



Asymptomatic Staff Testing in Primary Schools and Nurseries

Frequently asked questions

Aims and Objectives of Asymptomatic Testing

What are the objectives of the Government's asymptomatic testing strategy in education settings?

The Government's asymptomatic testing strategy will help to break the chains of transmission of coronavirus (Covid-19) in education settings by identifying asymptomatic positive cases. Those who test positive will then self-isolate, helping to reduce transmission of the virus.

The asymptomatic testing programme does not replace the Government's current testing policy for those with symptoms. Primary school, junior school, and early years nursery staff who experience symptoms of Covid-19 should self-isolate immediately and arrange a test.

Why is asymptomatic testing being introduced?

Up to one in three people who have the virus have it without symptoms (they are asymptomatic) so could be spreading the disease unknowingly. Rapid asymptomatic testing means that we can now introduce testing of staff twice a week.

This is a significant development that will help to identify positive cases more quickly and break the chains of transmissions. Primary schools, junior schools, maintained nursery schools, schools-based nurseries and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries must continue to put in place a range of protective measures to minimise the risk of infection spread.

Adults and young people that fall into the clinically extremely vulnerable group should continue to follow the [Guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons](#).

Is participation compulsory?

The Department for Education expects all primary schools, junior schools, schools-based nurseries, private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries and maintained nursery schools will want to participate and offer at-home test kits to staff. It is voluntary for staff to participate.

Once staff understand the testing process and read a privacy notice, if they choose to participate, they are committing to self-administer the test and provide their results. Settings should aim to ensure that staff provide their results (positive, negative or void) to NHS Test and Trace via the [self-report gov.uk page](#). Results (positive, negative or void) should also be shared with school / nursery to support local contact tracing.

Staff who decline to participate can still attend school or nursery. Staff who decline to participate in this testing programme should follow the usual national guidelines on self-isolation and anyone showing symptoms should [get tested](#).

Can staff who have opted out join the testing programme at any point?

Yes. The school/nursery should share the privacy notice and relevant materials with that member of staff when they choose to participate.

What settings are included in this testing programme?

All staff working in:

- local-authority-maintained primary schools - including mainstream, special and pupil referral units (PRUs)
- primary academies - including special academies and alternative provision free schools
- junior schools
- non-maintained special schools
- independent primary schools - including independent special schools and independent alternative provision
- hospital schools
- school-based nurseries
- maintained nursery schools
- private, voluntary and independent (PVI) nurseries

Staff working in 'all-through schools' and middle schools should be tested through the secondary school testing programme.

Pupils' Return to Primary Schools

Why are you not testing primary pupils on return?

Public Health England have advised there are currently limited public health benefits attached to testing primary aged or younger pupils with lateral flow devices. Primary age pupils, particularly younger children, may find the LFD testing process unpleasant and are unable to self-swab. For these reasons there are no plans to pilot LFD testing for primary age pupils. We will review this approach in the light of any emerging evidence.

Are staff and children in primary and early years required to wear masks?

In primary and early years settings, face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors where social distancing between adults is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal areas). Children in both primary and early years settings do not need to wear face coverings and should not be asked to wear one.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings and we expect staff and pupils to be sensitive to those needs.

Should staff continue testing through the Easter holidays?

All early years and primary settings included in the asymptomatic testing programme should keep testing going through the Easter holidays to manage the spread of COVID-19 and encourage staff to get into a regular habit of testing themselves every 3-4 days (twice a week).

Primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nurseries should ensure they have enough test kits to keep testing through the Easter holidays. Guidance for primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools on how to reorder supplies, if needed, can now be found on the same document sharing platform [here](#).

PVI nurseries will receive a second delivery of test kits between the 24-26th March, this should mean settings have enough supplies to maintain testing through the Easter holidays. PVI nurseries that have reported to us missing or damaged kit between 15th and 18th March will receive additional kits as part of this. If PVI settings do not think they have the correct number of test kits, they should use [this online form](#) to report this to us.

Difference between primary and secondary testing programmes

Why do staff need to take a confirmatory PCR test if they test positive at home?

In line with clinical advice, confirmatory PCR testing will remain in place, for pupils, students, and staff for whom testing is done at home.

Robust evaluations from PHE and the University of Oxford show that LFD tests are accurate, reliable and successfully identify those with coronavirus (COVID-19) who could pass on the virus without realising. The tests have extremely low rates of false positives. LFD tests taken on test sites, such as on school grounds, do not need a confirmatory PCR test. This is because these tests are done in a controlled environment and trained staff read the results.

