

Free rapid Covid-19 testing available to you

Households of children at nursery, school or college are now able to get tested twice per week using a rapid Covid-19 test. This is for any adult who lives with a child or student and for adults who are part of the support bubble or who provide childcare.

Staff working in nurseries, schools and colleges are already able to get tested and so are pupils and students in year 7 or above. **Nursery and primary pupils are not being asked to be tested.**

This letter explains why getting tested is important, how to get tested and what happens if you are positive.

Up to 1 in 3 people who have Covid-19 don't show any signs and do not know they have it. This means they can be very infectious and spread it to others without them knowing. These rapid Covid-19 tests, also known as Lateral Flow Tests (LFT for short) will show if a person who has no symptoms has the virus and is likely to be very infectious.

Is it the same as a Covid-19 test at a test centre?

The usual Covid-19 test is called Polymerase Chain Reaction or PCR test. This is very sensitive and can pick up very low levels of the virus. It is used if a person has any of the symptoms below. If you do have these symptoms - you should **not** use an LFT but book a PCR test by calling 119 or booking online at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

Symptoms of Covid-19

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- you've lost your sense of smell or taste or it's changed

How will this help?

Finding and isolating people who are positive will reduce the amount of virus circulating in the community and so you will be helping to protect others.

How can I get these tested?

There are four ways to get tested

- through your work if your employer offers testing
- by visiting a rapid Covid-19 test site
- by ordering a home test kit
- by collecting a home testing kit

At present these can be collected from either of Cheshire East's two local testing sites between 1.30pm and 7pm. These two sites are based at.

- Crewe - Chester Street car park, CW1 2ER
- Macclesfield - Commercial Road, SK10 2QJ

For information on local testing sites or how to order or collect a home testing kit please see, [Testing for COVID-19 \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/testing-for-covid-19)

What do I have to do?

The test is easy to do and comes with full instructions and all the equipment needed. It takes about 5 minutes to do the test and you will know the result in 30 minutes. You can still take this test if you have had the vaccine.

You then have to report your results via the website www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result or by calling 119 (free from landlines and mobiles) You do not need to let your child's school know your results but you must let the school know if your child is in year 7 or above and they had had a positive result from a home test.

What if I'm positive

If you test positive, you and your household/support bubble must all stay at home straight away and isolate for 10 days. You will need to arrange a PCR test to confirm the result. False positives are rare but if the PCR is negative you can all stop isolating.

What help is available

You can access Cheshire East Council's People Helping People scheme (PHP) if you need help because you're shielding, self-isolating or struggling due to the pandemic. PHP has a wide network of community-based support organisations and volunteers to help with things such as collecting prescriptions, doing your food shopping and addressing additional support needs (such as mental health and finances). You can also use this facility to source information and be signposted to other council services. You can self-refer online at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/peoplehelpingpeople or contact via telephone 0300 123 5034.

If you test positive you might be able to claim the £500 Test and Trace support payment. To find out more visit [Test and Trace support payments](#)

Testing is voluntary but we encourage all adults who support children to take part. It is an important part of way to drive down infections alongside vaccinations, face coverings, social distancing, and handwashing.