

Education Covid-19 Lateral Flow Testing FAQs

What is Lateral Flow Testing?

- Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing is for people **who do not have symptoms** of COVID-19 ('asymptomatic'). 1 in 3 people who have COVID-19 do not show any symptoms. In schools LFD testing helps us to identify and isolate staff and pupil, so they do not unknowingly pass on the virus to others.

The LFD test is a **RED-LIGHT** test that can **STOP** the spread of COVID-19 in people who do not have symptoms, by identifying them, isolating them, and breaking chains of transmission.

An LFD test is **NOT** a **GREEN LIGHT** to rule out COVID-19. This is because LFD tests are less sensitive than PCR tests and they will not identify all positive cases of COVID-19. They are a useful tool to identify COVID-19 cases in people who do not show symptoms. They are not a substitute for the measures we all need to take to stop the spread of the virus.

If your LFD test for COVID-19 is negative, it is very important that you continue to follow government guidance to stop the spread of coronavirus.

If you do need to leave home for an essential reason, **remember, hands, face, space**. If your workplace requires additional personal protective equipment (PPE), this must be strictly adhered to.

How long does it take to get the results?

- Results should usually be received within 30 minutes but may take up to 1 hour

What happens if you receive a positive LFD test result from onsite school (ATS) testing?

- A confirmatory lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test must be taken. Book immediately via 119 or <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- There is a legal obligation to self-isolate and contact tracing will be initiated.
- Close contacts in school should be isolated as a precautionary measure until the result of the PCR test is known.¹
- If a negative confirmatory PCR test is then obtained within 2 days of the positive LFD test result, the individual will be released from self-isolation and tracing. If the confirmatory PCR test is taken too late, the individual who received a positive LFD, and their household, will still need to self-isolate for the full 10 days.

¹ Negative LFD results do not rule out COVID-19 infection, particularly in the early stages of infection when viral loads are lower. It is important to consider any possible recent exposure to potentially infected individuals plus the presence of any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Anyone with a negative test, but with symptoms of concern should seek medical advice. Remember to follow the guidelines and *hands *face *space *fresh air

- The positive case and their household (including their [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) if they have one), must self-isolate for at least 10 full days from the day after the test date in line with [Stay-at-Home Guidance](#) and NHS Test and Trace guidance.
- Close contacts are identified within the school and required to self-isolate for 10 full days after the last point of contact with the positive case within the previous 48 hours.
- Those with a negative LFD test result can continue to attend school.
- **Note:** When schools report cases on the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Form, a positive LFD test result is an 'unconfirmed suspected case'. If the PCR test confirms a positive result the case then becomes a 'confirmed case' for which a SPOC form should be submitted.

What happens if you receive a positive LFD test result in home testing?

- Requires a confirmatory lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. Book immediately via 119 or <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- Pupil/employee and their household is required to self-isolate as a precautionary measure in line with the [Stay-at-Home Guidance](#) and NHS Test and Trace guidance but this is treated as a 'suspected' positive until PCR result is known.
- If a positive PCR result is confirmed, pupil/employee and their household (including within their [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) if they have one), are required to self-isolate for at least 10 full days from the day after the test date in line with [Stay-at-Home Guidance](#) and NHS Test and Trace guidance. This is a legal requirement.
- Those with a negative PCR test result can continue to attend school and use protective measures.
- Close contacts in school should be isolated as a precautionary measure until the result of the PCR test is known.²
- If negative, then they can return to school as normal.
- If a positive PCR test result is confirmed, close contacts must continue to self-isolate for 10 full days from the last point of contact with the positive case (Day 0) within the previous 48 hours
- **Note:** When schools report cases on the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Form, a positive LFD test result is an 'unconfirmed suspected case'. If the PCR test confirms a positive result the case then becomes a 'confirmed case' for which a SPOC form should be submitted.

After receiving a positive LFD test from home testing what happens if the confirmatory PCR test is negative?

- If the PCR test is negative following a positive LFD taken at home, then the person who had the test and the close contacts can return to school.

² Negative LFD results do not rule out COVID-19 infection, particularly in the early stages of infection when viral loads are lower. It is important to consider any possible recent exposure to potentially infected individuals plus the presence of any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Anyone with a negative test, but with symptoms of concern should seek medical advice. Remember to follow the guidelines and *hands *face *space * fresh air

What happens if a pupil or staff member is a confirmed close contact of someone who tests positive for Covid-19?

- They must self-isolate for 10 full days from the last point of contact with the positive case within the previous 48 hours in line with [Stay-at-Home Guidance](#) and NHS Test and Trace guidance.

What happens if a pupil or staff member is a close contact of someone that has tested positive with a home LFD test who does not attend/ work their school?

- Treat as a suspected case until there is a confirmatory PCR test.
- Pupil or staff member must self-isolate until the results of the PCR test are known in line with [Stay-at-Home Guidance](#) and NHS Test and Trace guidance.³
- If a positive PCR result is confirmed, they must continue to self-isolate for 10 full days from the last point of contact with the positive case (Day 0) within the previous 48 hours.
- If negative, then they can return to school as normal.

What happens if an LFD test is void/inconclusive?

- If the LFD test is void then a second test should be done ASAP, if the second test is void then a PCR should be arranged.
- Contacts would not need to isolate until results of PCR known

What is a close contact?

- Anyone who lives in the same household as someone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) with a PCR or LFD test:
 - face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre
 - been within 1 metre for 1 minute or longer without face-to-face contact
 - sexual contacts
 - been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)
 - travelled in the same vehicle or a plane

NHS Test and Trace

Anyone told to isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their public health protection team has a legal obligation to self-isolate, but you may leave home to avoid injury or illness or to escape risk of harm. More information can be found on [NHS Test and Trace: how it works.](#)

³ See footnotes 1 and 2 above

Isolation Periods

Symptomatic Cases: isolation period includes the day symptoms started for the first person in their household, and the next 10 full days

Asymptomatic Cases: isolation period starts the day their test was taken whether this was a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test), and the next 10 full days

If a member of the household starts to display symptoms while self-isolating, they will need to restart the 10-day isolation period and book a test.

If anyone tests positive whilst not experiencing symptoms, but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they must restart the 10-day isolation period from the day they developed symptoms.

PCR Test Centres in Newcastle

PCR tests **must** be booked in advance.

To book go to <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or Tel: 119 (7am-11pm)

The PCR test sites in Newcastle are as follows;

- Newcastle Great Park and Ride, Gosforth, NE13 9NR. (drive through)
- Etherly Road Car Park, Newcastle, NE6 2UT (walk in)
- CCE Car Park, University of Northumbria, Newcastle, NE1 2SW (walk in)
- Castle Leazes Car Park, Newcastle University, Newcastle, NE2 4NY (walk in)
- Newcastle General Hospital site, Westgate Rd, Newcastle, NE4 6BE (walk in)

Please note – Asymptomatic community testing sites, such as that at the Banqueting Suite, Civic Centre and Westgate Community College **do not** offer PCR tests. Parents and carers must not be directed there to get a confirmatory PCR test for themselves or their children. They must book PCR tests via the link above or by telephoning 119.

The list of PCR sites above is subject to amendment

More information on testing can be viewed on the [City Council website](#)