

10/02/22



Dear Parents and Carers,

February 2022 HALF TERM COVID-19 TESTING

Thank you for all your ongoing help and support in our efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 throughout this school year.

You may be aware that, despite everyone's efforts, our borough has consistently had a high rate of COVID-19 cases in schools since their return in January 2022 (see data at the end of the letter). Staff and pupils have been impacted in some schools and we have also seen a rise in cases in parent-age groups. Early signs are that the case rate is now starting to drop, though as you will probably be aware, numbers are still very high. We hope that, with your support, this decrease will continue. Please support us by taking the following actions to help Keep Kingston Safe:

What you can do to help:

Testing: we appreciate that there are a small minority of pupils who are unable to test or be tested, but if your child can:

- **Back to school testing on Sunday 20th February 2022:** We are asking **all families** to test their children (aged 5 years and over) on Sunday 20th February with a lateral flow test (also known as 'LFT' or 'LFD' or 'rapid' test) before the return to school on Monday 21st February - this will help us minimise any infections in school after half term.
- We encourage families to continue to test twice per week with lateral flow tests over the half term break, and to carry on testing after school begins (for example, every Wednesday and Sunday). **Although national announcements have indicated future changes to testing arrangements, regular testing remains the national recommendation at this time.**

What if my child (or a household member) has a positive COVID-19 result or symptoms?

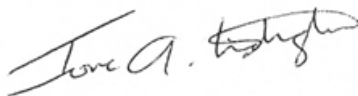
- **Self isolate: If your child has a positive LFT or PCR test, they should self isolate (stay at home).** They should self isolate for 10 days (unless they have two negative tests at Day 5 and Day 6 and no raised temperature, which will enable early release from self-isolation - see below for further details)
- If your child has any COVID-19 symptoms, even if mild, they should stay at home and take a **PCR** test.
- If your child has had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and is 5 years and over, follow advice to test more frequently after contact with the confirmed case. If possible, please do **daily** lateral flow tests for 7 days. Free tests are available from the school or you can order test-kits online for home delivery at: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>). See [our Kingston testing web pages](#) for further details.
- Finally, please only send your child back to school when they feel recovered and fully well following any Covid infection.

Help is available if your child or family member tests positive:

Local Kingston support is available to anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 or has been told to self isolate, to help with access to food and medicine deliveries, financial assistance if eligible, and support with health and wellbeing. This help can be accessed by visiting www.kingston.gov.uk/Covid19-needhelp or calling 020 8547 5000.

Thank you for your support. I would like to wish you all a very safe and enjoyable half term.

Yours sincerely,



Iona Lidington
Director of Public Health
Kingston Council

Further information:

Vaccination: We encourage everyone aged 12 years and over to get vaccinated. For more information see our [Kingston Covid-19 vaccination web pages](#) where there are details of vaccination sessions for 12-15 year olds and adults over the half term break.

We have a number of extra pop-up walk-in vaccination sessions taking place in Kingston over the coming weeks - for all ages (12+), for 1st doses, 2nd & Boosters.

Upcoming Market House sessions in central Kingston include:

Today, Thursday 10th February, 3pm-7pm,
Saturday 12th February, 12pm-4pm
Thursday 17th February, 3pm-7pm
Saturday 19th February, 12pm-4pm
Thursday 24th February, 3pm-7pm

Other sessions include:

Tolworth Girls School KT6 7EY - Sunday 13th February 10am-5pm (open to all 12+, no need to book)

Coombe Boys School KT3 6NU - Sunday 2th February 10am-5pm (open to all 12+, no need to book)

