

Information about optimising the “lolly test procedure” after the Christmas holidays

Dear parents and guardians,

Lolly tests are generally considered a successfully introduced and established testing procedure, which have since become very important in curbing the infection rates for the whole of society. These tests make a vital contribution to maintaining classroom lessons and ensure that your children are by far the best monitored age group. Nevertheless, there are still ways to improve the testing procedure for everyone involved in the project, thereby easing the burden and creating planning security – for the children, for the teachers, but most of all for you as parents and guardians. Below we would like to provide you with some information about optimising the testing procedure at our schools in the period after the Christmas holidays.

Essentially, your children will be conducting an individual lolly test in addition to the pool test in school on the testing days, which will be sent to the lab as a so-called “retention sample”. This will only be analysed directly by the lab if there is a positive pool test result. If not, the lab will dispose of the tests appropriately.

For you in specific terms, this change means the following:

Step 1: Pool tests on the testing day

- Negative pool test

The usual and most likely negative pool test means that no child tested positive for SARS-Cov-2 in the tested group. In this case, you will not hear anything from the lab and your child can continue to participate in lessons as normal.

- Positive pool test

If a pool test comes up positive, this means that at least one person in your child’s pool group tested positive for SARS-Cov-2. In this case, with the improved testing strategy, the lab can fall back on the retention samples from the children which were already taken in school. This means that unlike before, you no longer need to conduct an additional swab at home and can save yourselves the extra trip to school to submit the individual sample.

The individual test can be directly analysed by the lab.

Step 2: Reporting the results of the retention sample by 6am on the day after the test

The results of the individual test will be available for you to retrieve **at 6am on the day after the pool test**. Depending on the lab, the result will be sent **to you directly** either by e-mail or SMS.

- Your child has a negative retention sample result

If you get the message that your child's retention sample result is negative, your child can participate in lessons on the same day.

- Your child has a positive retention sample result

If you get the message that your child's PCR test result from the retention sample is positive, the lab will inform the health authority¹ and your child must go into quarantine.

Organising the conversion to the new testing system requires a **one-time** registration with the labs of all school pupils participating in the lolly test procedure, including the necessary master data. The following master data will be collected: name, address, date of birth and gender of the child, plus current contact details for the parent of guardian to forward the results (mobile phone number and e-mail address).

The schools will carry out this registration from 16 to 30 November.

To do so, **the schools need your current mobile phone number and e-mail address**, which will be passed on to the labs and used by the labs to inform you about the test results. This is a necessity, so that the labs can contact you directly and inform you about your child's test results.

If your mobile number or e-mail address change at any time, please let the school know immediately. This is the only way we can ensure safe school operations for everyone.

Direct information by the labs from the optimised lolly test procedure will make it easier for you and your child to plan your daily lives.

We will be happy to assist you if you have any further questions.

Best regards,
School Management

¹ Following the currently valid version of the Corona Testing and Quarantine Regulations for North Rhine-Westphalia