

Lateral Flow Testing in Schools and Colleges



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Frequently Asked Questions

27 January 2021

What are Lateral Flow Tests?

New, simple and quick tests, known as Lateral Flow Tests (LFT), enable rapid testing of all school staff and students in Years 11 and above, on the school site, with the results back within 30 minutes.

Who are Lateral Flow Tests being offered to?

All primary and secondary school staff

All secondary students in Years 11 and above

Why are these tests being offered in schools?

Testing is important because staff, students and pupils without symptoms could be carrying the virus and may spread it to others.

Testing staff and students will support schools and colleges to operate as safely as possible and keep children in education.

Participating in testing is voluntary.

There have been allegations in the national media about the accuracy of Lateral Flow Tests and it was suggested that the UK have stopped the roll out in schools – is that true?

A group of experienced scientists in the UK have challenged those allegations about the accuracy of Lateral Flow Testing and have affirmed the use of lateral flow tests to combat the spread of COVID-19.

The latest UK Government statement also says that there is no change to the main rollout of regular testing using rapid lateral flow tests in schools and colleges in the UK, which is already proving beneficial in finding teachers and students with coronavirus who do not have symptoms.

The use of lateral flow device testing will form part of our multi-layered approach to keep schools safe and running in Jersey.

How accurate are Lateral Flow Tests?

Lateral Flow Testing allows for a weekly testing in schools, and studies show they will identify up to three-quarters of any positives, including those pupils or staff showing no symptoms.

All positive results from Lateral Flow Tests will be followed up by a PCR test to confirm.

Anyone testing negative will still need to adhere to the public health guidelines that help prevent the spread of the virus.

In addition, a group of experienced scientists have also issued a statement supporting the use of lateral flow devices as part of the testing strategy against Covid.

In the UK they have identified 27,000 infected people who would not otherwise have had to self-isolate.

In field evaluations, these tests still perform effectively and detect at least 50% of all PCR positive individuals and more than 70% of individuals with higher viral loads.

How are these tests different to a PCR test?

The LFT testing programme does not in any way replace the existing PCR testing regime within schools. This testing programme is designed to provide an additional layer of preventative precaution against outbreak, to supplement existing measures by detecting occasional asymptomatic cases.

A negative LFT test does not categorically indicate that the individual is COVID-19 negative and all existing public health safety guidelines must be consistently observed if the programme is to have a positive impact on infection control.

Why are these tests needed?

Up to a third of individuals who test positive for coronavirus have no symptoms at all and can therefore spread it unknowingly. Identifying infectious individuals early and isolating them can significantly reduce transmission of the virus and break transmission chains

Testing of asymptomatic individuals is therefore of vital importance in the prevention of COVID-19 transmission.

How does Lateral Flow Testing work?

Lateral Flow Testing devices are a rapid test for COVID-19 that offers a result in approximately 30 minutes.

The test can be self-administered under the supervision of a trained member of staff and consists of a small swab which is brushed against the inside of your nostrils (or your tonsils).

Where else are Lateral Flow Tests being used?

It is the first LFD to successfully pass through all stages of Public Health England (PHE) evaluations and has been evaluated in several settings including secondary healthcare settings, PHE Porton Down, military establishments, schools and universities and regional Covid-19 centres in Liverpool.

They are also used amongst the NHS staff.

How long will this Testing programme run for?

On the advice of STAC, the testing programme is presently being rolled out using Innova Lateral Flow Devices. This phase of the programme is scheduled to continue up to Spring half-term and it will be reviewed ahead of that point to determine the approach after half term. The devices being used are part of a consignment allocated to Jersey by the Department of Health and Social Care in the UK.

Who will be tested?

As advised by STAC and agreed by CAM, testing will be extended to students in year 11 and upwards (15 to 18-year olds) and all secondary and primary school staff (all roles).

In addition, all staff at all primary schools will be invited to take part in the programme.

The programme started on Monday 18 January as a test of operational procedure with a view to defining a clear standard operating model for rollout across all school environments.

All participants in the programme will be invited by default to join a programme of taking an LFD test once per week, at least until February half term, and potentially until the end of term in April.

If someone refuses to take a test can they attend school?

Participation is voluntary for the programme and consent is required either by staff, students or parents/legal guardians as appropriate. However, if any staff member, student or pupil who does not wish to take part in Lateral Flow Testing they will still be able to attend school or college unless they require PCR testing and isolation for another reason (such as symptoms, contact tracing or admission to hospital).

