

COVID testing in School: Lateral Flow Testing Risk Assessment, January 2021

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A programme of coronavirus (COVID-19) asymptomatic rapid-result Testing will be provided in secondary schools and colleges. This is to safeguard the teaching workforce's health and keep as many staff and students in secondaries, colleges, special schools and alternative provision as possible. The tests will be carried out by using a Lateral Flow Device (LFD): Innova SARS-CoV2 Antigen Rapid Qualitative Test; these tests produce a result in 30 minutes and do not require a laboratory to process.

All students aged 11-18 and staff are in the scope.

Anyone who shows symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) who has a negative result from an LFD test will be required to self-isolate until the result from a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test is known.

Anyone who experiences any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms can get a coronavirus (COVID-19) test at a testing site or home.

Preparing for rolling out LFD Testing

1. Review the 'How to Guide' – Rapid Testing in Schools and Colleges and decide who will be appointed as a Team Leader/Quality Lead and as COVID-19 Coordinator. Consideration should be made for the COVID-19 Coordinator to be trained and deputise for the Team Leader.
2. As soon as possible, communicate with staff, students and parents, guardians or carers that COVID-19 Testing is being rolled out in your school. Send them the NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 Testing for staff and students letter (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/949062/Template_letter_covid_19_testing_for_schools.odt) and share related materials with them, explain the testing process and ask them to provide consent via relevant parents or guardians. Obtain staff consent and student's parental consent.
3. Administered Swabbing will be provided only for students who are unable to self-swab. Further guidance will be provided, and specific risk assessments will be completed in conjunction with the student's individual needs
4. Use the Workplace Planning tool issued by the DfE to ascertain the required number of:

- Test Assistants
- Processors
- Registration Assistant
- Result Recorder
- Cleaner

Once the number of staff required has been identified, proceed with appointing or recruiting. The following roles can be fulfilled by third party helpers trained in the process: Team Leader, Test Assistant, Processor.

Teaching staff are not expected to be involved in the running of the Testing programme.

- The online modules available from the DfE and NHS are not tailored to school settings. The Team Leader and the COVID-19 Coordinator need to review the training modules and ensure the necessary adjustments are made to complete the school Testing programme.
 - The Team Leader should ensure that the Competency Checklists for Key Roles are completed before rolling out the testing programme. The form issued by the DfE should be used.
- 5. Identify a suitable space for Testing. The key things to consider are:**
- Enough space is available to facilitate 2-metre social distancing – before, during and after the test.
 - At least two doors to facilitate a one-way system to manage the flow of those taking a test
 - The flooring of the testing area should be non-porous that can withstand cleaning with specified disinfectants. If a suitable area is not available, then a hard surface or covering should be laid down during the testing programme.
 - The testing area will have four key areas:
 1. Registration desk
 2. Swabbing area
 3. Sample processing area
 4. Recording area
- 6. Ensure sufficient Test Kits and personal protective equipment (PPE) are available for the Testing team.**
- 7. PPE – The Testing Team should have access to fluid-resistant (Type 11R) surgical mask, nitrile gloves which meet the Regulation (EU) 2016/425, safety glasses with side shields or visors which are tested and approved under appropriate government standards and disposable impervious apron/gowns should be provided to the Testing Team. The PPE will be provided with the Test Kit. Provide PPE is as follows: -**
- Type 11R surgical mask – All members of the Testing team
 - Nitrile gloves – Processor, Testing Assistant, Results Recorder, Cleaner.
 - Disposable impervious apron/gown – Processor, Cleaner.
 - Eye protection – Processor and Cleaner.

8. The school will need to provide the following materials and equipment to facilitate the Testing:

- Tables
- Chairs
- NHS Test and Trace signage and instructions for swabbing that can be cleaned
- A PC for test registration upload – the PC should be set up as per DSE requirements.
- Hand sanitiser
- Disinfecting wipes
- Tissues
- Tape or plastic sheets to separate testing bays
- General waste bins
- Bins for hazardous/clinical waste
- Clocks / Timer
- Mirrors
- First Aid supplies
- Tube racks or equivalent – it can be microarray test tube racks
- Trays to transfer tests to the processing table
- Stationery supplies, such as parkers, pens, printers
- A barcode scanner if you want to automatically scan barcodes
- Cleaning materials: mop, bucket, wipes, waste disposal bags (yellow/clear/tiger bags and black bags) , etc.

