

Our Ref: JP/TK 052

Date: 16 November 2020

Dear Education Leader

You may have seen in the news recently that Staffordshire will be increasing the testing of residents in a bid to identify more cases of Covid-19 and reduce the spread of infection.

We are one of several local authorities to sign up for early roll out of new rapid turnaround tests, and there may be an opportunity to use these in sixth forms for schools and colleges that are interested.

We are also expanding our advice around when to get a test.

Currently anyone who has one of the main symptoms of persistent cough, high temperature, new cough or loss of taste or smell must self-isolate immediately and book a test.

However, with many people displaying other symptoms, we are asking residents in Staffordshire to consider getting tested as a precaution if they have other symptoms such as:

- Headaches
- Aches and pains
- Feeling very tired for no good reason
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Sometimes 'tummy ache' in children

People with any of these symptoms can carry on going to school or work if they are well enough to do so and only need to self-isolate if the test comes back positive.

We are asking all education providers to communicate this to their parents, as often children with Covid-19 can display different symptoms to adults. We want to ensure as many people as possible consider getting a test, even if it is merely a precaution.

The national testing centres across the county have good availability, and can be booked through [the NHS website](#). People booking a test through this website need to check the 'My council has asked me to get a test' option.

We also have community testing sites that change on a weekly basis. People can view if there are any sites set up near them by visiting [our testing website](#).

The advice supersedes the symptom checker chart we sent you a few weeks ago, please disregard this chart from now on.

Thank you for all your help.

Yours sincerely



**Jonathan Price**  
**Cabinet Member for Education**  
**(and SEND)**



**Richard Harling**  
**Director for Health and Care**