

PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Increase in Covid-19 cases in schools/settings in Solihull

I wanted to write to you all to let you know that there has been a sharp increase in confirmed Covid-19 cases in schools and settings in Solihull in a pattern that is reflected across parts of the region.

A significant number of the new cases are the Delta variant of Covid-19 (originally identified in India) which is **more easily spread than previous variants** of the virus. Vaccination is key to getting on top of this so we would really urge everyone to get both doses of vaccination as soon as you are eligible. **Anyone over the age of 25 is now eligible for vaccination so please do book in when you can.**

While vaccination rolls out, it is very important to stick with the measures we are all taking to prevent virus transmission:

- Ensuring that you continue to wear a **face covering at school drop-off and pick-up**
- Ensure anyone aged 11 and over wears face covering in indoor public places and on public transport
- Keeping a **distance of 2 metres or more** from people outside your household/ support/ childcare bubble where possible
- **Wash hands regularly and thoroughly** for a minimum of 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser if soap and water is not readily available. *This is particularly important on arrival at public places/ workplaces/ school and your home.*
- Follow the national guidance on current restrictions at all times and for information on this, please visit www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do

Asymptomatic Covid-19 Testing (rapid lateral flow tests)

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms. Rapid lateral flow tests help to find cases in people who may have no symptoms but are still infectious and can give the virus to others. All secondary aged school children should be having a lateral flow test twice a week and

we greatly appreciate your support in ensuring that this is the case and the results are reported. Everyone is now eligible for twice weekly rapid lateral flow testing and information on how to access test kits can be found here www.solihull.gov.uk/COVID-19/covid-testing

Getting a Covid-19 test when a person has symptoms

If your child or young person has **any symptoms of Covid-19** and you are asked to take them for a **PCR test** by their school/education setting, it is **extremely important that you comply with this request**. In some cases, if there is an outbreak in a school/setting, a test may be requested for one of the lesser known symptoms, wider than the three Covid-19 main symptoms of a new, continuous cough, high temperature and loss/change of taste/smell.

If you or someone in your family has **Covid-19 symptoms, they need to have a PCR test** by booking online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test If you test positive, good ventilation, avoiding sharing plates, cutlery, mugs or towels, careful cleaning and staying at least 2 metres apart from household members and if possible in a separate room can help stop other people in your family getting it. Help is available from Solihull Council if you do test positive so that you and any close contacts can self-isolate for the 10 days as is legally required to protect others. Please visit www.solihull.gov.uk/COVID-19/Self-isolating-payment for details.

I fully appreciate that news of an increase in Covid-19 cases is not what families were hoping to hear, and I thank you and all our schools/settings for all the hard work that is being done to tackle Covid-19.

Yours sincerely



Ruth Tennant
Director of Public Health