9. Check and record that the Testing Team has carried out a dry run as a team during mobilisation or on the first day.

10. Monitoring the programme

- Record void rates and invalid tests rates by;
- Record errors;
- Record serious incident rates and escalate through the DfE Helpline;
- All incidents that could potentially impact the quality or safety of Testing should be reported to DfE who will, in turn, escalate the issues to DHSC through the clinical governance process for mass Testing

Conducting Testing

- All staff have the opportunity to conduct weekly Testing - this will help identify those who are carrying the virus without displaying symptoms, reducing the risk of transmission.
- Students and school staff to conduct daily Testing for seven days if they have been identified as close contacts of colleagues, students that have tested positive - this ensures that they do not need to isolate and are able to continue to benefit from high quality, face to face education.
- For every group, Testing is voluntary, but those who are eligible for tests are strongly encouraged to participate in reducing the risk of transmission within school.

In line with routine infection control practice, close contacts who decide not to be tested daily will need to self-isolate in line with guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

The Government has asked schools to adhere to the following guidance:

- [Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges](#)
- [Mass asymptomatic Testing: schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [What to do if a pupil is displaying symptoms of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Schools and childcare settings: return in January 2021](#)

UK Military personnel will provide planning and training support to secondary schools and colleges, for more information:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/military-to-support-the-testing-of-thousands-of-secondary-school-and-college-students-in-england?utm_source=06d59c67-8281-413b-a9fa-dcf33a26895d&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=weekly

Public Health England and the Health and Safety Executive require the completion of a risk assessment to ensure the end to end health, safety and infection control risks for mass lateral flow testing. All foreseeable risks should be identified, pre-assessed, managed and monitored regularly by the school management team.

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
<p>Spread/contraction of COVID-19 due to interaction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who should not be at the school; • A person who has symptoms of the disease, • A person who may be asymptomatic, • A person who lacks information on how infection risks are controlled in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and students have been advised not to attend if they have any symptoms of COVID 19, or live with someone who is showing symptoms of COVID 19 or if they have been in close contact with someone who is displaying symptoms. • The requirement to wear face-covering/mask is reminded to everyone in advance - at the time of the test booking. • Everyone entering the Testing area will wear a face mask/covering. • The Testing Team will wear the PPE as per the training received. • Prominent signage to inform people that the use of a face mask/covering is mandatory is displayed at the entrance to the building. • Staff monitors compliance with wearing of face-covering/masks at arrival and throughout the Testing. • Everyone entering the testing area will use hand sanitiser provided by the entrance and when instructed – this is enforced by the Testing Team. • The school has informed parents, students, carers, staff and visitors not to enter the school if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (following the COVID-19 guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection); • Access to the testing area is restricted; only staff and students that have been scheduled for a test will have access. • Parents of SEN students are individually consulted in order that plans are reviewed to assess how the Testing will be performed; • All staff are briefed and consulted on Health and Safety procedures and the plans for Testing and for the return of students; • All staff have had sufficient training and briefing regarding infection control and school protocols; • People deemed vulnerable take particular care to minimise contact with others and are advised to follow Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19; • When necessary, risk assessments are consulted and discussed with relevant staff, including on a one-to-one basis for some to enable staff to speak about their own situation and reasonable adjustments to be made; • The school will try as far as practically possible to be flexible and accommodate additional measures for vulnerable people where appropriate; • Staff have completed Control of Infections training; • Specific risk assessments for new and expectant mothers are completed. 	Y	

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
<p>Infection transmission due to the incorrect use of face masks/coverings.</p> <p>Spread/contraction of Covid-19 due face coverings not being worn where local area restrictions or national lockdown requirements apply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are instructed in the correct way to put on, remove, store and dispose of face masks/coverings (when these are required to be worn); Signage on the correct use of face masks/coverings is displayed; Those who are exempt from wearing face coverings are supported by the school ie time arranged for test when limited number of individuals present. Students (year 7 and above) and staff are required to wear face coverings when moving through communal areas when and if the school is under local area government local intervention measures; 	Y	
<p>Transmission of the virus due to the use of unsuitable areas allocated to complete the testing programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The designated Testing area has controls in place to reduce transmission by contact, airborne and droplet routes. Consideration has been taken to keep students and staff as separate bubbles that may be affected. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A check on all ventilation systems/facilities available was completed. Ventilation is provided to help reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus. Windows and doors (unless fire doors) are opened to improve general ventilation through fresh air and mechanical ventilation system in place to provide fresh air. The installation of one-way systems, layouts and occupancy limits for areas enable safe social distancing and restriction areas that are only entered by the Testing Team; Provision of hand-washing facilities, wipes and hand sanitiser and instructions on their use; Sufficient lighting is provided; The testing area has non-porous flooring. The testing area is well lit and has good airflow with no recirculation of air. The testing area temperature is between 15°-30° Celsius. Hazard reporting mechanisms are in place and are easily accessible. 	Y	
<p>Lack of premises management and unsuitable equipment can lead to accidents and unsuitable or damaged equipment or furniture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The testing area's floor is free from slip and trip hazards; The testing area is well lit; All the materials and equipment recommended by the DfE for the Testing area has been provided; The Team Leader can request additional equipment or resources if it is deemed necessary; 	Y	

