to their education or childcare setting immediately on day 6.

The first test must be taken no earlier than day 5 of the self-isolation period and the second must be taken the following day. All test results should be [reported to NHS Test and Trace](#).

If the result of either of their tests is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests or anyone who continues to have a temperature will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation. Further [information on self-isolation for those with COVID-19](#) is available.

Those who leave self-isolation on or after day 6 are strongly advised to wear face coverings and limit close contact with other people in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces, work from home if they can do so and minimise contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19.

The rules for contacts have not changed. Fully vaccinated individuals who are identified as contacts of someone with COVID-19 should take daily rapid lateral flow tests for 7 days but are not legally required to self-isolate. Unvaccinated contacts are legally required to self-isolate for the full 10-day period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H. Chatterjee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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