

9 February 2022

Dear Parents and Carer

Thank you for all your hard work to reduce COVID-19 spreading in Newham schools. We know it has not always been easy, but your part in this is so important.

Why?

Being in school is such an important and valuable experience for all of our children and young people and so we want to do everything we can to preserve that. Newham schools and families need to work together keep your children safely in school, so they can continue with their learning.

There are more COVID-19 cases in the 5-18 year old group than other age groups

COVID-19 is still here and still at high levels in Newham and London. Rates are falling, but not enough that we can safely stop COVID precautions completely. On February 1st, there were 2,292 new cases of COVID and one in ten people who took a test had COVID. The levels of Omicron COVID are higher in school ages than other age groups.

What schools are doing to keep students safe

Each school has its own risk assessment and methods to reduce the chance of COVID spreading on site. Because Omicron spreads easily between people in the air especially inside, it is important to stop it entering the school. School staff use Lateral Flow Tests regularly so they can find out quickly if they have COVID. Students in year 7 and above need to test too - twice a week.

Lateral flow testing helps our schools to continue face-to-face teaching

Lateral flow tests are helpful as they:

- Help you to find out if you or your children have Covid-19
- Let you know if you need to isolate to stop the spread of Covid-19
- Let you know when to stop isolation if you have Covid-19
- Help you to protect yourself, family, friends and others

What parents, carers and students can do to help

You as a parent/carer have a very important part to play in keeping schools safe by following the NHS stay safe advice. This means wearing a mask in crowded places,

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getting all doses of the safe and effective Covid-19 vaccines for yourself and your eligible children.

Please also make sure that your children take a lateral flow test before they return to secondary school following the half term holiday. They should test the day before and the day they are due back in school. For more details and advice on how to do a lateral flow test, please follow this [link](#).

Following a positive test result, please follow all the current [self isolation advice](#)¹. Help with money, shopping and someone to talk to is available on 0207 473 9711.

Once term has started, your children only need to test twice a week.

The Council, schools and the Newham public health team appreciate the support and understanding of our families. If we all work together, follow stay safe guidance, take tests before school, we can keep schools safe and working well for children and staff.

How to get test kits: You can order FREE test kits from this [link](#), or call 119 between 7am and 11pm. Calls are FREE on mobiles and landlines and there are 200 languages spoken if you want support.

Or you can collect in person from your library or local pharmacy, or one of our [collection points](#) around the borough.

Thank you again,



Anita Stewart

Director of Education, Inclusion & Achievement



Jason Strelitz

Director of Public Health

HELPFUL LINKS

[NHS COVID-19 STAY SAFE](#)

[ORDER RAPID TESTS](#)

[Got symptoms? GET a FREE PCR TEST](#)

[Get help with isolating - Newham council COVID -19 information pages](#)

¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

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