

FAQs on the use and interpretation of Lateral Flow Device Testing (LFD)

N.B. the information below is correct at the time of its publication (01/07/2021). We understand that this is a rapidly changing area and we recommend you regularly visit the latest Government guidance for the most up to date information – links below: -

- [Guidance: Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance -Updated 6 April 2021](#)
- [Guidance: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) asymptomatic testing in schools and colleges - Updated 30 March 2021](#)
- [Guidance: Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection – Updated 30 March 2021](#)
- [Asymptomatic testing for staff in primary schools and nurseries](#)
- [Position statement regarding daily contact testing in schools from PHE and NHS Test and Trace - GOV.UK](#)

For any questions on testing email RapidTesting.SCHOOLS@education.gov.uk, or call the DfE coronavirus helpline on 0800 046 8687 and select option 7.

N.B: Lateral Flow Device Testing programme **does not** replace the current testing programme for **those with symptoms**. Anyone who is [showing symptoms](#) of coronavirus (COVID-19) should still self-isolate immediately according to the government guidelines. Those with symptoms are also expected to order a test online or visit a test site to take a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to check if they have the virus. **Table below applies to those who do not have symptoms of COVID-19.**

Please follow the column that applies to you
For testing in SEND Specialist/Inclusive settings please go to pages 6 & 7

	Primary school, school-based nursery and maintained nursery		Secondary school and colleges	
	I work in nursery/primary school (Staff)	I am a student	I work in school (Staff)	I am a student in school
A- Am I offered an LFD test?	Yes	Not at present	Yes	Yes
B- Where do I perform this test?	At home	Not applicable	At home	Majority of the pupils would be expected to perform the test at home - in some case an LFD test can take place at school ¹

¹ It is recognised that home testing may not be appropriate for some pupils and students. In these instances, on-site testing should be offered if that is a viable alternative - please see [link here](#)

	Primary school, school-based nursery and maintained nursery		Secondary school and colleges	
	I work in nursery/primary school (Staff)	I am a student	I work in school (Staff)	I am a student in school
C- How often do I need to perform this test?	Twice weekly (3-4 days apart) and ongoing	Not applicable	Twice weekly (3-5 days apart) and ongoing	Twice weekly (3-5 days apart) and ongoing
D- What if my LFD test is negative?	<p>You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>You can inform your school and continue to work in school - unless you have been advised otherwise by NHS Test and Trace or Public Health professionals (for example as a close contact). Please also continue to use protective measures</p>	Not applicable	<p>You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>You can inform your school and continue to work in school - unless you have been advised otherwise by NHS Test and Trace or Public Health professionals (for example as a close contact). Please also continue to use protective measures</p>	<p>You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>You can inform your school and continue to attend school - unless you have been advised otherwise by NHS Test and Trace or Public Health professionals (for example as a close contact). Please also continue to use protective measures</p>
E- What if my LFD test is positive?	<p>1E). You will need to inform school and self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance.</p> <p>2E). Your household members must isolate for 10 days as well.</p> <p>3E). You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>4E). You will also need to <u>arrange a lab based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result, within two (2) days² of your LFD test.</u></p>	Not applicable	<p>1E). You will need to inform school and self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance.</p> <p>2E). Your household members must isolate for 10 days as well.</p> <p>3E). You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>4E). You will also need to <u>arrange a lab based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the</u></p>	<p>1E). You will need to inform school and self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance.</p> <p>2E). Your household members must isolate for 10 days as well.</p> <p>3E). You will need to report the outcome of your test as per instructions in home test kit.</p> <p>4E). You will also need to <u>arrange a lab based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result, within two days of your LFD test.</u></p>

² **Within two days** means the PCR should be **taken** on the day the LFD test was taken, the next day, or the following day. **For example:** An LFD test returns a positive result early Monday morning on the 15th of the month. The person has the rest of Monday 15th, or Tuesday 16th, or Wednesday 17th to **take** a PCR in order to be eligible for the rescind function in the event of a negative result.