For those aged 16 and over, it is suggested that consent is implied by attendance for a test. In line with previous guidance for testing, written consent from a parent/legal guardian is required for those aged 15 and under.

For looked after children aged 15 and under, local authorities may already have arrangements in place that cover medical treatment, which may extend to this form

of testing. Where that is not the case, parental consent should be secured via the child's social worker, who may need to contact the birth parents or other persons who hold parental responsibility.

It should be ensured that those participating in the testing programme are aware that results from Lateral Flow Testing will be shared with their school or college and will be entered into the Integrated Public Health Record for action by the contact tracing team.

Should any of the testing cohort decide not to take part then no action is required by the school. This is a voluntary programme and there is no penalty for non-participation.

How will this be communicated to schools?

Each school or college is responsible for communicating the purpose of the testing, how consent is obtained and the operational process, to develop an understanding of the service amongst the participants and wider community stakeholders.

Will students be supervised?

Secondary school students may self-swab (swab their own nose) with supervision of an appropriate member of staff, those aged 15 and under will require the consent of their parent/legal guardian.

Testing sites can be set up in spaces of varying sizes provided they meet some key layout requirements

What requirements are needed in schools to operate this process?

- Test site flooring must be non-porous and the test site cleanable with the approved cleaning product
- Test site must be well lit and have good airflow, with no recirculation of air wherever possible
- The ambient temperature should be 15-30°C for the lateral flow devices to operate and 2-30°C for storing them
- Registration desk at the first point where individual being tested would enter the test site
- One-way direction of travel for pupils/students or staff being tested. If not possible, enough room should be provided for individuals being tested to exit the room whilst maintaining social distance
- Test subject chairs in the swabbing bay should be minimum of 2m apart; consideration for exception to this rule could be given to students who are already in the same school bubble, however the 2m rule should be applied wherever possible
- Each swabbing desk must have a processing desk close by
- Clear division between swabbing and processing area. This should be clearly set out. Individuals being tested must not enter the processing area.

- Waste disposal points must be clearly marked and differentiated from general waste disposal

What protective equipment will be used?

Everyone involved in the handling of testing materials should use an apron, gloves and surgical mask; these will need to be changed after every test. Face masks should be worn by everyone in the testing area at all time and replaced between sessions.

What results do you get on the Lateral Flow Device Tests?

There are three different possible results on the Lateral Flow Device – positive, negative and void.

Guidance on the management of these different results is outlined below:

Positive result:

- A positive result will require the following actions:
- The result to be securely recorded in on the same day as the test
- The student / staff member to be informed of the result and given written information regarding the results and associated guidance as per the results card - this can be delivered by paper or electronic format
- Student / staff member to be asked to isolate along with their household until the results of a PCR test
- A confirmatory PCR test to be delivered within 24 hours of the LFD test, via a home visit

The Contact Tracing Team to support the process as follows:

- (i) call-back to all individuals with LFT positive results
- (ii) monitor all positive results from the LFT on Integrated Public Health Record, to ensure follow up and notifications for isolation are issued appropriately
- (iii) to escalate appropriately for guidance if a confirmatory PCR test is refused
- (iv) develop contact tracing operational Standard Operating Procedures as required

Anyone who tests positive should re-join the Lateral Flow Device testing programme 28 days **after their recovery date** (and not the positive PCR date).

Note on defining day zero: Day 0 for contact tracing is taken from the point of the PCR positive result, not the LFD antigen test positive result – however guidance and processes will be in place for the time period between the LFD result and the PCR result (contact tracing team will develop and cascade these processes).

Negative result:

A negative result will require the following actions:

- The result to be securely recorded on the same day as the test
- The student / staff member to be informed of the result and given written information regarding the results and associated guidance as per the results card. This can be delivered by paper or electronic format
- No further actions and the student / staff member can continue to attend and participate in school as usual if they have no symptoms
- Student / staff member is advised that safety measures remain important because this test is not as sensitive as a PCR test, therefore everyone should continue to adhere to all current guidance
- Anyone with symptoms (even if they recently had a negative LFD test result), should still self-isolate immediately and request a PCR test

Void / Invalid result:

- The absence of a 'C' line means that the test is invalid or void
- The student / staff member can continue as normal but must arrange another LFD test at the earliest possible opportunity.

