



Building Inspiring Caring

Circular 2021-22 TL010

To: Parents/Guardians of all enrolled students
Cc: Bursar

September 2021

COVID 19 – Frequently Asked Questions

We are pleased to have our students back at the start of a new academic year despite the challenges that lie ahead.

As a College we have already had to deal with some positive cases in the school community which is reflective of the wider transmission in the community. This is a difficult time for parents, students and staff and at times there can seem to be conflicting reports and mixed messages about what to do. As messages and notifications are often out of school time maintaining a channel of communication is key. Obviously during school hours of 08.15 – 15.45 the College phone lines will be open but we can also be contacted outside of these hours by private message on the College Facebook page and by email info@blackwateric.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk

We will always try and respond as quickly as possible but we would also ask that any guidance sent out is read carefully as all communications are created by the Public Health Authority and should contain all of the necessary information. As a College we are following directed guidance and have no flexibility to change any procedures that have been put in place. We really appreciate your co-operation with this and will do all we can to minimise disruption caused to parents and students.

Letters will be sent home today with all students regarding lateral flow tests which are voluntary. All of the information regarding this testing will be contained in the letter.

To help, we have listed a few frequently asked questions about some of the most common areas for which we have received queries. Please keep this information and refer to it if required and it will also be available as a letter on the College website.

Stephen Taylor
Principal

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I let school know that my child has tested positive for Covid-19?

Please call the College on 02844612115 if during school hours or outside school hours please email info@blackwateric.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk It may be necessary for us to then get in touch with you in relation to your child's positive case and help in accurately identifying close contacts in school.

My child has tested positive using a lateral flow test. What should I do?

A lateral flow test cannot be used to confirm a positive case of Covid-19. You must keep your child at home and arrange a PCR test as soon as possible. Please note that a lateral flow test is NOT a substitute for a PCR test in identifying a positive case.

What happens if my child has been identified as a close contact by school?

If your child has been identified as a close contact, they should book a PCR test (**a lateral flow test cannot be used as a substitute for a PCR test**) and isolate until they receive the result. If the result is negative, they can return to school, but book another PCR test eight days from the date of close contact. If the result is positive, please contact the school as above.

If your child has had Covid-19 in the last 90 days they do not need to get a PCR test and can continue to attend school. If they develop new symptoms they must stay at home, get a PCR test and self-isolate until the results are available.

What should I do when my child gets a negative result from their day 2 test?

Please call the College on 02844612115 if during school hours or outside school hours please email info@blackwateric.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk and let us know and your child can return straight away.

When should my child do the day 8 test?

The day 8 test should be done 8 days after the initial point of contact on the letter sent to you. For example, if the contact was on Friday 3rd September a day 8 test should take place on Saturday 11th September. Your child can still attend school and does not need to isolate until the result comes through on day 8. If it is positive, please inform us immediately as in the instructions above.

My child has been identified as a close contact but their Lateral Flow Test at home is negative. Can they come into school?

No, pupils identified as a close contact must arrange a PCR test and follow the advice given above.

What if my child has symptoms of Covid-19?

If your child is displaying any symptoms of Covid-19 they must stay at home, book a PCR test, and self-isolate until results are received. If a member of your household has symptoms of Covid-19 and is waiting for the result of a PCR test we encourage you to keep your child at home until the PCR test result is received.

What do I do if my child has been identified as a close contact outside school?

Please follow the same procedure for close contacts, outlined above, and contact the College to explain why your child is unable to attend school.

I have individual circumstances that I would like to clarify with someone?

Please call the College on 02844612115 if during school hours or outside school hours please email info@blackwateric.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk or contact via the College Facebook page.

How do I book a PCR test?

Please use the link below find out how to book a PCR test, including information on your nearest walk-through test site.

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