

My ref: Parent Letter – Spring 2022
Date: 4th January 2022
Contact: Please contact your school
for more information



To parents/carers of pupils in
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
Schools and Colleges

Public Health Directorate
Education Directorate

Dear Parent / Carer,

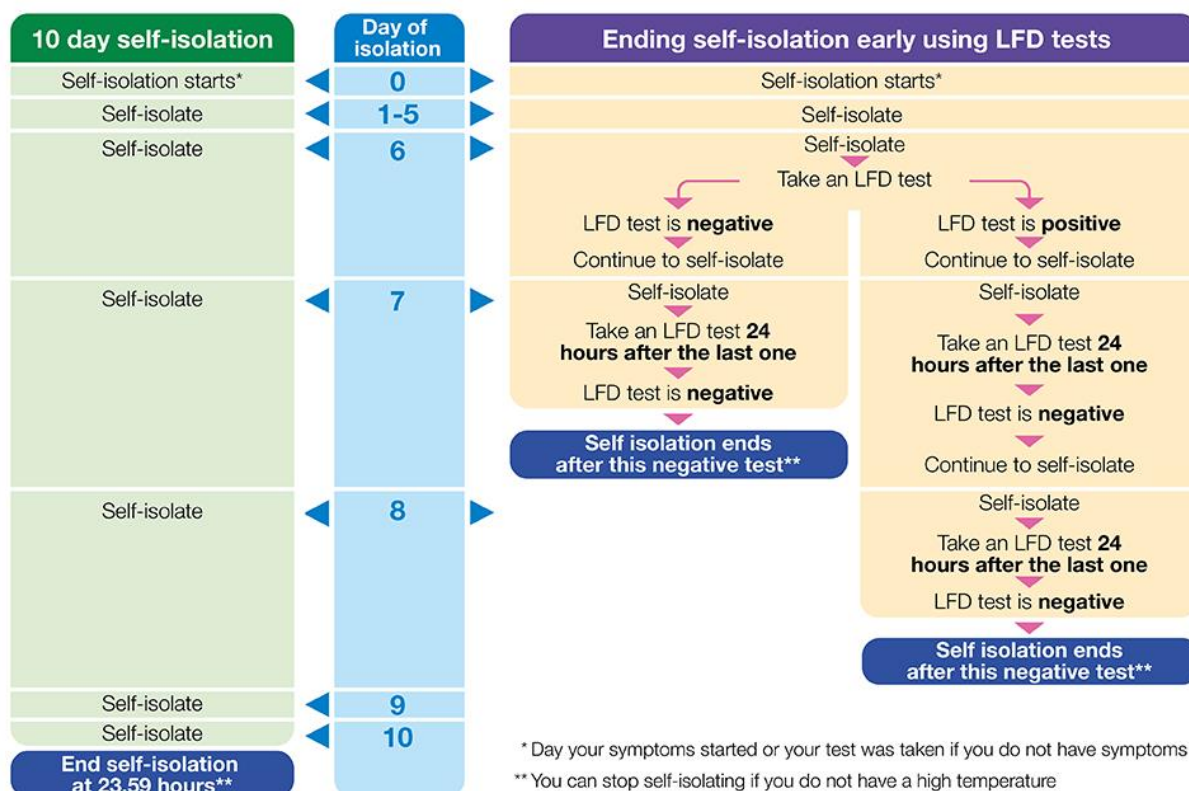
As you will be aware, Covid-19 is sadly still with us as we go into 2022. We are once again seeing a rapid increase in cases in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and across the country. With the start of the new term, we wanted to thank you for your support during this incredibly challenging time.

Our priority is to keep all students and staff safe and well, and ensure we are able to identify any new cases at an early stage, including when people have no symptoms. Early identification will help us to prevent onward transmission and minimise case rates in our education settings. If fewer children get Covid, fewer children will have to isolate, and they will not spread it to vulnerable adults who may get unwell and need hospitalisation. The Local Authority will continue to work closely with school leaders to minimise any disruption to learning. School leaders and Public Health teams will be monitoring the impact of cases on pupils, their families and the workforce. If your child's school needs to return to remote learning, the school will notify you at the earliest possible stage.

The Government have updated their guidance in recent weeks and alongside our guidance locally, the key messages for this term are below –

- The Government is temporarily recommending that face coverings are worn in classrooms and teaching spaces for students in year 7 or above (those aged 11 and over), in light of the highly transmissible Omicron variant surge. Teachers will not be required to wear face coverings in classrooms. This builds on the existing guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings and for pupils on school as well as public transport. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until the 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire.
- Local Authorities, Directors of Public Health and Health Protection teams may recommend measures described in the [contingency framework](#) in individual education and childcare settings – or a small cluster of settings – as part of their outbreak management responsibilities.
- Parents and other visitors are strongly advised to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before entering the premises of a childminder, early years setting, school, or college. All visitors to schools to wear face coverings in school buildings and whilst on the school site.
- If the number of positive cases substantially increases in your child's early years setting, school, college, or area, you might be advised to increase the use of lateral flow device (LFD) testing. This could also include advice on the reintroduction of onsite LFD testing for secondary age pupils.
- If you have a case of Covid-19 in your household, please refer to the diagram at the end of this letter for the current advice on how to minimise infection spreading in the household. Household and community transmission is likely to be the key factor in impacting upon schools.

