

Local Authority Guidance to Parents on Testing

This message is directly from the Local Authority:

COVID-19 Testing update and messaging request

As you may be aware the Department for Education have announced a small provision of home testing kits for schools and Further Education providers. We are aware that the number of these kits provided will be very limited for a number of schools and colleges at just 10 testing kits per establishment. We are concerned that with the announcement that schools are receiving kits, that there may be some unrealistic expectation on schools to provide the kits for any symptomatic case that occurs with a child or young person in school. In addition, from some parental feedback, there also remains some confusion on what will happen if a school has a suspected or confirmed case, particularly in relation to testing. We are therefore encouraging all schools to put some clear messages across in communications and on websites. We will reinforce these messages through our own communications channels. The messages that we feel are important to share are:

1. The following are now recognised symptoms of COVID-19:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>
 - a high temperature
 - a new, continuous cough
 - a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste
2. If your child has these recognised symptoms, you must inform the school and then get tested. Please book a free coronavirus (COVID-19) test through the [online booking portal](#). This will then give you a range of testing options available in your local area. These are:
 - test centre – booking a test at a drive-in test centre is likely to be the fastest way to get a test and the nearest ones in South Gloucestershire are: Bristol (Bristol Airport) or Gloucester (Hempstead Meadow) [online booking portal](#)
 - home test kit – parents or carers can order a home test kit for their child or young person [online booking portal](#)
3. All schools, including our own have been given a very limited stock of home test kits. These will **only** be issued to parents and carers for a child or young person in exceptional circumstances. If you have access as a parent or carer to the internet at home, it would be expected that you would book a test through the online portal in the first instance please.
4. We ask that if your child is symptomatic and has a test, if this is negative, you must still notify the school immediately of the outcome. They will then notify Public Health South Gloucestershire to update their records in line with their standard operating procedures.
5. We ask that if your child is symptomatic and has a test, if this is positive, you must notify the school immediately of the outcome. They will then notify Public Health South Gloucestershire, the Education department of the Council and the regional PHE health protection team to advise anyone who has come into close contact with your child to self-isolate in line with national guidance; this will be managed sensitively.
6. If there were to be any confirmed case with a child or young person in our school, then our leaders will work with Public Health South Gloucestershire, the Education department of the Council and the regional PHE health protection team to advise anyone who has come into close contact with the confirmed case to self-isolate in line with national guidance.

We are keen to support all school leaders and want a really clear message that will hopefully reassure parents of processes and manage expectations.