

Email: educationpartnerships@somerset.gov.uk

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Dear colleagues,

Rapid testing to support the return to school

As you will be aware, NHS Test and Trace announced earlier this week, that all adults in households with school and college age children without symptoms can now access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. Test kits can either be collected or ordered online, as set out below.

Schools/educational settings should not give test kits to parents, carers or household members and should not order more test kits for this purpose. Secondary school and college students will continue to access testing through their school or college.

Please share the information below with your parent networks to help answer any questions they may have:

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are different ways for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- an employer if they offer testing to employees;
- Community Testing via asymptomatic testing site;

- by collecting a home test kit from a Collection Point (RTS / LTS / MTU / CT);
- by ordering a home test kit online.

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Children of primary school age (and below) without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

To check the location of Lateral Flow Test and collection sites near you, or to order home test kits if this is not possible, please visit: www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff

A list of Frequently Asked Questions is available on the Somerset County Council website here: www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-testing

Yours sincerely

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