All positive results from rapid tests undertaken at home do need to be confirmed with a standard PCR test. This is because these tests are not conducted in a controlled environment and will not have trained staff on hand. Following positive LFD test at home, a confirmatory PCR test should be booked online or by calling 119. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the staff member and their close contacts should self-isolate. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test (at home only) and staff can return to settings.

Does the decision to pause daily contact testing in secondary schools and colleges impact primary schools and nurseries?

No, there is no change to the rollout of regular testing for staff using rapid lateral flow tests in primary schools and nurseries. Staff will continue to be tested twice weekly, 3-4 days apart. We will review the findings of the PHE and NHS Test and Trace evaluation of daily contact testing and use these to determine next steps.

Early years

Which EY settings are included in the education testing programme?

From March, all school-based nurseries, maintained nursery schools and PVI nurseries are included.

I'm a nursery (PVI or maintained): can we test staff on site?

All nurseries are being provided with test kits for use at home. Using these kits at home is recommended because if the test is positive, the risk of transmission on site is reduced.

Testing: participation

How will the testing work?

Primary school and nursery staff will be supplied with at home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test kits which they will be able to use twice weekly 3-4 days apart before coming into work, ideally in the morning. The LFDs supplied do not require laboratory processing and can provide a quick result in about 30 minutes.

Testing is voluntary and staff will not need to produce evidence of a negative test result, or provide proof of having taken a test, to return to work in person. However, testing is strongly encouraged.

The asymptomatic testing programme does not replace current testing policy for those with symptoms. Anyone with symptoms, whether they are involved in the asymptomatic testing programme or not, will still be expected to obtain a PCR test and follow NHS Test and Trace Guidance, self-isolating until they have received their results.

Schools, nurseries and staff should continue with all current protective measures – asymptomatic testing does not replace these controls or make these less important in controlling the virus.

Nurseries in the private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector can now access an [introduction to rapid testing webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8) which provides information on the process of how the testing programme should be managed by settings.

How accurate is a lateral flow device test?

Antigen lateral flow tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals and are approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Using antigen LFD tests is crucial in the fight against the virus.

Extensive clinical evaluation has been carried out on the antigen lateral flow tests. Evaluations from Public Health England and the University of Oxford show these tests are accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

Antigen LFD tests identify individuals who are likely to be infectious. These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying by LFD remains important.

It is important to remember that these tests are an additional layer of health protection measure in addition to face coverings, social distancing and other protective measures.

How often should primary and nursery staff take a test?

Staff should take the test twice weekly at home 3-4 days apart. If staff work part-time or have irregular attendance, they should still take a test twice weekly as above. Peripatetic staff should choose one school/nursery from where they will collect their home test kits.

When should school and nursery staff do the testing? Mornings vs evening? Is weekend testing allowed?

Staff should test twice weekly 3-4 days apart before coming into work. It is recommended that staff test in the morning before attending their setting (so there is less chance of infection between taking the test and attending the setting). However, you may choose to do the testing the evening before if more convenient.

Do staff working from home need to take a test if they never attend school/nursery in person?

No: the test kits are only for those working on school / nursery premises that might unknowingly infect others.

Should I still take part in the asymptomatic testing programme if I have recently tested positive for COVID-19?

If staff have recently (within 90 days) had a positive PCR test for COVID-19, they are likely to have developed some immunity. Individuals are exempt from testing by both PCR and LFD within 90 days of a positive PCR test, unless they develop new symptoms.

However, individuals may choose to take an LFD test after the 10-day isolation period, for example as part of a workplace or community testing programme. This should only be done after completion of the required self-isolation period as per [the NHS stay at home guidance](#). If they test positive with a LFD test, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days or longer if symptomatic.

They are still required to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact of a positive case, even if this is within the 90-day window.

Will we have to opt in to receive the test kit supplies?

As part of its operational guidance, DHSC has set out a legal agreement with terms and conditions that schools and nurseries will agree to by participating. The Primary Schools Agreement Rapid Testing Rollout is available on the primary [schools document sharing platform](#).

Primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools should have received their first delivery of test kits. Guidance for these settings on how to reorder supplies can now be found on the same document sharing platform [here](#).