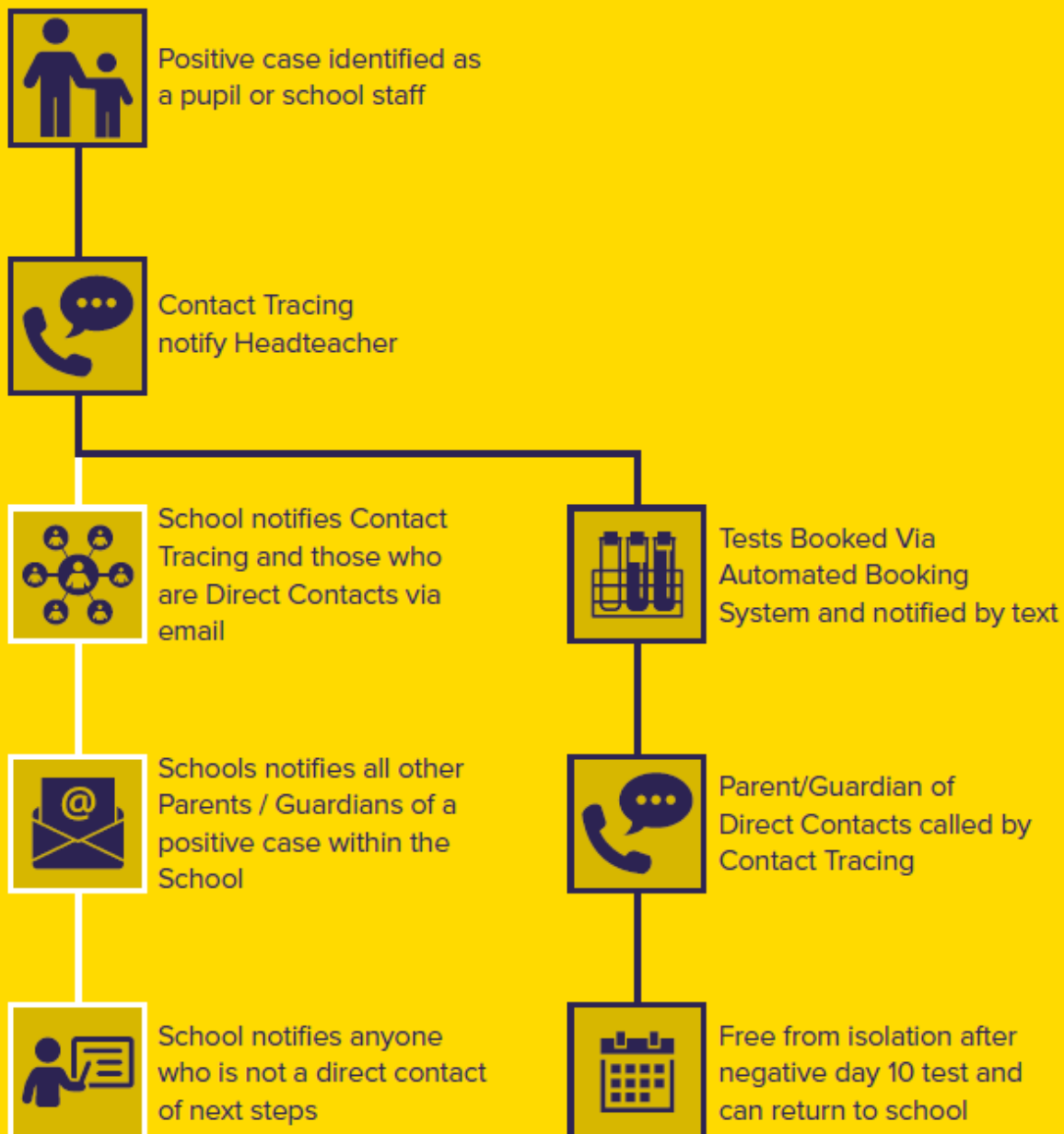
Link to the new Contact Tracing Process:

A new page has been created on gov.je that sets out the new contact tracing process, direct and indirect contact meaning, isolation guidelines for children and parents

<https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Testing/Pages/EducationContactTracing.aspx>

Flow charts in English, Portuguese, Polish and Romanian have also been created to show the process:

Schools Contact Tracing Process 2021



Key:
— Action taken by school
— Action taken by Contact Tracing Team

For more information, please call the Coronavirus Helpline: **01534 445566**, or visit: gov.je/coronavirus

 Government of Jersey