

Advice from the Director of Public Health

The seven-day rate of coronavirus cases in Stoke-on-Trent is now **85 per 100,000 people**, for the week 11 June - 17 June 2021. There continues to be a significant increase of cases in the city, **71.7%** on the previous seven days. The percentage of people who have had a test and **tested positive is 2.5%**.

As many of you will be aware, there have been a number of COVID-19 cases in Staffordshire schools – some of which have been linked to the outbreak in Leek, and the testing of thousands of secondary and primary schools in Newcastle is now underway.

Given that there have been cases in schools and within schools in neighbouring local authority areas, **we are urging all staff and pupils in Stoke-on-Trent city schools – both in primary and secondary settings - to take a COVID-19 test before the end of this school week.** One in three people with COVID-19 **don't** show symptoms, so regular testing using lateral flow tests (LFTs) is key to squashing any potential outbreaks.

You can access tests via a number of ways:

Home testing kits

Everyone in England is now able to access two home Lateral Flow Test home kits each week. They are free and there are various ways you can access them. The kits are quick to use from home, and give results in 30 minutes. **Testing twice a week should now be a normal part of our lives, even if you have had the vaccination you can still spread the virus, and there are still a lot of people who have not yet had their jab.**

It's also really important that your test results are registered online or over the phone - whether your result is positive, negative or a void result. If testing at home, residents will need to [register their results online](#) or by calling 119. They should self-isolate if positive and order a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours of a positive LFT.

Community Collect:

Home testing kits are available to collect from a number of venues across the city. Our staff are trained and on hand to help you and they are available to answer any questions or concerns you may have and to talk you through how to use these tests. You can find out more details about the community collect venues which offer this via <https://www.stoke.gov.uk/communitycollect>

Pharmacy collection:

You can also collect home testing kits from 58 pharmacies across the city. You can find out where you can collect them from via a map on the NHS website, available at [Find where to get rapid lateral flow tests - NHS \(test-and-trace.nhs.uk\)](#)

Ordering tests online:

If you cannot collect a home test kit from a community testing site or pharmacy, you can order them online by [Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Book a Covid-19 test

You will still be able to book tests at our community testing centres and there are still plenty of slots available. A full list of community locations and booking options and a range of locations, dates and times for the week ahead are available on our website via www.stoke.gov.uk/bookacovid19test.

If you have one of the three main symptoms then you are not eligible for lateral flow testing. You should instead book a test through <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>, or by calling 119.

Please also remember that confirmatory PCR tests for positive lateral flow tests have been reintroduced. It is really important that everyone has a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours maximum of a positive lateral flow test (LFT) at our community venues.

Key Covid Safety Messages

Please remember:

- Hands Face Space and Fresh Air
- Restrict the number of people you have any close contact with – particularly people you don't know well
- Get home testing kits and test the whole family at least twice a week (and record the results on line)
- Get a test and isolate if you have any of the classic symptoms
- Get vaccinated as soon as you can if offered the jab (important to get the second one) but continue to do all the above even after jabbed
- Brothers and sisters of positive cases are **not** allowed in schools
- If parents are worried and want a PCR test but have not got classic symptoms then when booking a test tick the box that says LA/HPT told them to get a test.