

Gaelscoil na mBeann
127A Newcastle Road
Kilkeel,
Newry, Co. Down
BT34 4NL
7th June 2021

COVID TESTING FOR ALL GAELSCOIL NA MBEANN PUPILS AND STAFF –LETTER TO PARENTS PCR TESTING

Dear Parent / Guardian,

The Public Health Agency has been notified of a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Gaelscoil na mBeann community. We have worked closely with the school principal and management team to review all the cases and undertake a detailed risk assessment in the school. All those who were in close contact with any of the cases have been identified and have been advised to self-isolate. The school has a range of other measures in place.

Even though all the recommended measures are in place, we are investigating the cluster further to reduce the risk of spread.

Improving Your Health and Wellbeing

To help with this we would like to find out if other students or staff at the school might also be infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. **We are offering pupils at the Gaelscoil na mBeann and Nursery a COVID test even if they do not have symptoms.**

A COVID testing unit is situated at **ST. COLMAN'S CHURCH, MASSFORTH, KILKEEL, CO DOWN, 152 NEWRY ROAD, KILKEEL, NEWRY, BT34 4ET** at the following times:

Tuesday 8th June 2021 from 9am – 3pm

Wednesday 9th June 2021 from 9am – 3pm

Appointments are not necessary. To be tested students should just turn up with their parent or guardian during these times. Testing is entirely voluntary. However we would encourage you to have a test.

The test

The test will involve taking a nose and throat swab, which is done by gently rubbing a soft cotton swab on the tonsils and up one nostril. This is a self-test although younger children will need help carrying out the test. Instructions will be provided. However, we would recommend that you visit the PHA website for detailed instructions and a video showing how to do the test.

<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/testing-covid-19>

Results

Results will be sent to you by text or email. This usually happens within 48 hours of the test being taken.

Can my child leave the house to be tested if they are isolating?

If you have already been identified as a close contact of a case of COVID and are currently isolating **you can leave home for the purposes of having the test.** However, you should travel directly to the site and avoid contact with other people. You should not use public transport.

I have already had a positive COVID test. Should I be tested again?

If you have already attended a Mobile Testing Unit in Kilkeel you do not need to test again. However, if you have tested positive for COVID prior to June 2021 you should attend for a test at the MTU.

I am not currently isolating, do I have to isolate while waiting for the results?

If you have not been identified as a close contact you do not need to isolate while waiting for the test results. However, if you develop COVID symptoms you should isolate until the result is known.

Can other members of my household be tested at the school?

Yes, other members of the household can test at the St Coleman's Mobile Testing Unit.

As you are aware COVID-19 is present in the community across Northern Ireland. You should be aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 the most common symptoms are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

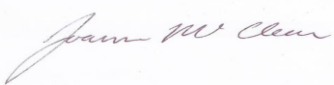
Whether in school or outside it is very important that we all remember the things we can do to help reduce the risk of spreading the infection including:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Keep to date with and follow the COVID-19 restrictions for your area

If you, or anyone in your household, develops any of these symptoms, your whole household must remain at home and not go to work, school or public areas. You should arrange testing for the person who has developed symptoms. Testing for all symptomatic individuals in Northern Ireland can be booked at www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test . When the result is known further advice will be available.

For further information, please see the Public Health Agency website <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus> or contact NHS 111. If your child feels unwell and you are worried about their symptoms or about anyone else in the home, please contact your GP.

Yours sincerely,



James M. Cleary

Dr Joanne McClean

Consultant in Public Health Medicine