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
Lack of suitable flooring could lead to slips, trips and falls (in the stairs, the Testing, sample processing, registration area and welfare facilities) or impact injuries caused due to poor premises management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements have been made to ensure staff have access to IT equipment required to log in results, scanning QR codes and escalate issues to the Headteacher, local public health officials, etc. • All electrical and test equipment is visually checked prior to use (checking for any damage); • The school adheres to the government guidance on managing school buildings; • Premises staff levels are maintained and suitable for the use of the building; • Appropriate cleaning and premises staffing levels are in place; • To avoid tripping hazards and cross-contamination, no personal items are taken to the testing area. • Waste removal and enhanced cleaning programs are in place for the potential coronavirus contaminated waste; • General waste and hazardous waste is disposed in different bins; • Testing staff will inform the Team Leader if they have any Health and Safety concerns; • Contingency in place for sudden premises staff absence; • Accidents and near misses are recorded, reported and investigated; identified actions are addressed. • The Team Leader will hold regular meetings with Testing staff. 		
Testing Spread/contraction of COVID-19 due to lack of social distancing measures during Testing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training is completed by members of the Testing Team before taking up a role. • Each role has completed the modules relevant to their role as per the COVID 19 National Testing Programme: Training Guide Rapid Testing for Schools and Colleges; • At a minimum, PPE should be changed between each test session. Staff are required to wear the appropriate PPE for each role; • The Team Leader addresses any questions staff may have after completing their training modules. • Face coverings/masks are worn at all times by everyone in the premises and when undertaking a test - except for brief lowering at time of Swabbing; • Testing staff provides verbal instructions to people not complying with this when necessary; • Testing staff the Testing kits are not out of date; • Two-metre social distancing is maintained between people in the testing area with measured floor markings to ensure compliance. When necessary, verbal reminders are given by the Testing Team or any member of staff. • A one-way flow of people through the Testing area will be maintained at all times. Compliance with this is monitored by the Testing Team. • Staff and students are required to conform with social distancing requirements at all times; 	Y	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Testing area has been assessed to identify the maximum number of people allowed, this information has been communicated to all staff, and the Testing Team ensures this number is never exceeded; • Furniture has been placed to facilitate social distancing, when necessary, perplex panels are used to further reduce the risk; • Students practice social distancing from staff; • The movement to different areas within the school is reduced as much as possible; • External doors are used to move students in a one-way system, where possible. • Additional furniture or seating facilities are not permitted outside the Testing area; • Students will be tested with their group will not mix with other groups; • PPE is changed whenever Testing staff leave and re-enter the Testing area (per session) or if PPE is compromised or contaminated. 		
Spread/contraction of COVID-19 due to lack of adequate cleaning measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole Testing area is cleaned at least twice daily in line with government guidance. This includes a wipe down of all potential touchpoints. • The cleaning staff is on hand to assist with any cleaning requirements that may arise. • The Test Assistant provides regular cleaning to testing stations throughout the day; • People taking the test are asked to self-clean all the surfaces they touched and the testing bay following the test, using disinfectant wipes or disposable cloth and spray provided. • Regular cleaning of the Testing area including wipe down of all potential touchpoints in accordance with PHE guidance. • Cleaning materials used are disposed of in hazardous/clinical waste bins. • Equipment used by the students and staff will be suitably cleaned before it is used by another person; • Swabs, cartridges and tissues will be packaged in a yellow/tiger bag. • PPE and used cleaning products will be packaged in yellow/tiger bags; • LFD packaging and general waste will be packaged in a black general waste bag. • Staff handling waste will be wearing gloves. • Suitable arrangements will be made for the disposal of yellow/tiger bags. • If an area is suspected of having been contaminated by coronavirus (a positive case is detected for an occupant of a classroom), the area will be subject to a hard surface clean with disposable cleaning materials and the associated waste will be bagged in a yellow/tiger bag and will be disposed of as per the guidance set on COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings. • If part of the Testing area is contaminated by significant spillage (Testing fluid or bodily fluid), the surrounding area will be evacuated and cleaned immediately as per the guidance. 	Y	

