

9 July 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians

**Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) – testing of children and their households required**

I have been informed by Public Health England (PHE) that there have been a number of positive COVID-19 cases at Oswald Road Primary School in Chorlton, Manchester.

Our priority is to keep all pupils and staff safe and well, so we are asking for your help in how we address this situation.

In the meantime, close contacts of the cases have been identified and they isolated at the time that the initial positive result was notified.

We know that the new Delta variant is the main strain of COVID in Manchester now and it spreads more easily. There is no evidence to suggest this variant causes more severe illness than any other variant in the UK.

As a precautionary measure, I need to be certain that there is no asymptomatic transmission by asking all pupils, staff and household members to take a PCR test, which is when the sample is sent off to the laboratory for the results to be analysed.

Testing is a vital tool in helping us detect cases that we would not otherwise know about. These tests will help make pupils and staff safer by helping us quickly identify many people who are unknowingly carrying high levels of the virus, preventing them from passing it on to others.

By identifying cases quickly, it will help reduce the spread of COVID within our community too and lead to less disruption in school caused by more bursting of bubbles.

**Pupils and staff and their household members**

To make it easy and convenient to get tested, from next week we are making PCR testing kits available so you and your children can take the test at home. The home testing kits will be distributed by the school along with instructions. The school will also let you know what arrangements are in place for you to return the kits.

It is really important that everyone takes part in this testing programme. The only people who do not need to take part is anybody who has tested positive using a PCR swab test in the last 90 days. They do not need to take another test.

## **Pupils currently self-isolating**

Any pupils and their household members currently self-isolating should book a COVID test online at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) by clicking the box that says your local council has asked you to do this. Anyone who has tested positive using a PCR swab test in the last 90 days does not need to take another test.

School leaders have acted quickly to work with us, and the measures Oswald Road Primary has put in place to prevent COVID-19 spread are excellent. This additional testing is a precaution so that we do our utmost to keep everyone well. These PCR tests are different to the normal lateral flow tests more commonly used as part of the routine asymptomatic testing in secondary schools. By using PCR testing, positive results can be sent for genomic sequencing at specialist laboratories, helping us to identify variant of concern cases and their spread.

I would strongly encourage you to take part in this testing. The more cases we find, the better chance we have at stopping the virus spreading.

Thank you for your cooperation and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for working with us to help keep everyone safe.

Yours sincerely,



David Regan  
**Director of Public Health for Manchester**