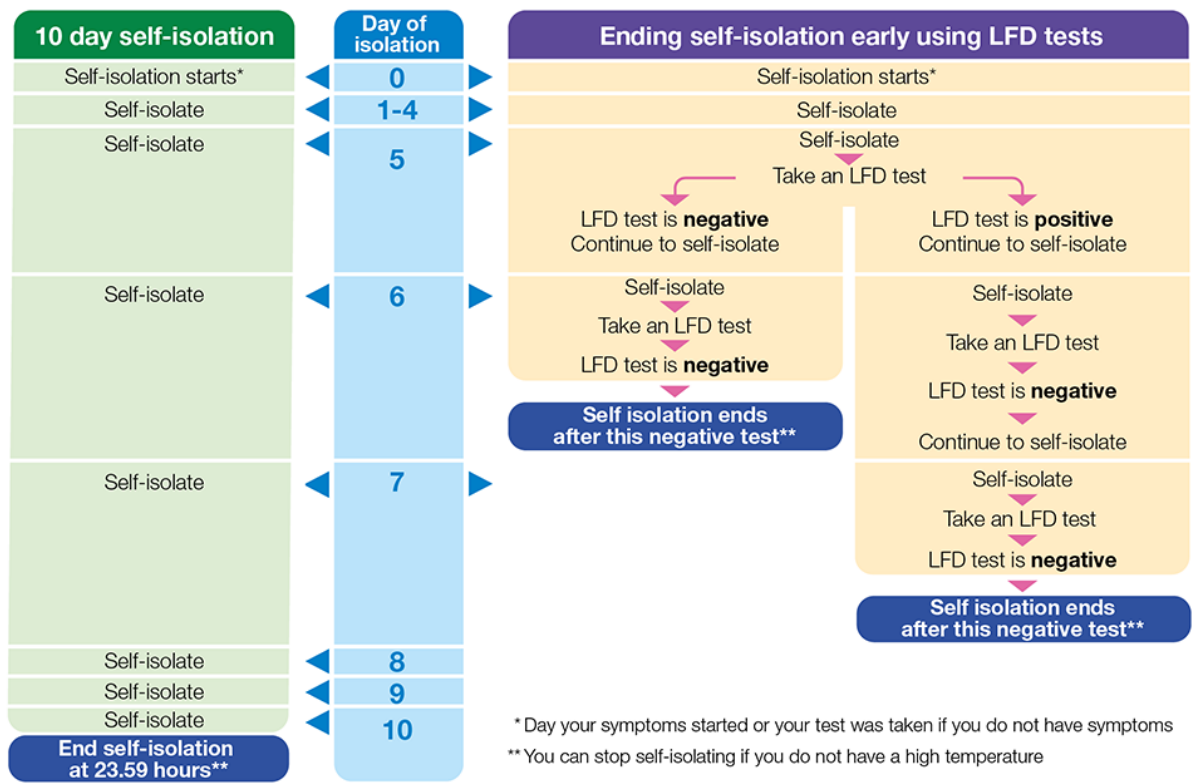
Please note that 12-17 year olds who have tested positive for COVID-19 are advised to wait 12 weeks before having a COVID-19 vaccine.

Where to get a Lateral Flow (LFD) test: Order your rapid test kits online at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests or obtain from some pharmacies and The Market House in Kingston.

Where to get a PCR test: You can book a free PCR test online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test at a local test site or for home delivery.

Please see [our Kingston testing web pages](#) for further details on testing.

Further details on testing and self isolation: Examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result:



How to stop COVID-19 spreading in a house if someone has COVID-19:

- wash your hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- 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
- meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- limit close contact with other people outside your household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces such as car sharing, parties, sleepovers and playdates. Consider taking a lateral flow test before meeting up with others indoors.
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- wear a face covering if aged 11 and over when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places

- participate in twice weekly LFD testing, following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We strongly encourage you to log your results here: <https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

Where to contact for help:

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>. If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

How long should someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 stay at home and self isolate?

- If someone tests positive for COVID-19, they should self isolate for 10 days unless the criteria below are met which allows for a shorter self isolation period. As [per latest guidance](#), the self-isolation period can be ended earlier **as long as certain conditions are met** (please see explanatory table below). For instance, you can be released early from self-isolation if you have negative LFD tests on Day 5 and Day 6 after the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken **if you did not have symptoms**). The second LFD test should be taken at least 24 hours after the first. If **both these test results are negative**, and you **do not have a high temperature**, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result on Day 6.
- You should **not** take an LFD test before the fifth day (Day 5) of your isolation period, and you should only end your self-isolation after you have had **2 consecutive negative** LFD tests which should be taken at least **24 hours** apart.
- If you cannot do tests on Day 5 and Day 6, you must self isolate for the full 10 days.
- Please report your COVID-19 test results through this link: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

This guidance (see online link by clicking [here](#)) also applies to children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting.