PVI nurseries will start to receive deliveries of LFD home testing kits from 11 March to be used from the week beginning 22 March. Settings can expect to receive a further delivery of test kit supplies between 24th and 26th March. PVI nurseries that have reported to us missing or damaged kit between 15th and 18th March will receive additional kits as part of this. These supplies should last another 3-4 weeks. The reordering journey for PVI nurseries is different than that for primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools. Separate guidance on how PVIs can order further supplies will be available on the document sharing platform by the beginning of April. Further information for PVI settings on the process of managing the testing programme is

available through an introduction to rapid testing webinar, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8

What if a PVI has not received the correct number of test kits?

The number of testing kits that PVI's will receive for workforce testing is based on a workforce estimation using the number of childcare places on record with Ofsted. If this data is no longer up to date and thus PVI's do not think they have received the correct number of test kits, they should use [this online form](#) to report this to us. You will need your nursery's unique identification number to complete this. Please note you will not require a DfE sign-in account.

PVI nurseries should have received an initial delivery of LFD home testing kits to be used from the week beginning 22 March. Settings can expect to receive a further delivery of test kit supplies between from the week commencing 22 March. These supplies should last another 3-4 weeks

How should schools/nurseries distribute the supply of test kits?

It is advisable that staff are given allocated time slots for collecting their test kits to maintain social distancing and to avoid queues and crowding. Staff who distribute kits and those collecting kits should maintain social distancing and wear appropriate face coverings in line with national guidance.

Can settings redistribute test kits?

The number of testing kits that PVI's will receive for workforce testing is based on a workforce estimation using the number of childcare places on record with Ofsted. If this data is no longer up to date and thus PVI's do not think they have received a sufficient number of test kits, they should use [this online form](#) to report this to us. You will need your nursery's unique identification number to complete this.

If a setting has received too many test kits they will be able to keep them as stock and use as and when required. Settings should not redistribute test kits to other settings. The DfE must be able to track the supply of test kits in case of exceptional circumstances such as a batch recall.

How should headteachers/nursery leaders brief their staff?

Leaders may want to take staff through the materials supplied on the document sharing portal and testing instructions for use (v 1.3.2 or v 1.3.3), including the 'How to Guide' and the 'how to self-test' video, as a group to give consistent messaging. Staff may also want to view our webinar introducing rapid testing, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8. The format of the briefing should comply with national guidelines on social distancing.

What should you do if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace?

Staff who are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a contact of someone who has coronavirus, will need to self-isolate immediately following current public health guidance.

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a PCR test. Tests can be booked online through the [NHS website](#)) or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet.

How have you got the addresses and contact details for PVIs?

Ofsted have provided PVI contact details to the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care. We will only use these contact details to support the COVID-19 Education Testing programme.

Testing kits will be sent to the address the PVI has registered with Ofsted. Please contact enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk from the email address you have on record to inform us of any changes/updates. Alternatively call 03001231231 from the mobile number registered with Ofsted to inform them of any changes/updates.

Testing: general

Will the existing testing service remain open?

The Government's normal testing service for symptomatic individuals will continue. This is the foundation of our testing strategy. It is the most effective way to know if staff are positive and need to self-isolate. If staff have symptoms, they should continue to book a test via the [NHS Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) service](#) or by calling 119 in England and Wales, or 0300 303 2713 in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Why should I get tested if I have no symptoms?

Lateral flow tests are designed to detect the level of virus in individuals who do not experience and show any symptoms, but who could still be infectious and pass the virus to others. By taking a test, staff will help to stop the spread of the virus, protect other people, and save lives.

Should someone who has been vaccinated take an LFD test?

Yes, we do not yet know whether vaccines prevent individuals transmitting the virus. If staff have been vaccinated, they should continue to follow the steps set out in this guidance. The vaccine does not interfere with the LFD or PCR tests.

Why should I take a test when I don't even have symptoms?

Lateral flow tests are designed to detect the level of virus in individuals who do not experience and show any symptoms, but who could still be infectious and pass the virus to others. By taking a test, staff will help to stop the spread of the virus, protect other people, and save lives.

This will also mean that staff can continue going to work if they test negative using the at-home LFD tests. By detecting more asymptomatic cases, schools can avoid unnecessary staff shortages through staff unwittingly infecting others.

What impact does this testing have on protective measures on schools and nurseries?