	Primary school, school-based nursery and maintained nursery		Secondary school and colleges	
	I work in nursery/primary school (Staff)	I am a student	I work in school (Staff)	I am a student in school
	<i>Please note, that if this PCR test is taken within two days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides a positive LFD test and you can return to school</i>		result, within two days of your LFD test. <i>Please note, that if this PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and you can return to school.</i>	
F- What actions would be needed by my school if my LFD test is positive - (while PCR results are awaited)?	<p>1F). Your school would need to carry out contact tracing to identify your close contacts in school.</p> <p>2F). Any close contacts identified would also need to isolate for 10 days from the date of their last exposure to you.</p> <p>N.B:– 7 days of daily contact testing in close contacts has been paused and hence not needed, UNLESS your school is part of the DHSC supported pilot programme of daily contact testing.</p>	<p>If you are identified, by your school, as a close contact of the staff who tested positive on LFD test, then you would need to follow advice from school on self-isolation.</p>	<p>1F). Your school would need to carry out contact tracing to identify your close contacts in school.</p> <p>2F). Any close contacts identified would also need to isolate for 10 days from the date of their last exposure to you.</p> <p>N.B:– 7 days of daily contact testing in close contacts has been paused and hence not needed, UNLESS your school is part of the DHSC supported pilot programme of daily contact testing.</p>	<p>1F). Your school would need to carry out contact tracing to identify your close contacts in school.</p> <p>2F). Any close contacts identified would also need to isolate for 10 days from the date of their last exposure to you.</p> <p>3F). if the LFD test was carried out at the school, then the setting should contact the parent or carer who should make arrangements for the child or young person to journey home as soon as possible.</p> <p>N.B:– 7 days of daily contact testing in close contacts has been paused and hence not needed, UNLESS your school is part of the DHSC supported pilot programme of daily contact testing.</p>
G- What if my confirmatory PCR test comes back as positive	You and your household should continue with the remaining days of the original isolation period. Your household would also need to get a PCR test.	If you are identified, by your school, as a close contact of	You and your household should continue with the remaining days of the original isolation period. Your	You and your household should continue with the remaining days of the original isolation period. Your

	Primary school, school-based nursery and maintained nursery		Secondary school and colleges	
	I work in nursery/primary school (Staff)	I am a student	I work in school (Staff)	I am a student in school
	<p>Your school would have already completed contact tracing as 1F and 2F above.</p> <p>Your close contacts at school would also need to complete the remaining days of the isolation period. In addition, these close contacts are now recommended to get a PCR test</p>	<p>the staff who initially tested positive on LFD test and now has a positive confirmatory PCR then you would need to continue with the original advice on self-isolation. In addition, close contacts are now recommended to get a PCR test</p>	<p>household would also need to get a PCR test.</p> <p>Your school would have already completed contact tracing as 1F and 2F above.</p> <p>Your close contacts at school would need to complete the remaining days of the isolation period. In addition, these close contacts are now recommended to get a PCR test</p>	<p>household would also need to get a PCR test.</p> <p>Your school would have already completed contact tracing as 1F and 2F above.</p> <p>Your close contacts at school would need to complete the remaining days of the isolation period. In addition, these close contacts are now recommended to get a PCR test</p>
H- What if my confirmatory PCR test (carried out within 2 days ² of a positive LFD test) comes back as negative?	<p>If this PCR test result is:</p> <p>a)- carried out within 2 days of a positive LFD test and b)- it comes back as negative</p> <p>then you and your household can stop isolating.</p> <p>Your close contacts can stop their self-isolation too</p>	<p>You can also return to school if you were initially identified as a close contact of the staff who has now tested negative on his/her PCR test</p>	<p>If this PCR test result is:</p> <p>a)- carried out within 2 days of a positive LFD test and b)- it comes back as negative</p> <p>then you and your household can stop isolating.</p> <p>Your close contacts can stop their self- isolation too</p>	<p>If this PCR test result is:</p> <p>a)- carried out within 2 days of a positive LFD test and b)- it comes back as negative</p> <p>then you and your household can stop isolating.</p> <p>Your close contacts can stop their self-isolation too</p>
	<p>Please note that if your confirmatory PCR test was carried out after 2 days of a positive LFD test – and it comes back as negative, then this negative result would be outside of the time window to overrule the original</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Please note that if your confirmatory PCR test was carried out after 2 days of a positive LFD test – and it comes back as negative, then this negative result would be outside of</p>	<p>Please note that if your confirmatory PCR test was carried out after 2 days of a positive LFD test – and it comes back as negative, then this negative result would be outside of the</p>