- Vaccination is our best defence against Covid. The vaccination programme for 12 to 15-year-olds is well underway and parents can now book an appointment at a local vaccination site via the NHS booking service [Book or manage your coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) or by phoning 119. Around 60% of pupils in Cambridgeshire and 37% of pupils in Peterborough have had their first dose of the vaccine. They can have their second dose 12 weeks after the first dose; it is important to get both doses to prevent Covid-19 spreading in schools and for those who have not had their first dose to get it. Further information will be sent on the second dose for 12 to 15 year olds through schools. We are working with Health colleagues to provide more on-school site vaccination sessions. We would also encourage the 16 and 17 year olds who have not had both doses to access their vaccination. The NHS will directly contact parents of eligible children aged 5 to 11 years regarding their vaccination.
- Attendance remains mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age. This means it's your legal duty as a parent to send your child to school regularly if they are registered at one. If you have concerns about your child attending, you should discuss these with your school or college.
- If you child has had Covid, the isolation period can be reduced to 7 days providing two negative lateral flow tests on days 6 and 7 are returned and they do not have a temperature. The diagram below outlines this process, and I would ask you provide confirmation to your school about the outcome of the LFD tests if you choose to return early to school via this route.




- In the second half of the autumn term, we saw increased cases of Covid-19 which had a significant impact on the staffing capacity of several schools. If the number of cases continues to rise, we may see closure of classes and remote learning being necessary again. Schools have prepared for this, but I ask you to support schools at this difficult time. Schools will use a variety of approaches to deliver education, but live learning will not always be practical when teachers are unwell. Please support your child's education where you can, and we would strongly recommend you access the [National Oak Academy](https://www.nationaloakacademy.com) for free and useful teaching resources. If you need support accessing ICT, please contact your child's school.

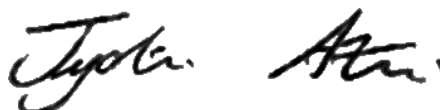
- To protect staff, we have recommended that they socially distance and staff meetings should remain virtual. Schools will also consider their own circumstances, but we recommend that until the end of January all non-essential events where parents visit schools are to be held virtually if possible.
- Secondary school pupils will be required to take one on-site test when they return to school this week. We continue to promote the importance of twice-weekly LFD testing for staff and students in secondary schools and staff in primary schools. There is no need for primary age pupils (those in year 6 and below) to test regularly, unless they have been identified as a contact for someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 and therefore take lateral flow tests every day for 7 days. Schools will notify you of this process should your child be identified as being a close contact.

As well as the measures above, it is important that we all continue to wear face coverings, wash our hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, meet people we don't usually meet outdoors or in well ventilated spaces, and keep our distance from people where possible. It is through working together that we will have a better chance of stopping Covid-19 spreading. We know that school leaders have really appreciated the support of parents and carers in managing the impact of the pandemic and as we move into this next period, we thank you for your continued efforts.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Lewis
Service Director – Education
Cambridgeshire County Council and
Peterborough City Council



Jyoti Atri
Director of Public Health
Cambridgeshire County Council and
Peterborough City Council

How to reduce the spread of infection with the people you live with if you have COVID-19.

If you have COVID-19, there is a high risk that others in your household will catch it from you. There are several things you can do to reduce the spread of infection in your household.

- 1** Limit close contact with others. Spend as little time as possible in communal areas.



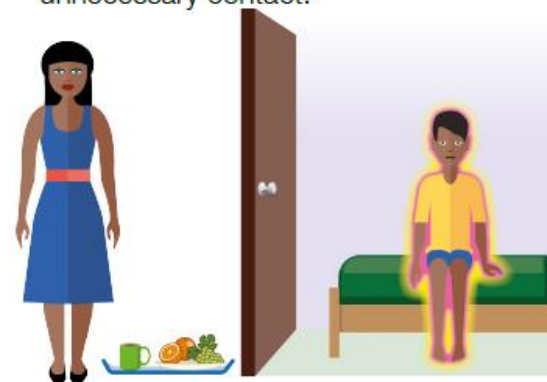
- 2** Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces and shared rooms like kitchens and bathrooms.



- 3** Wash your hands regularly using soap and water, particularly after coughing and sneezing.



- 4** Get help where possible from those you live with. Ask for help with cleaning and being brought food safely to avoid unnecessary contact.



- 5** Use a face covering if you need to spend time in shared spaces.