All existing protective measures set out in the [School coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance](#) and the [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) guidance e.g. social distancing, handwashing, face coverings where needed, bubbles) remain important and the need for these is not lessened. A negative LFD result should not be read as a means to relax or ignore social distancing or other virus prevention measures intended to reduce transmission – LFD is an additional tool that contributes to reducing risk.

Can staff members' families get tested too?

If you are a member of a household, childcare bubble, or support bubble of staff in a primary or early years setting you can get a twice-weekly test:

- Through your employer, if they offer testing to employees.
- At a local test site – you may need to book an appointment. You can find your nearest test site via the postcode checker www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site or check your local council website.
- By collecting a home test kit from a local test site - anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests. Find your nearest collection site COVID Test Finder (<https://www.gov.uk/find-covid-19-lateral-flow-test-site>)
- By ordering a home test kit online - do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most. More information can be found on www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests
- For those who cannot access online, or for any queries about the tests, people in England can call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm.

More information can be found [here](#).

Test process: results

What happens if a staff member's lateral flow test result is negative?

Staff with a negative LFD result can continue to attend school or nursery after logging their result with NHS T & T. We recommend that they also inform their school or nursery of their result. Individuals who test negative should continue to follow national and local guidelines including regular handwashing, social distancing and wearing face coverings, where required.

If a staff member has had positive PCR test followed by a negative LFD test taken at home, can they end self-isolation?

No, individuals must continue to self-isolate. The at home LFD tests are not approved to allow release from self-isolation. Note if an individual has had a positive PCR, they should self-isolate and not take an LFD test for their period of isolation.

What happens if a staff member's lateral flow test result is positive?

Individuals with a positive LFD result will need to self-isolate immediately in line with the [stay-at-home guidance](#). They should report their results to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is complete, as set out in the test kit instructions and [self-report.gov.uk page](https://self-report.gov.uk). This will enable NHS Test and Trace to monitor the spread of the virus.

They should also inform their school or nursery of their result so the school can identify close contacts and they can make appropriate cover arrangements. They must book a confirmatory PCR test online, then continue to isolate as per the [stay at-home guidance](#) if the PCR test result is positive. The staff member should also inform their school or nursery of a positive PCR result.

What happens if staff have a positive LFD test at home but the follow up PCR is then negative?

If you have a negative PCR test following a positive LFD test, you and your household can stop isolating as per the [NHS stay at home guidance](#).

What should happen to contacts of staff who have a positive LFD test and a positive confirmatory PCR test?

Schools and nurseries should follow their existing policy in identifying close contacts of positive cases that would need to self-isolate.

When should self-isolation of an asymptomatic case commence from?

If staff are asymptomatic, the self-isolation should start as soon as the LFD test taken at home shows a positive result, in line with the [NHS stay at home guidance](#). They should arrange a confirmatory PCR as soon as possible.

What happens if a staff member's lateral flow test result is void/invalid?

If staff get a void result, this means that the test has not run correctly, and they should take another test as soon as possible, ideally on the same day. Staff should still report the void result to NHS Test and Trace via the [self-report gov.uk page](#). They should use a new test kit but not reuse anything from the first kit. In the very unlikely event staff get two void test results, they should book a PCR test. In this instance, staff do not need to self-isolate pending the result of the PCR test. Staff should inform their school/nursery as it may indicate a faulty batch of test kits.

Do test results get affected by brushing teeth, drinking water?

Avoid eating or drinking half an hour before the test. A small amount of water is acceptable. There is unlikely to be an adverse impact of brushing teeth prior to testing but it might be prudent to wait a while before testing.

How should primary schools and nurseries manage close contacts of those who have positive LFDs tests?

Schools/nurseries should send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, as defined in the [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance or actions for early years and childcare providers guidance](#). Those who have come into close contact with staff who have a positive LFD result should isolate straight away rather than waiting for the staff member's confirmatory positive PCR test. The staff member's household should also isolate immediately after the staff member is informed of the positive LFD result, as per the [stay-at-home guidance](#).

If schools and nurseries would like support on the action they should take to respond to a positive case, they can contact the dedicated advice service introduced by Public Health England (PHE) and delivered by the NHS Business Services Authority. This can be reached by calling the DfE Helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting option 1 for advice on the action to take in response to a positive case. This is outlined in the [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance. or actions for early years and childcare providers guidance](#).

How to manage primary bubbles: what happens to the teacher's bubble of pupils / other close contacts if they test positive?

