

16 June 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

Coronavirus infection rates in Surrey have risen significantly in recent weeks and the central government announcement on 14 June advised that there will be a four-week pause at Step 3 to further control the spread of the virus. Step 3 restrictions remain in place, and it is expected that England will move to Step 4 on 19 July, though the data will be reviewed after two weeks in case the risks have reduced.

The health risks of coronavirus to the vast majority of children and young people remain low, but we know [rates are currently much higher in children between 11-16](#) than at earlier phases in the pandemic.

We fully appreciate the perseverance and commitment you have already shown over the last year but, as we know rates are increasing among children and those that haven't been vaccinated, we must reiterate the need to encourage your children to follow the guidelines.

Attached to this note is some helpful information to share with your children and below is an outline of the current guidelines in place:

Symptom free testing

All adults and secondary and college age students are encouraged to take a symptom-free rapid lateral flow test twice a week, even if you have been vaccinated. You can collect a home testing kit from a designated site or order online. [Find out more about symptom-free LFD testing here.](#)

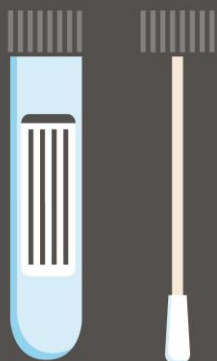
Pupils with a positive rapid lateral flow test result must self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result. [Find out how to book a PCR test here.](#)

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil and contacts can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Testing if you have symptoms

Anyone showing symptoms should immediately isolate and get a [PCR test](#), and everyone in the household should continue to isolate until the PCR test result is received. If positive, they will be advised further by NHS Test and Trace.

Covid-19 TESTING



'PCR' test

- If you have Covid-19 symptoms
- To confirm a positive lateral flow test



'rapid lateral flow' test

- If you do not have symptoms
- As part of routine testing twice a week

Staying Safe Outside Class

Your child must follow the government guidance in force when outside of school or college. The changes around the gradual easing of lockdown apply equally to young people, so please encourage your children to follow the guidelines: Hands – Face – Space – Fresh Air.

Coronavirus restrictions remain in place across the country, including for people who have been vaccinated:

- You can meet indoors in a group of up to 6 people or a group of any size from 2 households
- You can meet outside in a group of up to 30 people
- Work from home if you can and travel safely
- If you have symptoms get a test and stay at home

There are three things that we can all do, to keep COVID at bay and see the ending of all restrictions safely:

- 1) Test regularly
- 2) If you are an adult, take the Vaccine
- 3) Hands – Face – Space – Fresh Air

If you or your child feel anxious about coronavirus, that can be expected but, it is important to take action early. There are lots of tips on ways to cope along with sources of help available at [Healthy Surrey](#). Children and young people in Surrey can also chat confidentially and anonymously to other young people and mental wellbeing professionals online at [Kooth](#).

However challenging these times may be, we will continue to support you and make sure that your child can progress towards a successful and enjoyable future. We are so grateful for your support during this challenging time, it has been key in our efforts to protect and support your children.

It is important we take a precautionary approach and we ask that this support continues for a while longer, as schools and communities manage the weeks ahead.



Rachael Wardell
Executive Director,
Children, Families & Lifelong Learning
Surrey County Council



Ruth Hutchinson
Director of Public Health
Surrey County Council