



Long Lane Primary School
Long Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 6YG
Telephone/Fax: 0118 942 7187
www.longlane.w-berks.sch.uk
office@longlane.w-berks.sch.uk
 @LL_Primary

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COVID-19 update

Dear Parents and Carers,

We understand that the COVID symptoms also happen to be symptoms of other viruses, such as colds, BUT in all cases, this guidance **must** be followed even if you suspect “it’s just a cold”.

As we have received further clarification from the Local Authority that I would like to pass it on to everyone.

Symptoms

Individuals should **only seek a test if they have one (or more) of the main COVID symptoms** :

1. **a high temperature** - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature);
2. **a new, continuous cough**- this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual) and/or
3. **a loss or change to sense of smell or taste**- this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

(or as directed to by a medical professional, at the request of a local council or as part of the government pilot project).

The guidance is also clear that **if an individual has one or more of these symptoms then they must isolate** (stay at home and don't have any visitors) and **get a test** as soon as possible. The NHS has provided explanations for each of the main symptoms, which can be found via this link <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/> or Please note that this doesn't specify a particular figure for a high temperature.

Testing

*Obtaining a test slot, at a drive through testing station that is within a manageable distance or requesting a home test kit, seems to currently require considerable perseverance with the online booking system. If families have access to the internet then the **online booking system seems to be the most effective way of securing a test, but perseverance is needed.** The advice from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is if people are unable to get any tests at a convenient time or location to wait and try again in a few hours when more testing slots will be released, people should not turn up to any testing site without an appointment.*

Isolation

*We appreciate the potential challenges of 'household isolation' and spending time online seeking a test, but it is **vitaly important for those people who display symptoms to self-isolate and get a test.** Whilst as difficult as this might be for many families, it will hopefully prevent any further restrictions, rather than people ignoring these symptoms and spreading the virus. We know that children in particular are often asymptomatic, so any suggestion of **any one** of the three main symptoms in children, should mean self-isolation and a test sought as soon as possible.*

Yours sincerely,



Mr. P. Thorne,
Headteacher