Where there is a positive case, not all members of the teacher's 'bubble' / group will be asked to self-isolate. Schools/nurseries should only send home any pupils who have come into close contact with the teacher as defined in the [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance](#)

Components of LFD tests

Are the swabs latex free?

The manufacturer has confirmed that Innova swabs are latex free.

Does the LFD test contain any harmful substances and are there any precautions for dealing with spillages?

Extraction solution which comes with the LFD test kit contains the following components: Na_2HPO_4 (disodium hydrogen phosphate), NaH_2PO_4 (sodium phosphate monobasic), NaCl (Sodium Chloride). These components do not have any hazard labels associated with them, and the manufacturer states that there are no hazards anticipated if individuals follow the instructions for use.

Any spillages should be wiped with a paper towel and if the solution included the throat and nose sample, the area should be appropriately disinfected using household disinfectant.

Do the LFD tests contain animal products, or have they been tested on animals?

All of the antibodies are necessarily generated from animal cells. While we do not test any of these products on animals, nor are animals harmed in the development process, the antibodies used for the test reaction are derived using an animal cell in the laboratory. The T line for a positive test is derived by reaction between the sample as it flows to the membrane (thin paper like material inside the device) which is coated with these antibodies. It is therefore highly unlikely for there to be any direct contact between the person being tested and the animal material itself.

However, we want to make sure that the people undertaking the test make an informed choice about this.

Are the LFD tests vegan?

The monoclonal antibody technology present in our lateral flow devices is generated from animal cells. During development, at no time have any component parts been tested on animals.

Are the LFD tests halal?

No animal products have been used in the production of the swabs. The swab is the only material with which the individual will come into direct contact. The individual using the test will not come into direct contact with any materials made from animal products.

The thin paper like material inside the LFD is coated with antibodies from animal cells. No direct contact will be made between the person and this material. The monoclonal antibody technology present in our lateral flow devices is generated from animal cells. This is in common with other tests of this kind, including commercially available pregnancy tests.

Is the LFD test safe for those that are pregnant?

Yes, the tests are safe to use by those who are pregnant.

Does taking a test during Ramadan invalidate the fast?

The British Islamic Medical Association view is that taking a Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test or lateral flow test during Ramadan does not invalidate the fast.

People may feel more comfortable doing the tests when they are not fasting, even if they support the Islamic legal ruling of its permissibility. In this case, with the move to home-testing, tests can be carried out between Iftar and Sehri.

Supplies

Our boxes have arrived! Does each blue box only contain 1 test kit? Or do we open them to reveal more than one in each little blue box?

Each individual box has 7 tests. Please give one box of 7 per staff member. If you are a schools-based nursery, maintained nursery school or primary school you will also need to hand out the new Instructions for Use.

Test kits will be sent in packs of 3 or 7. Settings can initially provide 2 packs of 3 or 1 pack of 7 testing kits to each member of staff so that they can test twice a week. Packs, whether of 3 or 7, should not be broken up and should be given in whole to a member of staff.

What happens if we are not able to receive the delivery for some reason?

For primary schools, schools-based and maintained nursery schools, the delivery partner will reattempt delivery in the next possible timeslot.

For initial deliveries of testing kits to PVI nurseries, where nursery staff were not available for the receipt of their deliveries, delivery partners will post a "Sorry we missed you" card which will allow staff to re-arrange their delivery.

What do I do if my school/nursery has not received their kit?

If you are a primary school, schools-based nursery or a maintained nursery school please report any missing or damaged items, via this [contact form](#).

PVI nurseries are able to report any missing or damaged items via this [separate contact form](#). Please note you will not require a DfE sign-in account. Before you report an issue with your delivery, please ensure that you have checked the delivery schedule published on the document sharing platform [here](#) and checked for a "Sorry we missed you" card which will allow you to re-arrange your delivery. Other members of staff may have accepted the delivery on behalf of your setting and therefore we ask you to check with your colleagues before submitting a report on missing items.

If PVI nurseries are having difficulty with the contact form they can:

- Check they are using the PVI form [here](#)
- Confirm and find their URN using the Ofsted website: [Ofsted | Check if childcare is registered](#)
- If the form signals that we are still unable to locate details for your organisation, contact enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk to confirm your URN.
- If you are still experiencing difficulty, please contact enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk from the email address you have on record to inform us of any changes/updates. Alternatively, call 03001231231 from the mobile number registered with Ofsted to inform them of any changes/updates.

