



High Tunstall College of Science

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Dear Parents, Staff and Governors

With the amount of minor illnesses that always go along with a new school year, I thought it would be helpful to make sure everyone was up to date in terms of how to respond to any symptom associated with Covid-19, even where it might be as a result of a general cold or other illness.

The following information is an amalgamation of guidance directly from the government, which you can find here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>; the NHS, which can be found here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/what-your-test-result-means/> and also information schools have been sent from the Local Authority.

The reason for the triangulation of various sources is that there are some discrepancies in the gov.uk guidance and the NHS guidance in terms of what happens following a negative test result. I have based the information below on the NHS guidance as it is much clearer:

Symptoms: Although Covid-19 can present with a number of symptoms, the ones that trigger a need to self-isolate and get a test are as follows:

- **a high temperature** - (this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature));
- **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);
- **a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste** - this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

If you are unsure if you or your child has the symptoms detailed above, we would advise you contact 111 for further advice.

Self-Isolation: If you have symptoms of COVID-19, however mild, you must self-isolate until you have either received a negative test result (subject to conditions) or the time periods below are completed:

- 10 days from the onset of symptoms and 14 days for anyone else in your household and support bubble;

If, during the 14 day isolation period for the household, someone else displays symptoms, they must isolate for 10 days from that point, even if that goes beyond the original 14 days.

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Testing: The only way to potentially not have to self-isolate for 10 or 14 days is to be tested and for everyone else in the household/support bubble **who has displayed symptoms** to be tested.

The NHS website is very clear about this:

- “If you had a test because you had symptoms, you and anyone you live with must stay at home (self-isolate) until you get your result. Anyone in your support bubble must also self-isolate until you get your result”

If you, or anyone else in the house receives a positive test result, you must then continue the isolation periods above, even if someone else in the household has a negative test. If, however, there is a negative result you can stop self-isolation, as long as (all four must apply):

- Everyone you live with **who has symptoms** tests negative;
- Everyone in your support bubble **who has symptoms** tests negative;
- You were not told to self-isolate for 14 days by NHS Test and Trace;
- You feel well – if you feel unwell, stay at home until you're feeling better.

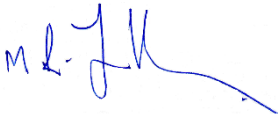
If you receive an “Unclear, void, borderline or inconclusive test result”, you must continue self-isolation and book another test.

Implications for College: If a child at college is off because of one of the symptoms listed above, even where that symptom may appear to be a result of something else, your child will need to be tested before returning to college, or will need to self-isolate for the listed time-periods. If college has clear evidence of another member of the household having symptoms (such as a sibling at another school) then we will also expect the child to be off until appropriate tests have taken place or the self-isolation period is up.

Getting a Test: The link to book a test is here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>.

Although there is a lot of information in this letter, I hope it provides some degree of clarity, but please don't hesitate to contact the college if you have any questions at all.

Yours faithfully



Mark R Tilling
Headteacher