**Coronavirus (COVID-19) asymptomatic testing for staff in primary schools and nurseries.**

**Flow Chart from Cumbria County Council Public Health Team.**

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| Prior to launch: Identify who will be the setting COVID-19 Coordinator and Registration Assistant.  Setting receives supply of Lateral Flow Devices (LFD). Inspect and record details on ‘[Test Kit Log](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D4tI82_pvDmkAN-x7pX-Hja6Pf1PR69G)’.  Call DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 if any problems with delivery. | | | |
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| * Each staff member should obtain LFD test from collection point. Registration assistant distributing LFD kits should wear a face covering and maintain 2 metres distance. * Staff members given LFD testing kit twice a week (ideally 3-4 days apart) to carry out test at home. Ensure staff have copy of ‘[Your step by step guide for COVID-19 self-testing’ booklet](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X4fLxy6_ppmpmKrv3hT2M6cduAN_GS54) (plain blue cover). * Registration assistant should record test details on [‘Test Kit Log’](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D4tI82_pvDmkAN-x7pX-Hja6Pf1PR69G).   Participation not mandatory, but strongly recommended. | | | |
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| Member of staff carries out test at home following instructions.  Ideally this should be in the morning prior to attending setting. If not possible, then night before.  Report any clinical incidents [here](https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/). Report non-clinical incidents to line manager. | | | |
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| **LFD Test result negative** | **LFD Test result positive** | | **LFD Test Result void** |
| * Individual records test result for NHS Test and Trace [here](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result) (or call 119). * Individual can go to work as normal. * School records result on ‘[test result register](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D4tI82_pvDmkAN-x7pX-Hja6Pf1PR69G)’. * Continue testing twice per week. * All staff should continue to follow COVID-safe practices (e.g. ‘Hands/Face/Space’). * Test result negative but individual has symptoms?: they should get a [PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested) and isolate with their household until result known. | * Individual records test result for NHS Test and Trace [here](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result) (or call 119) and informs COVID coordinator at work. * Individual should get a [PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested) asap to confirm the result. * Individual to isolate immediately along with all other household members until PCR result is known. * Setting lead should follow procedure for managing positive cases, including identifying and isolating close contacts (don’t wait for PCR result) and inform CCC Call Centre on 0800 783 1968. * School records result on ‘[test result register](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D4tI82_pvDmkAN-x7pX-Hja6Pf1PR69G)’. * Individual to contact setting to inform them of PCR test result. | | * Individual records test result for NHS Test and Trace [here](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result) (or call 119) and inform COVID coordinator at work. * School records result on ‘[test result register](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1D4tI82_pvDmkAN-x7pX-Hja6Pf1PR69G)’. * Individual to complete another rapid test (using LFD) as soon as possible. |
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| **Confirmatory PCR Test result negative** | | **Confirmatory PCR Test result positive** | |
| * **RISK ASSESS!** Check individual does not have any symptoms of illness or known contact with positive case. If ‘no’ follow steps below. Contact public health for advice if required via email: [EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk). * Individual can return to work as long as they are asymptomatic. * Household members can end isolation. * School to contact non-household contacts and inform them to end isolation. * Continue testing twice per week (if any LFD test comes back positive again in next 10 days contact Public Health for advice). * Continue to follow all COVID-safe practices (e.g. ‘Hands/Face/Space). * School should record test result and call it through to call centre on 0800 783 1968. | | * Individual and household stay at home and isolate for 10 days (count day following LFD test as day ‘one’). Follow [‘stay at home’ guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance). * School: contact non-household contacts and confirm they should stay at home and isolate for full 10 days (count day following last contact with positive case as day ‘one’). If any close contacts develop symptoms, they should get tested (and rest of household should isolate). * When individual returns to setting, LFD testing can resume (make individual aware that they & household would need to re-isolate for 10 days if LFD/PCR positive) | |
| Any queries or questions: contact the Cumbria County Council Public Health Team: [EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk) | | | |

**Additional Information**

**Should staff carry out LFD testing within 90 days of a positive PCR test result? Has the guidance recently changed?**

Guidance has been in place for some time advising that you should not re-test within 90 days of a positive PCR test result unless you develop new symptoms (because you are likely to have developed immunity to the virus and the test is so sensitive it may detect dead viral cells and give a positive test result, when you are in fact no longer infectious to others).

LFD tests are less sensitive, therefore less likely to detect dead viral cells. So, if you test positive via LFD within 90 days of a positive PCR, it is a good indicator of ‘high viral load’, meaning you are more likely to be infectious to other people. This is why the guidance for LFD testing in Primary Schools and Nurseries includes the following advice:

***If someone has recently (within 90 days) tested positive for COVID-19, they are likely to have developed some immunity. However, given the current prevalence of the virus and the pressing need to reduce transmission, subjects are encouraged to take an LFD test regardless of whether they have tested positive previously as this is a good indicator of high viral load, and therefore infectiousness.***

**This difference in LFD and PCR testing within 90 days of a positive PCR test result has now been clearly evidenced and national guidance is now consistently advising that LFD testing can take place within 90 days of a positive PCR test result. Cumbria County Council’s Public Health Team is therefore happy to advise LFD testing can take place within 90 days of a positive PCR.**

* Do not LFD test during a 10-day isolation period. Please ensure that any member of staff carrying out LFD testing within 90 days of a positive PCR result is made aware that if the result comes back positive, they will need to isolate along with their household and obtain a confirmatory PCR. If the PCR is negative, they can end the isolation. If the PCR is positive, the individual and their household will need to complete the full 10-day isolation period.
* *Why is confirmatory PCR needed for Primary School and nursery staff, but not secondaries and FE colleges?* Because primary school and nursery staff carry out their testing at home unsupervised, so the test result needs to be validated. Secondary school staff and pupils carry out their testing as part of an onsite supervised programme, so the result is verified by a third party at the time of the test.
* If an individual chooses not to be re-tested within the 90 days following their positive PCR result, they are still able to come back to work at the end of their 10 day isolation period as long as they feel well enough to do so and have not had a high temperature for 48 hours. Participation in LFD testing is not mandatory. A school or nursery cannot insist an individual has a negative test result before they return.
* LFD testing is for asymptomatic use. If a member of staff develops symptoms within 90 days of a positive PCR test result, they should isolate along with their household and get a PCR test as soon as possible.
* If you would like any advice in relation to LFD testing, please contact the Public Health team at Cumbria County Council via email: [EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk)

**Why are you advising we isolate non-household close contacts as soon as a staff member in a primary school or nursery tests positive via LFD?**

Studies have also shown that Lateral Flow testing is good at catching all those with high viral loads, meaning the tests are effective in identifying the cases who are infectious and are most likely to transmit the disease.

The majority of individuals testing positive via LFD will also test positive when they have a confirmatory PCR. Recent feedback from a hospital trust in Cumbria showed that out of 104 positive LFT tests, 98 (94%) were also positive when confirmatory PCR testing was completed.

In addition, the need for confirmatory PCR has recently been temporarily removed from the secondary school testing programme and one of the reasons given is that it delays the ability to isolate close contacts.

Given these factors, and the risk posed by the transmissibility of the new variant of COVID-19, we feel the safest option is to isolate close contacts as a precaution as soon as a positive result via LFD is reported. Should a staff member’s PCR result then come back negative, and you would like advice, please contact us. We can support your risk assessment regarding safe return to the setting for the member of staff and close contacts. Contact the team via [EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk)