Some frequently asked questions

Do I need to give consent?
Students and parents do not give written consent to take part in the home testing programme.

Once you open the kit you should take and report the results of the tests to NHS Test & Trace regardless of the result (positive, negative, or void) and only positive results should be reported to the school.

Can my child take the test themselves?
Students aged 18 and over should do the test themselves and report the result, with help if they need it.

Students aged 12-17 should do the test themselves with adult supervision. The adult may help the [pupil/student] to take the test if they need support.

Students aged 11 must be tested by an adult and the adult must report the result.

Reporting problems or issues with testing
If there is an issue with the test kit, for example something is missing, please report it by calling **119.**

If an accident or injury happens whilst using the test kit, please seek medical care by calling 111 (or 999 if it is an emergency). Please also report what happened using this website: https://coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/

What type of tests will be used?
We will be sending home Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. They are a fast and simple way to test people who do not have symptoms of COVID-19, but who may still be spreading the virus.

The tests are easy to use and give results in 30 minutes.

Further information: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms

Are LFD tests accurate?
Lateral Flow Devices identify people who are likely to be infectious.

These individuals tend to spread the virus to many people and so identifying them through this test is important.

These 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). The speed and convenience of the tests supports the detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals, who would not otherwise have got tested.

The tests are highly specific, with low chance of false positives. They are also very sensitive and are able to identify the majority of the most infectious yet asymptomatic individuals. Extensive evaluation has been carried out on the tests and it shows that they are both accurate and sensitive enough to be used in the community for screening and surveillance purposes.

It is important to remember that these tests are only an aid to help stop the spread of the virus and you should continue to follow other guidance such as on wearing face coverings and social distancing.

How are LFD tests different to PCR tests?
There are 2 main types of test to check if you have coronavirus:

- polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests check for the genetic material (RNA) of the virus in the sample - you send the sample for processing at a lab
- lateral flow device (LFD) tests detect proteins called 'antigens' produced by the virus - LFD tests give rapid results, in 30 minutes after taking the test.

What does it mean if my child has a positive result?
If your child has a positive antigen LFD test result they, their household and any support bubbles they are part of **should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance for 10 days**.

You should order a confirmatory PCR test if you are testing at home (confirmatory PCR tests are not needed if the test was conducted at the Asymptomatic Test Site at [school/college]).

You can book a test here.

What does it mean if my child has a negative result?
A negative result does not guarantee that your child is not carrying the virus. So, you should continue to follow social distancing, and other measures to reduce transmission such as wearing a face mask and regularly washing your hands.

What if my child has a void result?
If the result of the test is unclear (void), they should do another one. If the next test is also void, your child should take a PCR test. You can book a test here.
All test results need to be reported to both NHS Test & Trace

Do I need to send the test to a lab?
No. The LFDs supplied do not need to be sent to a laboratory to get a result and can give a quick result in around 30 minutes. Guidance on self-testing is contained in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet, which comes with the test kit. There is also a useful video to show you how to administer the test here.

How do you report the result?
Once your child has taken the test, you will need to report the result online (whether it is positive, negative or void) using this service. You also need to tell the school of a positive test result. You will receive a text or email from NHS Test & Trace confirming that you have reported your test result.

Can I or someone else in my household use a test kit sent home from school?
No, however whole families and households with primary school, secondary school, and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, will be able to test themselves twice every week from home. This testing can be accessed through the following channels:

- get a rapid test at work, through workplace testing. Ask your employer for more information
- attend a test site to get tested where you will be able to see how to take the test or pick up tests to do at home (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)
- collect tests to do at home, find your nearest collection site COVID Test Finder (test-and-trace.nhs.uk)

If these options are not possible, there will be a supply of rapid tests for order online for people who need them the most. More information can be found on www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

There is more information available about testing for households and bubbles of students.

What if my child cannot tolerate a swab down their throat, perhaps due to their disability?
A child or young person may find it difficult to take a throat swab due, for example, to their having difficulty in understanding instructions, needing to keep their mouth open during the period of swabbing or they are having a strong gag reflex. In such cases, where a combined nose and throat swab is not possible, a nose swab from both nostrils can be taken. Similarly, if reason a nasal swab is not feasible, a throat swab alone will suffice.

How do I swab my child?
If you are assisting with swabbing as your child needs support, for example due to their special education needs or disability, you can find guidance on doing this here - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934735/coronavirus_test_guide_how_to_test_on_a_child.pdf