



29th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: COVID-19 Household Lateral Flow Testing to support Secondary Schools

Thank you for all that you are continuing to do to support schools in managing COVID-19. As winter approaches, I wanted to write to pass on my thanks and to ask for your continued help to reduce cases of COVID-19.

We all want as many of our children and young people as possible to experience having a 'normal' and positive school experience. Schools are working extremely hard and doing all they can to maintain face to face teaching and learning in a safe way.

Like the rest of the country Sheffield is now seeing higher case rates in school age pupils and this is to be expected. We want to ensure that we continue to manage transmission of the virus as much as possible and reduce the number of cases. This means that unfortunately some things are not completely back to 'normal' and I realise that many of you will be disappointed as we approach Christmas that schools may not always be able to put in place some of the things that you are familiar with happening around this time of year.

This letter is to ask for your continued support. It explains some of the measures that schools are having to put into place and asks for **your direct help** through doing the following:

1. **If someone in your household tests positive for COVID-19** please ensure that **ALL** household members have a PCR test (whether they have symptoms or not). You can access a PCR test via: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Young people living in the household who are of secondary school age should now also take daily LFDs until the PCR result is returned. This is a **new** measure that we are asking you to undertake to help us reduce transmission.

- If the LFD test is negative your child can continue to go into school.
- If the LFD is positive your child must stay at home and await the PCR result.
- If the PCR result comes back positive, they must of course isolate for 10 days and should not go into school.

You can access LFD tests from:

[Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

Pick up tests from a pharmacy

You can get up to 2 packs of 7 rapid tests from a local pharmacy.

If you give the pharmacy a 'collect code' when you pick up the tests, it helps the NHS match your details to the tests. [Get a collect code on GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/get-a-collect-code)

You can also collect tests from our stall at The Moor Market, 77 The Moor, S1 4PF - open 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m. Monday – Friday.

Search #CommunityCovidBus on Twitter to [see where the minibus will be next](#)

2. Please continue within your household to regularly use LFD tests twice-weekly at home.
3. If anyone in your household is symptomatic (has a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste) they should have a PCR test and if your child is unwell, **they should not go into school**. Please access a COVID-19 test via: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
4. Encourage the use of face coverings in communal areas of school or in enclosed indoor spaces including on public transport (unless exempt).
5. Everyone in your household should frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitizer.
6. Schools may have to reduce mixing between year groups and classes if there are increasing cases of COVID-19 in the setting.
7. We are requesting that schools ensure that classroom windows are open to facilitate good ventilation. Some settings will be using CO2 monitors to monitor air quality.
8. I have asked settings to continue to reduce the numbers of events and meetings involving large numbers of pupils, parents/carers and staff. This means that parents evenings may run virtually and as Christmas approaches schools will be carefully considering if events can go ahead. I understand that this will be disappointing for some, however it is important to help reduce transmission of COVID-19 by some events not going ahead.
9. Schools will also carefully consider whether educational trips and residential visits should go ahead. This is important because being on transport for long periods, and/or sharing overnight accommodation increases the chance of transmitting COVID-19.
10. There are considerable benefits of the vaccination programme for children and young people aged 12 – 15 years. Vaccinations are being offered to pupils at school and you should receive information from your school about the vaccination programme shortly if you haven't already done so.
11. If your child missed their vaccination at school you can also book a vaccination appointment for them at Sheffield NHS Vaccination Centre, Longley Lane by calling **119** or by visiting: www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination. Please note if your child has tested positive for COVID-19 they need to wait 4 weeks before they can have a COVID-19 vaccine.
12. Getting vaccinated is the most important thing you and your family can do to help us stop the virus. If you haven't yet had your COVID -19 vaccination, please have it as soon as possible. It is also extremely important that anyone eligible for a booster vaccination gets this as soon as possible. You can book an appointment or find walk-in clinics near you by calling **119** or by visiting: www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination

13. The flu vaccination is important because more people are likely to get flu this winter as fewer people will have built up natural immunity during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you get flu and COVID at the same time, research shows you are more likely to be seriously ill. Getting vaccinated against flu and COVID will provide protection for you and those around you for both serious illnesses. If you've had COVID-19, it's safe to have the flu vaccine. It will still be effective at helping prevent flu. Please take up the flu vaccination. Further information via: [Flu vaccine - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

The next few weeks as we approach Christmas, and the coming winter period will to be difficult for us all. The steps outlined above will help considerably and I hope you understand their importance. Thank you for your patience and support. COVID-19 continues to influence the things we do and how we live our lives. By following the above 13 points this will help the children and young people living in the city to continue to have education in school and for us all to have as safe an autumn and winter as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AGFell', written in a cursive style.

Greg Fell
Director of Public Health, Sheffield