How and when will test kits/ be provided?

Primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools will have received their initial delivery of test kits. These test kits are for the twice weekly at home testing of staff. The number of test kits that each school/nursery will receive has been estimated based on the number of staff.

PVI nurseries can expect delivery of test kits from 11 March. A delivery schedule is available on the document sharing platform [here](#). Deliveries will contain sufficient test kits for all staff for 3-4 weeks. Guidance on how to reorder further testing supplies will be made available on the document sharing platform by early April.

When should PVI settings expect a second delivery of test kits?

The majority of PVIs will have received an initial delivery of lateral flow device test kits, ready to commence the testing of staff from Monday 22 March. You can expect to receive a further delivery of test kit supplies between 24th and 26th March. PVI nurseries that have reported to us missing or damaged kit between 15th and 18th March will receive additional kits as part of this. These supplies should last another 3-4 weeks. If a setting has received too many test kits they will be able to keep them as stock to use as and when required. If you believe that you have not been supplied with sufficient test kits, please use the [nursery rapid testing delivery supply form](#) to report this to us.

PVIs will not need to take any specific steps to receive their second delivery of test kits.

How do we reorder supplies?

The test kits are expected to last up to three and a half weeks based on staff testing twice a week.

Guidance for primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools on how to reorder supplies can now be found on the document sharing platform [here](#).

The reordering journey for PVI nurseries is different than that for primary schools, schools-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools. Separate guidance on how PVIs can reorder further supplies will be available on the document sharing platform by early April.

Record keeping and reporting

What record keeping does the school or nursery need to do?

Schools/nurseries should keep a test kit log, where they record which individual has taken which kits home. This is required in the unlikely event of an incident requiring investigation or batch recall. This log will also help record that staff have received the new instructions for use. This should be separate from the results register for data protection reasons. A template is provided on the document sharing platform [here](#).

Schools/nurseries should also keep a record of staff tests results. This will help with contact tracing, since schools/nurseries cannot view staff results otherwise. A template record is provided on the document sharing platform [here](#).

If the individual follows the instructions in the home test kits, they must then record and share their result (whether positive, negative or void) with NHS Test and Trace.

How long should primary schools/nurseries keep the Covid-19 staff data?

As outlined in the privacy notice, the school/nursery should retain its test kit log for no longer than five days after the test kit is provided. COVID-19 results register should be retained for a minimum of 14 days up to a month after the last entries are made by the school into them.

How and when do I report my result to NHS Test & Trace?

Individuals should ensure that they provide their result (positive, negative or void) to NHS Test and Trace. There are two ways staff can report their result. They can report online by visiting <http://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>. Alternatively they can report via telephone - Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm. +England, Wales and Northern Ireland: 119; Scotland: 0300 303 2713.

All staff should select the second option ('A school, college or other education provider') when filling in the 'Who was the test for?' section for reporting test results on <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Why do I need to share information on LFD test results both with NHS Test & Trace and my school/nursery?

It is a requirement to share results with NHS Test & Trace so that contact tracing (particularly outside the school environment can take place) and clinical evaluation of the testing programme can continue. Staff should share results with their school so that if positive, immediate contact tracing can take place in school. Void and negative results are useful information for their school both to monitor stocks of kits and to identify any particular issues that might need escalating to DfE or NHS Test & Trace.

Use of equipment

How will staff know what do to with the at home test kits?

Detailed information how to self-swab and process the tests is in the Instructions for Use (please check this is version 1.3.2 or 1.3.3 – dated 15 January 2021). Tests can be disposed of in the waste bag provided and then put in general household waste bins.

Nurseries in the private, voluntary, and independent (PVI) sector can now access an [introduction to rapid testing webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8) which provides information on the process of how the testing programme should be managed by settings.

What specific storage arrangements are required for the test kits?

The temperature for storing LFD test kits is between 2°C and 30°C. The LFD devices and reagents must be used between 15°C and 30°C during use so must not be stored outside. If they are stored somewhere colder than 15°C, then move them to a room temperature area for around 30 minutes before use.

How should staff members dispose of their kit?

Once their test is complete, staff should put all of the used test contents in the small waste bag provided. They should seal the bag and put the bag in their bin at home – it is classified as general household waste.

Consent

Do you need consent to process the personal data required for testing?

Primary schools and nurseries will need to satisfy themselves that they have a lawful basis for processing personal data. They will provide staff with a privacy notice (which is provided as a [template](#) on the document sharing platform) explaining what personal data is required to participate in the programme.

