

COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Director: Hannah Doody



Public Health
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Direct Line: 0208 545 xxxxx

Date: 2nd February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Staff,

You will have seen the news yesterday that the Government announced new enhanced Coronavirus testing in nine areas of the country. This was after identifying cases of the South African variant of COVID-19 that do not appear to be linked to any recent travel. One of those places is part of the CR4 area, around Pollards Hill (please see [here](#) for link to the area identified). There are two other areas in London (Haringey and Ealing) and others in Surrey, Kent and the Midlands.

There is no evidence to show the South African variant is more dangerous. However, it does seem that it may spread more easily, so it is important that we stop local transmission as quickly as possible. To help us do this, we are rolling out enhanced testing for people who live and work in Pollards Hill and for those who visit for essential activities (such as shopping or to visit a support bubble). This includes:

- A mobile testing unit in the car park at Pollards Hill Library, which will be open from tomorrow (Wednesday) morning onwards. The unit will be open from 8am–3pm every day and employees and residents can [book a test on our website](#).
- Offering home-testing kits and advice on how to administer a home-test. Our team will be in the area knocking on doors from Thursday. The home-testing kits will either be collected or can be dropped off at a local community site.
- Individuals picking up and dropping off a home-testing kit from New Horizons Centre, South Lodge Avenue, Mitcham, CR4 1LT opening times 8.30am-6.00pm 7 days a week. For more information on this, [visit our website](#).

We are asking people without symptoms age 16 and over and living, working or visiting Pollards Hill for essential activities to get a test, so that we can stop local transmission of this new variant. For this enhanced testing programme you should only access a test at the three routes above, as these will then be sent to national labs for analysis. Because testing is for people who do not have Coronavirus symptoms you do not need to self-isolate while you are waiting for your test result. Anyone who does test positive will be asked to self-isolate immediately, along with members of their household.

The national lockdown rules apply to Pollards Hill in the same way as everywhere else. This means people who live and work in the Pollards Hill area are able to continue to follow the current [lockdown rules](#) – including attending work (if you cannot work from home) or school (if children come into the ‘vulnerable children’ or ‘children of critical worker’ groups). Under these rules, pupils and school staff living in Pollards Hill can

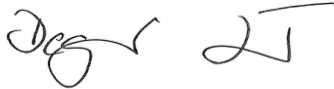
leave their homes to travel to school in other areas as they are doing currently and pupils and staff from other areas can travel into Pollards Hill to attend or work in school.

I'd like to remind everyone to continue to follow the national lockdown rules – only leaving your home to shop for basic necessities, go to work where you cannot work from home, provide voluntary or charitable services or get a test. Please also attend your vaccine appointments and any urgent medical appointments. Please continue to remember 'hands, face, space'.

Please help keep Merton safe.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dagmar Zeuner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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