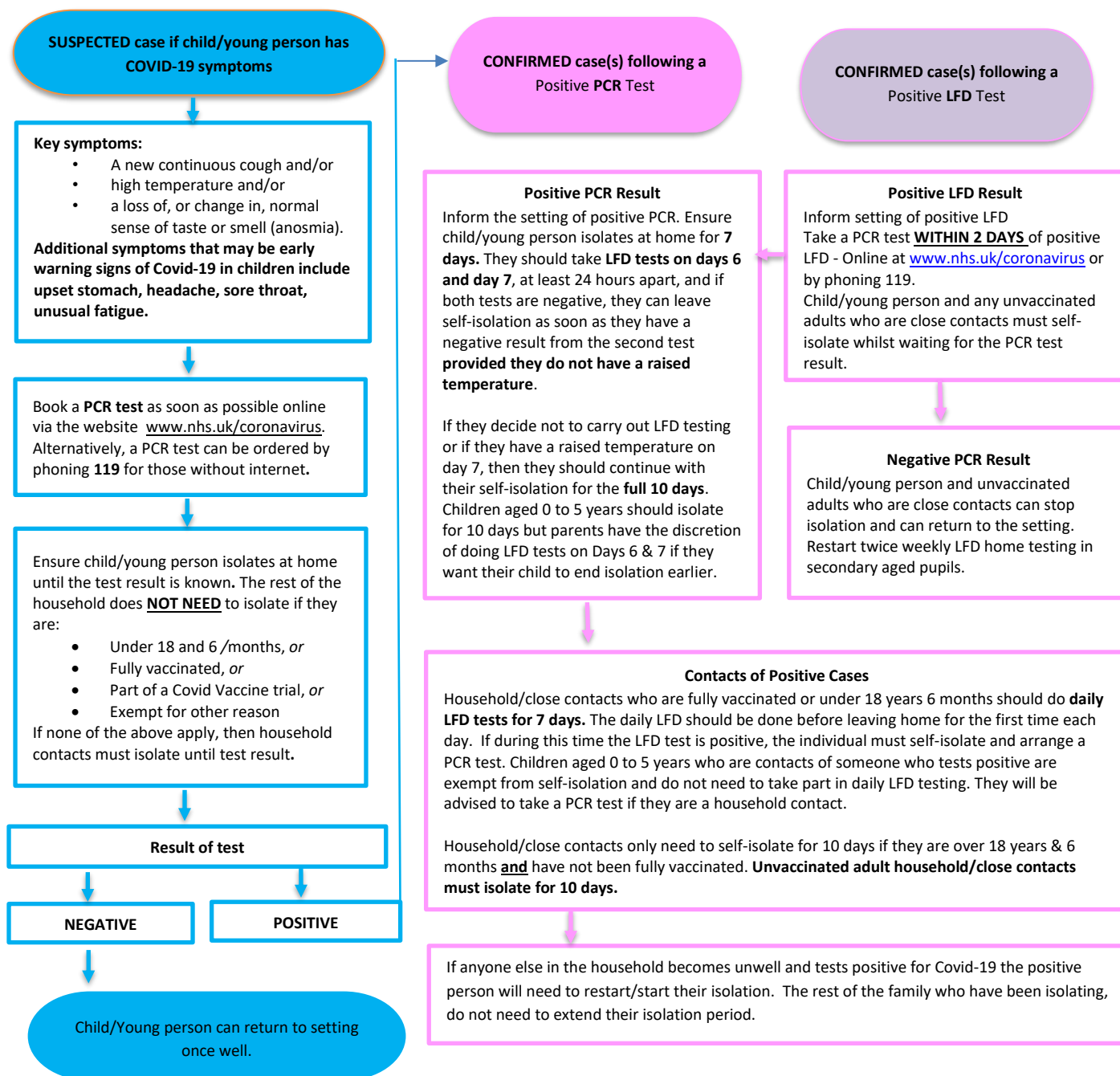
- 6** Keep rooms well ventilated.



- 7** Catch coughs and sneezes in disposable tissues and put them straight in the bin.



For any **SUSPECTED** or **CONFIRMED** case of COVID-19 in a child/young person please follow the flow chart below



- **With the emergence of the highly transmissible Omicron Variant, we continue to ask families/children to wash hands regularly, keep spaces well ventilated, wear face coverings (if aged 11 and over) in crowded public indoor areas, maintain distance, get vaccinated and take LFD tests prior to meeting people outside your household.**
- **Face coverings are to be worn by everyone over the age of 11yrs unless exempt on transport to and from educational settings.**
- LFD test = Lateral Flow Device tests are rapid tests that can be used at home and the result is available within 30 minutes.
- PCR test = polymerase chain reaction test that can be booked online and is sent to a lab for the result.
- If you have previously received a positive Covid-19 PCR test result within the last 90 days and you are identified as a contact of someone with Covid-19 you should not take a PCR test. You should only take a PCR test if you develop any NEW symptoms of Covid-19 or if you have a positive LFD test result, or if you are required to take a PCR test upon entry into the UK.
- LFD tests are used for identifying Covid-19 infection where there are no symptoms. If you have symptoms always book a PCR test.
- LFD tests are safe to use in pregnancy. They are not recommended for children under 5 years of age but can be used at parent/guardian discretion.
- If you have had a Covid-19 vaccination you should still take part in the LFD testing as you may still transmit the virus.
- If you have had a recent nosebleed, or have a nose piercing, use the other nostril to swab for the LFD test. Always follow the instructions on the pack as there are different types of LFD tests.