

Barking Town Hall
1 Town Square
Barking
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26 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Covid 19 testing for pupils who do not have symptoms (asymptomatic)

I am writing to you as your local Director of Public Health to let you know about the increase in Covid-19 testing in the borough.

Owing to the number of Covid-19 cases locally, we are carrying out a programme of asymptomatic testing (for people not experiencing any symptoms). These tests will help to reduce the risk of people without symptoms unknowingly spreading the virus to others in the community.

To keep schools safe and protect the wider community, I am encouraging all pupils who are attending school to get a test. This is particularly important as we prepare for all children to return to school from 8th March.

I strongly encourage anyone they live with to get a test also to make sure that anyone who may be infectious does not come to school with the virus and potentially start an outbreak.

How do I book a test if I don't have symptoms?

Go to the government website <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> where you'll be asked some questions. Select the following options:

- NO to essential worker
- NO to having symptoms
- NO to being part of a trial or pilot
- **YES - My local council or health protection team has asked me (or someone I live with) to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms**

You can book your whole family by choosing 'add family members'.

I can't get to a testing centre, can we get tested at home?

Yes, you can ask to receive your test by post. When you are making your booking, answer 'Yes' to 'Is the person who needs a test part of a trial or government pilot project' and select the option that says 'The person is taking part in community testing'.

What should I do if my child, or someone in our household, tests positive?

If you receive a positive test result, have symptoms of Covid-19, or if you've had contact with someone who has, self-isolation is the only way to guarantee you won't pass the virus on to others.

If you have to isolate, you should start the 10-day self-isolation period straight away.

My child has tested positive recently, do they need to take another test?

If your child has tested positive in the last 90 days, they should not take another test as the dead virus may still show in their system, even if they have recovered.

What if my family is already self-isolating?

If you've been asked to self-isolate by the NHS Test and Trace Programme or by our Public Health team you can still get tested by ordering a home testing kit. You still need to complete your period of self-isolation, even if you test negative as symptoms can take 10 days to show.

More information can be found on the government's website.

Thank you for your support during these difficult times. By working together we have seen a massive reduction in the number of cases in Barking and Dagenham since January. Covid-19 is still taking people's lives, but your continued efforts will help us stop the spread.

Yours faithfully,



Matthew Cole
Director of Public Health