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
Lack of staffing / insufficient staff ratios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The adequate ratio of Testing staff to student tests' is maintained and it is assessed on a daily basis, based on potential staff illness or self-isolation; Students are suitably supervised in the Testing area at all times; Covid 19 Co-ordinator monitors official new information or additional training modules released by the DfE and cascades the information to the Team Leader. 		
<p>Poor management of the substances used in the Testing area.</p> <p>The Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing kit includes an extraction solution that contains the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Na_2HPO_4 (disodium hydrogen phosphate), • NaH_2PO_4 (sodium phosphate monobasic), • NaCl (Sodium Chloride). <p>These components do not have any hazard labels associated with them, and the manufacturer states that there are no hazards anticipated under conditions of use as described in other product literature. This is the case for exposure to eye, skin, inhalation, ingestion, chronic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable storage and management of LFD tests, cleaning products and hand sanitiser is in place; All chemicals used for the cleaning of school buildings and equipment is COSHH assessed and managed appropriately; Material safety data sheets (MSDS) are held for all chemicals (e.g. MSDS form provided by Innova) and readily available to all staff; COSHH safety training has been completed by all those using chemicals for cleaning; Appropriate PPE is available for all cleaning duties, including suitable PPE for cleaning potential coronavirus contaminated areas or equipment. No chemicals are stored on the Testing area other than hand sanitiser and the substances included on the test kit <p>PPE Staff have been trained on putting on and removing PPE, infection control measures, hygiene and cleanliness. The Testing Team have access to fluid-resistant (Type 11R) surgical masks, nitrile gloves which meet the Regulation (EU) 2016/425, face shields or safety glasses with side shields or visors which are tested and approved under appropriate government standards and disposable impervious aprons/gowns. PPE is used as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type 11R surgical mask – All members of the Testing team Nitrile gloves – Processor, Testing Assistant, Results Recorder, Cleaner. Disposable impervious apron/gown – Processor, Cleaner. Eye protection - Processor, Cleaner. <p>Environmental considerations Staff disposes of the product as per instructions provided with the tests and on the training modules. Staff are aware that no substances should be disposed of by pouring them drains.</p> <p>Spillages Spillages are promptly wiped, and the materials used are disposed in line with the manufacturer's disposal procedures. Staff change their PPE after dealing with a spillage.</p>	Y	

