

## **COVID-19: Households with schoolchildren are encouraged to get a symptom-free test before 8 March**

### **\*To all parents\***

Anyone who lives or works in Medway can book a COVID-19 symptom-free test. With the government announcement on the roadmap to ease lockdown restrictions, which starts with the opening of schools on Monday, 8 March, Medway Council is encouraging all households with schoolchildren to book a symptom-free test before you send your children back to school.

To limit the number of pupils who may test positive when returning to school, it's really important to get your household tested at one of our five Medway symptom-free test centres. Testing is free, quick, and will help to identify individuals that have the virus without knowing.

Over 94,000 tests have now been taken by Medway's critical workers and residents since symptom-free testing was launched in December. So far, over 1,247 individuals have tested positive (without showing any symptoms). Thanks to this testing programme, it is helping to stop the spread of the virus in Medway, but we all must continue to work together to help protect each other.

### **Booking a test**

Households are encouraged to book a test before Monday 8 March (we recommend you try and book as close to this date as possible). We currently have plenty of availability across our test sites (which are open 7 days a week) and bookings are updated each day to provide availability over a 7 day period.

If you are booking for your household, you must complete all bookings individually (e.g. if you have a family of four, then four bookings will need to be made using the slots available on the booking page). It's really important to book a test for each individual to help our staff manage the number of individuals visiting the test centre throughout the day (it helps us to ensure social distancing rules are followed).

You must book before visiting a symptom-free test centre. If you don't book you will not be permitted to take a test. No booking = no entry.

One in three people with coronavirus have no symptoms: While children will be provided with symptom-free testing when they return (click [here](#) for more info), it's important that parents and other household members book regular symptom-free tests at our test centres every two weeks to help stop the spread of the virus in Medway.

## How to book

[Book now](#) and help stop the spread of COVID-19 in Medway - this is the full booking link: <https://mph.healthit.org.uk/>

[Check what you need to bring to your appointment](#)

## Test centres

Testing is taking place at five centres across Medway (Chatham, Chattenden, Rainham, Rochester and Gillingham). The centres are open between 9am and 7pm seven days a week (The Medway Park Test Site in Gillingham is open 9am to 7pm, Monday to Friday).

Limited parking is available at some sites. Please remember to drive and park considerately as they may be residential areas and please do not block any driveways while you attend your test.

**If you have COVID-19 symptoms on the day of your test please do not attend.** You should book a PCR test [here](#). You can cancel your appointment through the text/confirmation email sent to you.

## What you need to bring

You must bring the following proof to your appointment:

- Test booking confirmation (text or email)
- Proof of ID. This could include:
  - your driving licence
  - your passport
  - a utility bill
  - a council tax bill
  - a letter from your employer (or photo ID card)
- Your mobile phone to register when you arrive (this is not essential).

## The test

Please ensure you arrive on time. You should not arrive more than 15 minutes before your allotted time as you will not be permitted entry to the centre.

Please ensure you follow the instructions carefully at all times. You will be guided to a booth to complete the test.

You should wear a face covering at all times (you should only remove this when you do your swab).

The test should not take any longer than a few minutes and is similar to a symptomatic test.

### Your test result

You should receive the result of your test by text and email within one hour of your test. Please go home after your test (do not wait at the test centre for your result).

- If your child tests negative, they can take their next test when they return to school. For parents and other household members who test negative, you will need to retake the test in two weeks. You can book your next test using the same [booking website](#).
- If anyone in your household tests positive, you/they will need to self-isolate for 10 days and take a [home test](#) to confirm the result.
- If you do not receive your test result within 24 hours, you will need to book another symptom-free test.

### Find out more

For more information, visit [medway.gov.uk/symptomfreetesting](https://medway.gov.uk/symptomfreetesting)

If you have any other queries on booking your symptom-free test, you can email: [ats@medway.gov.uk](mailto:ats@medway.gov.uk)

Thanks for your support. Play your part now and help us continue to stop the spread of COVID-19 in Medway.

