Liverpool City Council

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are writing in light of changes made to national policies on self-isolation and to provide information on how COVID-19 will be managed in the school this term.

CHANGES TO NATIONAL SELF-ISOLATION GUIDANCE

From 16 August, the Government has said that people aged under 18 years and 6 months or who are fully vaccinated will no longer be legally required to isolate if they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19. Instead, such people will be advised (but not legally required) to get a PCR test unless they have had a positive PCR test in the previous 90 days.

Regardless of age or vaccination status, anyone who develops any of the three main COVID-19 symptoms (see below) must get a PCR test as soon as possible and isolate until the result is available. People who get a positive PCR test must continue to isolate as usual.

Covid Vaccination is currently available to people aged 16 and above, and in certain other circumstances, based on JCVI guidance. This may change, and if so we will be back in touch. Vaccine uptake in Liverpool is significantly lower than the national average. To date 88% of eligible UK residents have received their first vaccine, whilst in Liverpool this figure is only 69%. Nationally 77% have received their second dose compared to 57% in Liverpool. We strongly encourage all eligible Liverpool residents to come forward for their 1st and 2nd dose of the vaccine to prevent new restrictions being imposed on the city. To book your vaccine please use the following link: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/

Further details on the covid-19 vaccines can be found here: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/safety-and-side-effects/

What should I do if my child develops COVID-19 symptoms?

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- new continuous cough and/or
- fever (temperature of 37.8°C or higher)
- loss of or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child develops any of these symptoms, you must arrange for them to have a PCR test as soon as possible. A PCR test can be arranged via the NHS UK (www.nhs.uk) website or by contacting NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access.

Your child should self-isolate immediately and they should not attend school.

Please contact the school by phone to inform us your child has COVID-19 symptoms and you are awaiting a COVID-19 test.

What should I do if my child has COVID-19 confirmed by PCR test?

Anyone with COVID-19 confirmed by PCR test should self-isolate until the latest of:

- 10 days after the onset of their symptoms, or
- 10 days after their test day if they are asymptomatic

Self-isolation means your child should not go to school, attend any out of school activities or visit a friend's house. They should not visit any public places, use public transport or go out to exercise. You should not have vistors into the home except for those providing essential care.

Please contact the school by phone and inform them your child has COVID-19 confirmed by PCR test. It is really important you let us know if your child has confirmed COVID-19 so we can monitor the number of children with COVID-19 across the school.

What should I do if my child is a contact of someone with COVID-19 confirmed by PCR test?

If your child is aged under 18 years and 6 months and does not have any symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough, loss of or change in, normal sense of taste or smell) they do not have to self-isolate as a contact of COVID-19.

They are advised to have a PCR test unless they have had a positive PCR test in the last 90 days.

Children aged 5 and under are not advised to take a PCR test unless the confirmed case is someone in their own household.

What should I do if my child has a positive result on a lateral flow device test?

If your child has a positive result on a lateral flow device test, they should self-isolate immediately and you should arrange a PCR test as soon as possible.

Other members of the household do not need to self-isolate whilst you await the PCR test result if they do not have symptoms and are aged under 18 years and 6 months or are fully vaccinated.

Plans for COVID-19 testing in <u>Secondary Schools</u>

All secondary school pupils (year 7 and above) should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term. We are also advising that students take a lateral flow test before returning to school for onsite testing.

Secondary school pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed. By ensuing your child correctly carries out the lateral flow tests, it will be easier to spot asymptomatic spread amongst pupils. A positive Lateral Flow Test should always be followed up with a PCR test and the person testing should isolate until the results are back.

Nursery and primary school pupils are not asked to test at this time

Finally, we are asking residents, businesses, organisations and key stakeholders in the city to tell us what they think of Liverpool and how it could be improved. In particular we are seeking views on how we can make Liverpool fairer for all. If you would like to help shape Liverpool's future we would love to hear from you. Please take part in our short survey via this link: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ourcityourfutureyoursay/.

Yours Sincerely

Matt Ashton

Director of Public Health, Liverpool City Council

Steve Reddy

Director of Children's Services, Liverpool City Council