



Addendum to the COVID 19 Policy (August 2021) re use of antigen testing in certain circumstances in children who are asymptomatic and part of a classroom pod, where there is a confirmed case of COVID-19.

The most important way to protect against any onward spread of infection is that if your child has any symptoms of COVID-19, including a new cough, shortness of breath, high temperature, sore throat, they should self-isolate at home and you should book a COVID-19 PCR test for them.

Children who have symptoms should not use antigen tests. They should stay at home and organise a PCR test for COVID-19. If a parent/guardian has any concerns about their child they should contact their GP.

From 29 November 2021, if a parent or guardian receives a positive ('detected') PCR COVID-19 test result for their child, the school principal should be contacted immediately.

The principal will tell the parent/guardian, that the school will be contacting the parents of the other children in their child's pod, to give them details of how they can order free antigen tests for their children using a Freephone number. The principal will not share any personal information relating to any other child with parents.

Antigen tests are potentially an extra measure to help protect against transmission of COVID-19. You will be advised to do the tests yourself at home. The test sample does not have to go to a lab. You usually get your results in 15 minutes.

If just one pod is involved, only the children in this pod will be offered antigen tests. If there are two pods with separate confirmed cases of COVID-19, then parents or guardians of children in the whole class will be contacted and provided with the information on how they can request antigen tests.

When contacting the Freephone number to order the test, the parent/guardian will need to provide child's name and home address together with the school's roll number, which will be provided by the school (15685T).

These tests will be delivered free of charge directly to the parent or guardian at their home address and the child's parent can decide if they want to do the tests. The HSE has prepared instructions and a video for parents. Full details will be in the antigen test pack.

The HSE advises that parents/guardians should carry out the first antigen test for their child on the day that they receive the test kit, they should do a second test 2 days later, and a third test 2 days after that.

The children in the pod of the confirmed COVID-19 case can continue to attend school as long as they have no symptoms and they do not have a positive COVID-19 test result (antigen or PCR). If at any time, your child develops symptoms they should isolate at home and the parent/guardian should book a COVID-19 PCR test for the child. The parent/guardian needs to do this even if the antigen test has a negative ('not detected') result.

If an antigen test is positive, it is important that your child isolates at home and that you book a COVID-19 PCR test online on the HSE test portal.

A QR code will be provided to afford parents the opportunity to upload the result of a test result to inform the HSE. This information is very important to understand the COVID-19 pandemic.

School principal will not share any information with parents that might identify the positive COVID-19 case.

Participating in antigen testing is a voluntary programme, therefore it is not necessary for parents to share information with the school about whether they have requested antigen tests and undertaken negative tests.

Children who are well should continue to come to school whether they participate in antigen testing or not.

The decision to do antigen testing with the child is completely up to parents and guardians and will have no impact on your child's education or experience in school.

The voluntary programme of antigen testing is an additional measure and does not replace the very important public health measures currently in your school.

The HSE Freephone number is: 1800 700 700

Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm

Saturday and Sunday: 9am to 5pm

You can book your test online at: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/testing/get-tested/>

The addendum to the Covid-19 policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Athea National School on It will be reviewed on a cyclical basic or as the need arises.

Signed:

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date:

Signed: *Margaret Watters*

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 26th/11/2021