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	I work in nursery/primary school (Staff)	I am a student	I work in school (Staff)	I am a student in school
	positive LFD test. In this case, the above actions titled 1E, 2E, 1F and 2F would still apply.		the time window to overrule the original positive LFD test. In this case, the above actions titled 1E, 2E, 1F and 2F would still apply.	time window to overrule the original positive LFD test. In this case, the above actions titled 1E, 2E, 1F and 2F would still apply.
I- Do I need to restart LFD test, once I return to school after my isolation period of a positive PCR test?	It is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection. Anyone who has previously received a positive COVID-19 PCR test result should not be re-tested within 90 days of that test, unless they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. If, however, you do have an LFD test within 90 days of a previous positive COVID-19 PCR test, and the result of this test is positive, you and your household should self-isolate and follow the steps in this guidance again.	Not applicable	It is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection. Anyone who has previously received a positive COVID-19 PCR test result should not be re-tested within 90 days of that test, unless they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. If, however, you do have an LFD test within 90 days of a previous positive COVID-19 PCR test, and the result of this test is positive, you and your household should self-isolate and follow the steps in this guidance again.	It is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection. Anyone who has previously received a positive COVID-19 PCR test result should not be re-tested within 90 days of that test, unless they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. If, however, you do have an LFD test within 90 days of a previous positive COVID-19 PCR test, and the result of this test is positive, you and your household should self-isolate and follow the steps in this guidance again.
J- Do I need to restart LFD test, once I return to school after my isolation period of a positive LFD test?	Given that you required to have a confirmatory PCR – if your PCR test was confirmed as positive then the information in row above (I) would apply. If, your confirmatory PCR was negative and you came out of isolation, then you can resume the twice weekly LFD test.	Not applicable	Given that you required to have a confirmatory PCR – if your PCR test was confirmed as positive then the information in row above (I) would apply. If, your confirmatory PCR was negative and you came out of isolation, then you can resume the twice weekly LFD test.	Given that you required to have a confirmatory PCR – if your PCR test was confirmed as positive then the information in row above (I) would apply. If, your confirmatory PCR was negative and you came out of isolation, then you can resume the twice weekly LFD test.

SEND Specialist/Inclusive Settings

This guidance note supports the very broad range of education settings supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). These can be “inclusive mainstream” or “specialist settings”. SEND can include physical disabilities including continuing complex care needs, physical disabilities, Long Term Conditions, alongside Learning Disabilities and Neurodiversity related needs.

More guidance is available on the DfE [secure digital platform](#).

Key principles of testing in SEND Specialist/Inclusive settings

- Settings should not make it a requirement for a child or young person to have been tested in order to attend their setting
- Children should be encouraged to engage with the testing process and it is important to ensure that any issues with void tests or repeat tests that might be required are managed in an atmosphere of ongoing support, and they must never be made to feel they have “failed” if a test is voided for any reason
- Home testing may not be appropriate for some pupils and students. In these instances, on-site testing in the setting should be offered if that is a viable alternative
- Children with SEND should be supervised when self-swabbing on site or at home
- If a pupil or student is unable to tolerate a swab-based test at all no testing should take place
- If a child or young person with a disability or health condition [cannot self-swab](#), then a parent, carer or suitably trained member of staff can help to swab them on site or at home (as appropriate). If it is not possible to get a ‘combined nose and throat swab’, then, for this group only, a swab of either just nose, or just throat, can be used.
- Testing in children with SEND at home or in a specialist setting must always bear in mind the practical and personal circumstances of the child, with a care planning approach from settings to ensure that children with complexity or additional needs are enabled to participate in testing.
- Some children who are not testing at home may need more support and/or more active supervision to be able to use the LFD tests and staff supporting them should be trained to do this and supplied with appropriate PPE
- Where [consent from the corporate or biological parent of the child with SEND for testing is received](#), but the child themselves declines or is unable to be tested, the testing should not proceed
- If a child with SEND becomes distressed in testing or it is on balance determined by staff that the child will become too distressed by testing this should be recorded and local versions of the key processes covered on page 42 of the [Clinical Standard Operating Procedure \(for children who cannot be tested or decline testing\)](#) should be followed.

- A setting may additionally wish to record when a child or young person has required assistance with swabbing and a parent, carer or member of staff has assisted or performed the swabbing, in order to comply with any school and college insurance requirements.

Please follow the column that applies to you

	Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting – Early Years or Primary (Pupils aged under 11 years Old – Key stage 0 to 2)		Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting -Secondary school and colleges (Pupils aged 11 and older – potentially up to 25 years Old – Key stage 3, 4)	
	I work in the Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting school (Staff)	I attend the Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting (Pupil)	I work in the Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting (Staff)	I attend the Specialist or Inclusive mainstream setting (Pupil/student)
Am I offered an LFD test?	Yes	Not at present	Yes	Yes
Where do I perform this test?	At home	Not applicable	At home if appropriate (See above and here)	Many pupils would be expected to perform the test at home – for some cases an LFD test can take place at the relevant setting (See above and here)

From this point, please follow the main table above (row C onward) as further questions and actions remain the same. Please note, close contacts of a PCR positive case are now also recommended to have a PCR test while they are completing their 10 days of isolation period. The LCRC is happy to provide advice and support to SEND settings on a case by case basis and as per risk assessment of the situation.