



Appledore Gardens
Lindfield
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 2AQ

tel: 01444 414001
email office@oathall.org
website www.oathall.org

Headteacher: Mr E Rodriguez MA BSc (Hons)

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Dear Parent

This email is to keep you updated on changes to the self-isolation period for people who test positive and to remind you of the continued importance of twice weekly home testing using lateral flow devices.

Changes to the self-isolation period for those who test positive for COVID-19

From Monday 17 January, students who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period after 5 full days if they test negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature. For example, if they test negative on the morning of day 5 and the morning of day 6, they can return to school immediately on day 6.

The first test must be taken no earlier than day 5 of the self-isolation period, and the second must be taken the following day. All test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace. Contact tracing is triggered once a positive LFD test is reported.

If the result of either of their tests is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests or anyone who continues to have a temperature will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

Home testing

Students are strongly encouraged to test twice weekly at home and report the results to the NHS. Self testing kits are being distributed to students via tutors this week. We have limited supplies of kits and they are intended for a student's personal use only. Please bear this in mind. Test kits are available from local chemists and via the NHS website.

Reminder on the temporary suspension of confirmatory PCR tests in schools

Confirmatory PCR testing following a positive result on a lateral flow device (LFD) is temporarily suspended. This means that for all education and childcare settings, staff and students who have tested and reported a positive LFD result will no longer be advised to get a confirmatory PCR test.

We therefore don't need to ask people to do a confirmatory PCR unless they:

- have symptoms (in which case they need to follow the stay at home guidance, self-isolate and order a PCR test)
- wish to claim the Test and Trace Support Payment
- have been advised to take a PCR test because they are in a clinically vulnerable group
- have been advised to do so as part of a research or surveillance programme

Yours faithfully

E Rodriguez
Headteacher