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toxicity, reproductive and developmental toxicity, carcinogenicity, and medical conditions aggravated by exposure.	Substances' Use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expired solutions are not used and are returned. Staff have been trained in handling potentially biohazardous samples and chemicals. To prevent improper handling, the Team Leader provides supervision and assistance to ensure all Testing staff adhere to the training provided guidelines. Students know good behaviour is expected in the Testing area, e.g., follow the 'Lab Code'. Staff follow procedures on the MSDS form provided by Innova to mitigate against inhalation, skin contact or ingestion of these chemicals. 		
Welcome & registration. Contact between Testing staff and students, increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To avoid the congregation of people being tested at the Testing area, the school has informed beforehand the Testing times, so only the people who are scheduled to be tested go to the registration desk at the required time. Before Testing commences, Testing staff perform hand hygiene and put on the PPE required for their role. Face coverings/masks are used at all times If students or staff are being tested because they are a close contact, they will need to wait somewhere before being allowed to begin normal school activities until they receive a negative test result. The Testing area is ventilated. Social distancing is maintained at all times. 	Y	Suitable area required for holding close contacts following test and before they return to main school – location TBC
Sample taking. Contact between Testing staff and students, increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing staff wear PPE in line with government guidance Face coverings/masks will be used at all times – except for the short period when the Swabbing is completed. The NHS Test and Trace poster "How to do your COVID test" leaflet is displayed in key areas for people that are completing the test. Staff can provide assistance – verbal instructions at a 2-metre distance The Testing area is ventilated. People being tested will only handle their barcode and LFD test kit. Students will only have access to the Registration area and the Swabbing area Social distancing is maintained at all times. Face masks/coverings will only be removed by the person taking the test, and only for the time required to take the sample. People doing a self-swabbing are responsible for cleaning bays and all surfaces that they have into contact with (e.g., table, chair, mirror) by using disinfectant wipes / disposable cloth & spray provided. Test Assistants do not need to wear apron, gloves and visor, but they have access to gloves and wear them if they are required to touch any component of the test kit. 	Y	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing staff PPE is replaced between test sessions, e.g., at the end of the morning session before lunch, except for specific roles. Staff follow the instructions given in the training modules. Staff doing sample processing roles change gloves after each sample and follow PPE guidelines. 		
Sample transport. Contact between sample and test centre runner increasing the transmission of COVID19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trays are used to prevent contact with testing kits; Only trained Testing staff (Test Assistants and Processors) will transport the samples. Staff wears PPE as per online training provided; If PPE is damaged, staff can request a replacement – additional PPE is available; 	Y	
Sample processing & analysis. Contact between samples and sample testers increasing the transmission of COVID19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairs in the swabbing bay are a minimum of 2 metres apart; Processors wear apron googles/visor and mask for each test group and change gloves between each test; Care is taken to avoid spillages and splashes; Processors clean between each test being processed using disinfectant wipes / disposable cloth & spray provided; Each swabbing desk has a processing desk close by no more than 1-2 metres away. Recording desk is located close by; There is a clear division between Swabbing and processing area. Individuals being tested cannot enter the processing area; There is a one-way system for individuals to follow: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Registration desk Swabbing desks Sample processing area Recording area Individuals doing the test can only access the registration desk and the swabbing desks. The desks are set up as per the NHS Test and Trace guidance. 	Y	
Sample and waste disposal. Contact between samples and sample testers increasing the transmission of COVID19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All disposables are discarded before leaving the testing area. General and hazardous/clinical waste is separated and placed in suitable bins. Cleaning materials used, e.g., wipes, cleaning-cloths, roll and disposable mop heads, are disposed of and placed into the hazardous waste bins. Waste is removed at least daily or when the bins are getting full. Staff use separate waste bags as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear/Tiger bags – hazardous/clinical waste; 	Y	

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
Samples taken can contain COVID-19 or other infectious agents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Black bags – general waste. 		
Incorrect result communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team Leader carries out staff performance and competency reviews by direct supervision and by completing the Competency Checklist for Key Roles before the testing programme started and then at agreed intervals (dates are included on each checklist form); • The Testing team has completed a dry-run to assess issues that could arise; • People doing the test receive two identical barcodes at the registration desk; Barcode and Registration card. • People doing the test registers their details to a unique ID barcode before conducting the test; • Barcodes are attached by Testing staff at the sample collection bay; • Barcodes are checked for accuracy at the processing desk and are applied to the LFD tests at this desk; • Competency checks carried out by the Team Leader by using the Schools and College Testing for Assessment Checklist. 	Y	
Spread/contraction of Covid-19 due not acting appropriately when a case is suspected or confirmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If at any point, a student or staff member begins displaying symptoms, they will be sent home and will be advised to follow government guidance, COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance • If anyone becomes unwell in school with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature they are sent home/their parents or carer are contacted to collect them and they are advised to follow COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection • Parents/Carers are informed that a responsible adult should be on standby to collect their child from school if they become unwell during the school day. The name of the person who will collect the child needs to be provided and recorded for safeguarding • The school has identified the Local Health Protection Team (HPT) so they can be contacted immediately in the case of a case, the HPT details are available to the SLT • The school keeps informed of Government and Department for Education guidance and updates • The school has remote education plans in place for students or groups that need to self-isolate; 	Y	

Risk	Control measures	In place? (Yes/No)	Comments/ Outstanding action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A contingency plan is in place for a local outbreak, and if the school is asked to close temporarily by HPT or local authority to help control transmission. The plan may involve a return to remaining open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers only and providing remote education for all other pupils. 		
Stress or anxiety caused due to lack of information, support, or staff consultation. Especially those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support is provided to students that find the extra PPE worn by the Testing team intimidating and need extra reassurance about its role in keeping staff safe; Staff have read the "Training Guide Rapid Testing for Schools and Colleges" guide and the Testing Team Leader has provided an induction of the local Testing arrangements; Staff have been trained on how to support student's concerns; Communications about the Testing programme, schedule, and Health and Safety arrangements are in place. Managers have an open-door policy. The Testing programme process has been planned and communicated to all staff. An on-site run-through of the swabbing and processing procedure exercise has been carried out. All Testing staff has completed the necessary training to discharge their duties. All Testing staff are aware of their tasks and responsibilities and have received suitable training. 	Y	