



Dear Parents / Carers,

We hope that you have had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year, where you have been able to spend some time with your families. Over the holiday period, there has been a local increase in the number of reported cases of the Omicron COVID variant, which has led to new rules regarding testing and isolation. This letter is intended to share the advice around the changes.

One of the most common misunderstandings is around counting days of isolation. The day that you test positive or first have symptoms is classed as Day 0 (see the chart below). Day 1 of counted isolation begins the following day. On Day 10, isolation finishes at 11.59pm on that day, regardless of the time of day you tested positive.

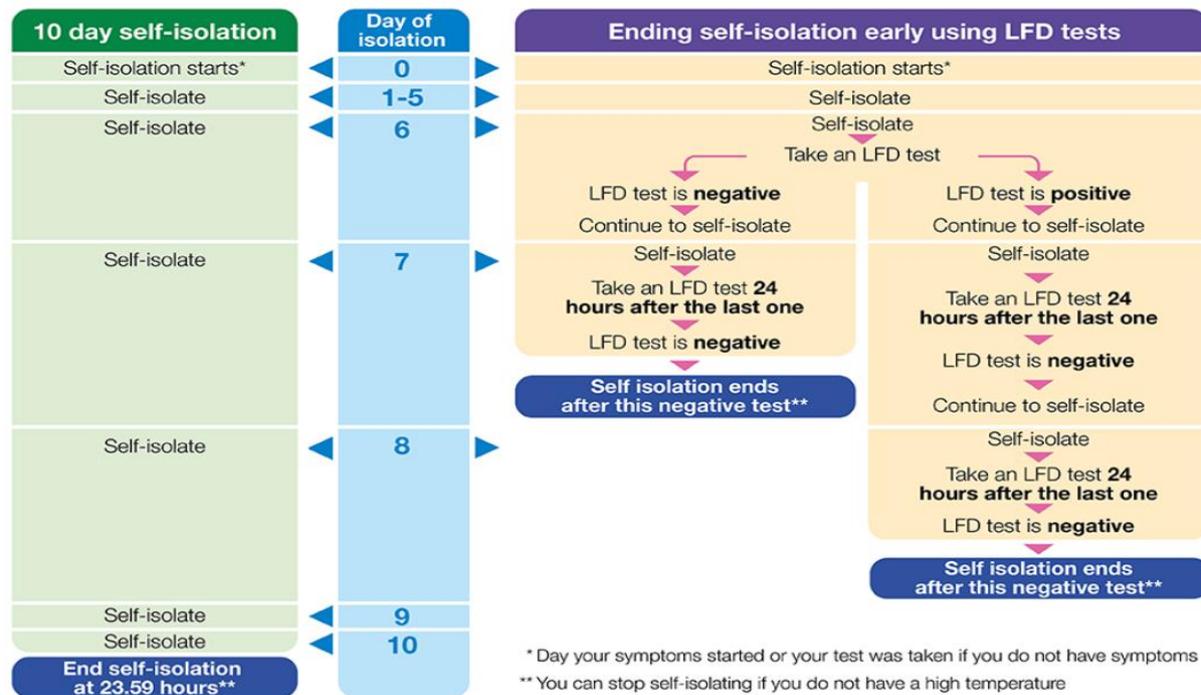
However, it is now possible to end self-isolation **early** after 7 days, **following 2 negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart**. The first LFD test should not be taken before the sixth day. This guidance applies to all who have tested positive, vaccinated and unvaccinated adults and children.

For example: If someone test positive on a Saturday, they can take an LFD the following Friday (Day 6). If they take this test at 8am, then they must leave 24 hours before taking a second test, so 8am on Saturday morning (Day 7).

Day PCR test taken or symptoms began = Day 0	Day 6		Day 7
Saturday	Friday	You must leave 24 hours between each test	Saturday
Sunday	Saturday		Sunday
Monday	Sunday		Monday
Tuesday	Monday		Tuesday
Wednesday	Tuesday		Wednesday
Thursday	Wednesday		Thursday
Friday	Thursday		Friday

Therefore, if a child has 2 negative LFD tests, one on Day 6 and one on Day 7, and **no longer have a high temperature**, they can come out of isolation straight after receiving the negative result of the second test on Day 7. If not, then they must continue to isolate.

Ending self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result



It is still the case that children should not attend school if they have:

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

Where children have any of these symptoms, parents should not rely on an LFD (lateral flow test), but go to a testing centre for a PCR.

Isolating as a Contact

If you **are fully vaccinated*** or aged under 18 years and 6 months, and you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are not legally required to self-isolate. However, you are strongly advised to take an LFD test every day for 7 days, and to self-isolate if any of these test results are positive

****You are fully vaccinated 14 days after having received 2 doses of an approved vaccine (such as Pfizer/BioNTech, AstraZeneca or Moderna/Spikevax) or one dose of the single-dose Janssen vaccine.***

Children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend the setting as normal, but should take daily LFD tests at home.

Children under the age of 5

Regular LFD tests are not recommended for children aged under 5. If they live with someone who has COVID-19 they are not legally required to self-isolate but you should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 and arrange for them to take a PCR test as soon as possible. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result.



