

Special School Head Teacher
Letter sent via email

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Dear Parent/Carer,

Home testing kits for secondary age pupils

I would like to pass on a message of thanks to parents/carers for their ongoing support during the current national lockdown. Many of you have been juggling the competing demands of work and home life alongside the need to support children with home schooling. Your hard work and that of our excellent school staff has ensured that children and young people have been able to continue learning during these extremely difficult times. The result of all this hard work is that rates of COVID-19 are continuing to decline which is great news.

To ensure that we do not need to close schools to face-to-face teaching again, we will still need your support over the next few months. We are asking all parents/carers to support us to keep schools open by helping all secondary school aged children to complete a home testing kit for COVID-19. The test should be completed twice a week 3-5 days apart, ideally in the morning prior to leaving home for school. We hope that by introducing testing for staff and pupils without symptoms, alongside all the other additional measures in schools we will be able to keep rates of COVID-19 low. Testing ensures that we find cases and their contacts early so they can isolate for the required 10 days to stop the virus spreading.

We would like parents/carers of secondary school age pupils (11-17) to support their children by ensuring the testing process is completed correctly and results are accurately reported into the national results system. You will be supported to do this with written guidance and a YouTube video. From this information you will see that it is extremely important that pupils clean the area before they swab, wash their hands between stages, swab the correct location and process the swab correctly before then waiting the correct amount of time for the result to develop.



By supporting your children to complete the testing twice a week and report the results you will be playing a significant role in helping schools remain open to face-to-face teaching.

It is important though that you and your children continue to follow national guidance even if you do get a negative result. You should still:

- Maintain two metre social distancing from anyone outside of your household where possible
- Wear a face covering when entering public indoor buildings and travelling on public transport
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water or hand sanitiser
- Self-isolate with your household and get a PCR test if you develop symptoms of COVID-19 – even if your home test was negative
- Self-isolate for 10 days if you are a contact of a confirmed case

We do recognise that for some pupils attending special schools, testing, or testing at home will not be possible or appropriate. In this situation we would not expect your child to take part in home testing and would advise that you continue to follow the support from your school for testing and the relevant guidance detailed in the points above.

For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 please visit <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/>

Yours sincerely



Ian Ashworth
Director of Public Health