Workforce, funding and insurance

How are staff defined in primary schools and nurseries?

The primary school and nursery workforce includes all staff who are working in these settings including contractors or peripatetic staff. Schools and nurseries should also offer testing to other staff members, such as:

- clinical practitioners
- therapists
- other support staff
- caterers
- volunteers and
- those supporting with wraparound childcare to children attending school.

Non-permanent members of staff should also be offered testing, such as trainee teachers on placement in school and supply workforce.

Some staff (particularly those employed through the NHS) may have separate arrangements for regular testing.

If a staff member receives regular (twice weekly) testing in another setting i.e., NHS should they still take part in school or nursery?

If a staff member is participating in asymptomatic testing in a different setting, they do not need to participate in asymptomatic testing simultaneously in the school/nursery setting.

What are the duties of those undertaking the staff testing roles?

Prior to commencing their roles, staff must read the guidance and familiarise themselves with their roles. The two roles that each school or nursery will require are a 'Covid Coordinator and a 'Registration Assistant'.

The Covid Coordinator / Programme Management responsibilities cover the overall management of Covid self-testing programme at the school or nursery, including:

- engagement and communication with staff and parents

- ensuring staff are using the right instructions and that they sign for the test kits using the 'Test Kit Log'
- reporting incidents and carry out risk management
- storing and reporting any required data
- reordering tests when required (advice on how to do this will follow)

The Registration Assistant duties cover:

- distributing the correct number of test kits and managing the distribution schedule
- working with the Covid Coordinator/Programme manager to manage the stock of kits
- recording self-reported result for weekly testing on their COVID_19 Test Register.
- sending reminders to staff [report their results online](#) and to their school or nursery
- responding to staff questions about testing

How long are staff expected to spend in these roles?

The size of the school/nursery and its workforce will dictate how long the activities set out under the Registration Assistant and Covid Coordinator roles take. It is advisable that staff are given allocated time slots for test-kit pick up, to maintain social distancing and to avoid queues and crowding. Therefore, we expect that the initial set-up, including registration of staff and distribution of tests, will take up to 2 days. We anticipate that the regular input of staff test results to the Covid-19 test register will take up to 1 day, spread over the course of a working week.

Will my school/nursery have costs reimbursed?

Primary school and nursery staff will be supplied with at home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test kits which they will be able to use before coming into work. The home testing offer is intended to make the process as simple to manage as possible, minimising the demands placed on school and nursery workforces to deliver their staff testing programme. The responsibilities of the programme (Covid Coordinator and Registration Assistant) are intended to be integrated within existing staff or volunteer structures. We do not expect additional staffing costs to be incurred, as the administrative requirements for schools/nurseries are relatively light. No further workforce, equipment or funding is therefore required for the administration of these tests; as a result, primary schools/nurseries will not receive additional funding to carry out testing.

Has the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) or the insurance companies who work with primary schools, school-based or maintained nursery schools confirmed that they would cover activities related to the asymptomatic testing programme, even if testing occurs at home?

The Risk Protection Arrangements (RPA) provides extensive public and employer's liability cover. The RPA would provide an indemnity to the member school for all sums that the member school shall become legally liable to pay for damages or compensation in respect of or arising out of personal injury or damage to third party property occurring during the period the member school is a member of the RPA and in connection with the testing. Cover applies during home testing as well as testing on school premises. Risk assessments are required whether the testing is on site or in a pupil or employees' home.

If schools are insured, they should check with their insurer or their insurance broker / agent in the first instance to check the extent of cover provided for testing in the employee's own home.

Training

How much training will staff members get?

All of the information needed to allow an individual to participate in testing is included in the instructions for them. Primary schools and nurseries and their staff can find detailed information on how to self-swab and use the at home LFD tests in the following:

- 'instructions for use' handbook (v 1.3.2)
- 'how to' guide
- YouTube video series covering a 'step to step guide to covid-19 self-testing'
- PVI nurseries can access an [introduction to rapid testing webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8p-x_HYHYN8

Transport

What if staff need to travel to school on public transport?

Staff are being provided with at home test kits which they will be encouraged to use prior to attending work. If a staff member has a negative LFD test, they can continue to use public transport. However, if a staff member tests positive with a LFD test or develops symptoms, they should isolate immediately in line with the [stay-at-home guidance and book a PCR test](#).

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