What should you do if your child is a household contact or other close 'contact' of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

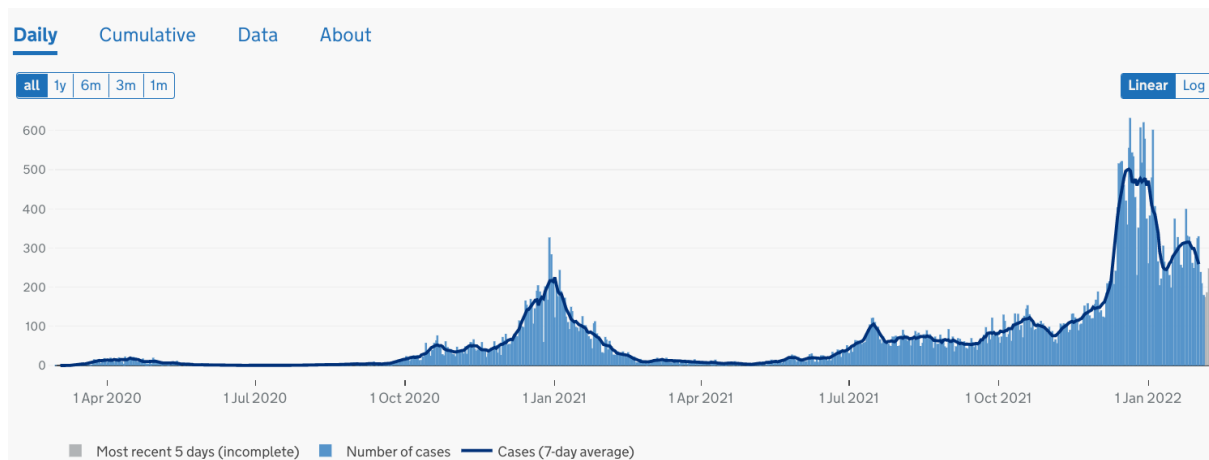
- A contact is someone who has been close to or spent a certain amount of time near someone who is infectious for COVID-19. This may be in a household, school or other setting.
- If you or your child/children test positive, any children who are contacts and without symptoms who are attending school are strongly advised to take a daily lateral flow test for 7 days before coming into school or mixing with others
- **NHS Test and Trace** will (where they know about contacts), get in touch with anyone who is a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and will provide isolation and testing advice. The school may also let you know that your child is a 'contact'
- Those who are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.
- Children under 18 years and 6 months who are 'contacts' and who do not have symptoms or a positive test result do not need to self isolate but should do daily lateral flow testing, if possible, for 7 days.
- If your child is a 'contact' and the school (or NHS Test and Trace) asks you to do daily Lateral Flow tests, please do this testing if possible, so that we can try to find any further cases in the school and help stop the spread of COVID-19.
- A close contact who is **unvaccinated and over 18 years and 6 months unless exempt**, should self isolate for 10 days and take a PCR test as soon as possible. **In this situation, a negative PCR test result will not shorten the isolation period.**
- More information about actions for contacts is here: [Guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

For further updates:

As you are aware, things are changing rapidly, please familiarise yourselves with the latest government guidance and further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

COVID-19 situation in Kingston at 10/02/22

- **Reported COVID-19 cases are decreasing. However, the COVID-19 rates in Kingston are higher in February 2022 than they were in February 2021, as can be seen from the graph below:**



