



COVID-19 Testing Frustrations

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very grateful to those who have sought precautionary COVID-19 tests so far this term. This letter has been written to publicly state that we share your frustration with testing availability but also confirm our stance in order to keep everyone as safe as possible.

During the summer term and the first few days of this term, Public Health England (PHE) guidance was working well. If a child showed a symptom that required testing, then they could book a test locally on the same day. In most cases, the result was back the following day.

However, this does not appear to be the case at the moment. Families are being sent long distances for tests or are unable to get tests at all. In addition, we have a few cases where testing centres are refusing to issue tests because a high temperature has since come down again and parents are then being advised that their child can return to school. This contradicts school guidance.

In order to ensure we are protecting all our children, we are asking parents to seek a test wherever a child or member of their household bubble has shown any symptoms. This keeps the whole school community as safe as possible and ensures we can act quickly and appropriately to protect staff and children in our bubbles in the case of a positive test.

In the DFE guidance issued to all schools, it is clear that anyone who has one of the symptom does not return to school unless they have had a negative test result or they have self-isolated for 10 days. We have clarified this with PHE who have reiterated that schools must not allow children to return unless they can meet the above criteria. We understand that in most cases this will mean keeping a child who has had a normal winter illness off school for longer than their symptoms show and that this will cause frustration and inconvenience to those involved. However, we must all follow this guidance in order to prevent an avoidable COVID-19 case getting into school.

If you are struggling to book a test then please keep trying. If you continue to have difficulties then please let us know. The issues with COVID-19 testing capacity are being widely reported and hopefully will be improved soon. We are raising the issue through all the official channels available to us.

We thank you for your support, patience and understanding in these challenging circumstances.

The Hayling Headteachers

Mill Rythe Infant School Mrs Lucy Ford	Mengham Infant School Mrs Lindsay Rebbitt	Mill Rythe Junior School Mr David Bessant	Mengham Junior School Mr Edward Harrison Mrs Odele Davies	The Hayling College Mr Colin Rainford
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