

## **COVID-19 tests for pupils returning home to China**

Many members are being asked by parents and guardians for help with COVID-19 testing for pupils returning to China for the Christmas holidays. Please note that the NHS test report does **not** meet the China entry requirements and will not be accepted.

China requires all incoming passengers to present two test results, a negative COVID IgM antibody test result and a negative nucleic acid test result, as well as a green QR health code. The flight from the UK to China **must** be a direct flight.

The laboratory or healthcare institution providing the COVID-19 tests needs to be accredited by UKAS <https://www.ukas.com/news/first-accreditations-for-COVID-19-testing/> or ISO 15189 <https://www.hongkongairport.com/en/COVID19.page>

The Chinese Government further requires that reports of both nucleic acid (COVID-19) and IgM (antibody) tests must come from the same service provider. This does not mean the provider must carry out both tests, but that the provider must guarantee both test reports.

A certificate or a letter from the laboratory to say that they are a UKAS accredited provider or that the tests are ISO15189 compliant must be carried by the pupil even if the test report contains an ISO accreditation reference. The test reports must give the name of the pupil in identical format to that of the passport, state that the pupil undertook the tests within 48 hours of flight departure and that the result was negative.

Home tests are acceptable as long as they are sent off to an approved laboratory, as defined above. So tests could be carried out by your school nurses and then sent to such an approved laboratory. The test involves taking two swabs from the nose and the throat within 48 hours before the scheduled aircraft departure time. If there is a schedule change or cancellation, passengers are responsible for ensuring that their COVID-19 tests meet the 48-hour requirement based on the new flight departure time. It is advisable for pupils not to book a flight for a Monday or a Tuesday, due to laboratory turnaround times.

Both sets of test results will need to have been obtained within 48 hours before departure and a green QR health code will also need to be presented, which can be obtained from the Chinese Embassy via an app. This very tight turn around makes it extremely difficult to travel to China from the UK, with obvious consequences for any Chinese pupils planning to go home at Christmas. The test reports, certificate or letter and QR code will all need to be shown at check-in.

On arrival, pupils will then need to follow Chinese quarantine regulations for at least 14 days.

Whilst we are unable to recommend individual test providers, there are companies offering help listed on the BSA COVID Supplier list on our website <https://www.boarding.org.uk/500/safeguarding/-COVID-19/COVID-supplier-list>

We urge members to get parents or guardians to check requirements with specific airline companies before booking flights and also to keep updated by checking on

[China travel advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/travel-advice)

<http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/chn/lsw/lsw/t1827662.htm>