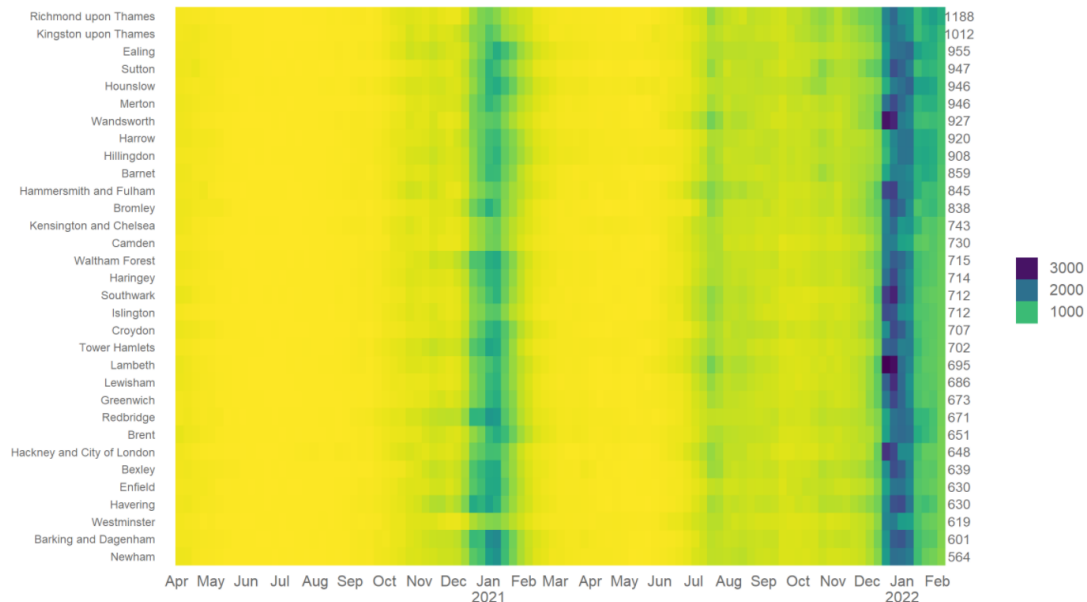
You can see updates for this this data here:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases?areaType=ltla&areaName=Kingston%20Upon%20Thames>

- **Kingston has the second highest COVID-19 rate of the London boroughs (on the 4th February 2022):**

Weekly case rates per 100,000 population

Most recent complete data for week ending 04 February (case rate shown on right hand column)



Source: PHE COVID-19 Dashboard
Sorted by case rate in most recent week. Colour scale may change with new data
Graphic by GLA City Intelligence

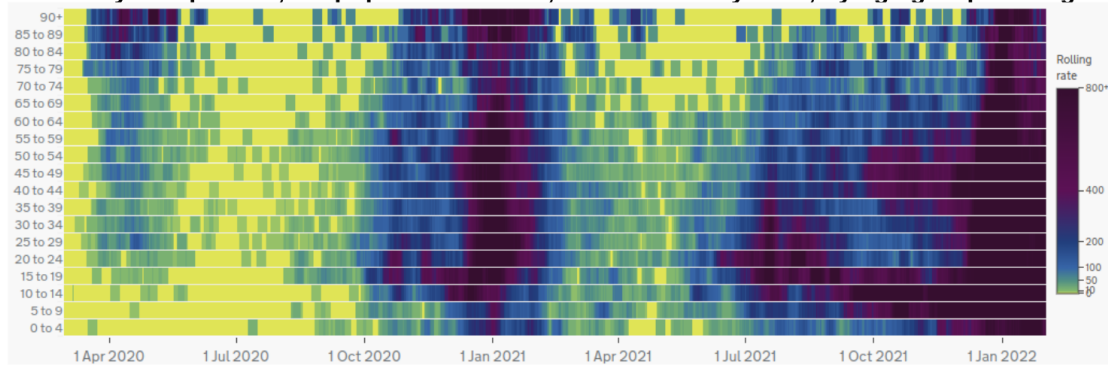
You can check Kingston's position in the data here:

<https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/coronavirus--covid-19--cases>

- **COVID-19 cases in primary school children are very high although**

beginning to show some signs of decreasing in Kingston. Rates are very high in parent age groups (1st Feb 2022 data):

Seven day rate per 100,000 population / week, to 1st February 2022, by age group in Kingston



Date: 1st February Age group: 0 to 4 Rolling Rate: 673	Date: 1st February Age group: 5 to 9 Rolling Rate: 2,179	Date: 1st February Age group: 10 to 14 Rolling Rate: 2,793	Date: 1st February Age group: 15 to 19 Rolling Rate: 1,352	Date: 1st February Age group: 20 to 24 Rolling Rate: 848	Date: 1st February Age group: 25 to 29 Rolling Rate: 851	Date: 1st February Age group: 40-44 Rolling Rate: 1,696	Date: 1st February Age group: 45-49 Rolling Rate: 1,588	Date: 1st February Age group: 75 to 79 Rolling Rate: 578	Date: 1st February Age group: 80 to 84 Rolling Rate: 332
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Rates have fallen in the under 10s but risen in all other age groups except 65-69.

See the most up to date data on age groups in the public domain: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases?areaType=Itla&areaName=Kingston%20upon%27thames>

You can look at this data in more detail here:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases?areaType=Itla&areaName=Kingston%20upon%20Thames>