

TO ALL SCHOOL/ELC BASED EMPLOYEES

FR/LR

24 March 2021

Dear Colleague,

COVID-19 ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOL/ELC SETTING BASED EMPLOYEES

I am writing to thank you for your continuing hard work and to remind you of the School/Early Learning and Childcare Asymptomatic Testing Programme, which has been put in place as part of the package of coronavirus risk reduction mitigations in schools across Scotland. I am also writing to inform you of the arrangements for testing during the upcoming school holidays in April 2021.

Whilst participating in the testing programme is entirely voluntary, I am strongly encouraging all employees to participate wherever possible, in order to contribute to the wellbeing of our school community.

If you have not already consented to participate in the testing programme but now wish to do so, please read the two privacy notices below, and complete both consent forms, also below, by completing the required fields at the earliest opportunity. Please note that you will not be issued with a testing kit until you have confirmed your consent.

Privacy notices:

[Addendum to Tayside Contracts' Employee Privacy Notice \(for FSD Employees in School/ELC Establishments\)](#)

[LF Testing - Objective Connect - Privacy Notice](#)

Consent forms:

Angus - Tayside Contracts Form	Dundee - Tayside Contracts Form	P&K - Tayside Contracts Form
Angus - NHS Test & Protect Form	Dundee - NHS Test & Protect Form	P&K - NHS Test & Protect Form

If you have already consented and are currently participating in the testing programme you do not need to complete any further forms but please note the information below.

School Holiday Testing Arrangements

If you are not scheduled to work during the entire April school holidays, you do not need to test during the holidays until the day you are due to return to work. However, if you are attending work during the April school holidays, you will need to continue testing twice per week prior to attending your shift.

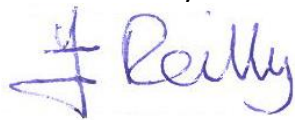
If you will be attending work during the April school holidays, you should ensure that you have enough of a supply of testing kits prior to the beginning of the school holidays.

All employees participating in the testing programme should ensure that they have enough of a supply to test before returning to work after the April school holidays as school staff will be unavailable to issue more kits during the holiday period.

We will continue to support and communicate with you as we implement this programme. Please speak to your manager if you have any questions.

In the meantime, some Frequently Asked Questions can be found in the annex to this letter.

Yours sincerely



Frank Reilly
Head of FM and Human Resources

Annex – Frequently Asked Questions

Who can take part?

The regular testing is open to all school based employees who are regularly attending work in school/ELC premises. The testing programme currently includes employees from early learning and childcare settings and school-aged childcare settings which are attached to schools. References to ‘schools’ or ‘employees’ within this letter include this group of childcare staff.

If you are working from home, and not attending school, you should not participate. This is because the goal of the programme is to minimise the risks of COVID-19 in the school environment.

Do I have to take part?

Testing is voluntary. No-one who is otherwise permitted to come to school will be prevented from doing so just because they do not wish to participate. However, we are strongly encouraging all employees to participate wherever possible, in order to contribute to the wellbeing of our school community.

If you wish to take part, please read the two privacy notices provided carefully, and complete both consent forms by following the links above.

What will the testing involve?

Every school is being provided with a supply of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test kits for use at home. Each school will give every employee a supply of these test kits to take home, together with the ‘Instructions for Use’. Each employee will be asked to sign for these in a log at the point of handover. Completion of this test kit log is a regulatory requirement.

We will then ask you to test regularly at home, twice a week (every three to four days, ideally in the morning before school), to fit with work patterns and leave requirements; for example, Monday and Thursday. Employees may continue to test whilst on leave of longer than a week, but it is not a requirement.

The LFDs supplied do not require laboratory processing and can provide a quick result in around 30 minutes. Comprehensive guidance on conducting self-testing is contained in the ‘Instructions for Use’ leaflet which will be provided with the test kit.

The school will provide you with the most up to date Instructions for Use along with your test kits. You should ensure you use these, and not the ones that are pre-packaged in the test kits. There is also a useful video to show you how to administer the test, available here: [Step by step guide to COVID-19 self-testing - YouTube](#).

Once the test has been conducted you must log the test result – whether positive or negative – online at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result. Tests are free of charge and will be provided by the school.

NB: It is important to note that this regular testing is only for individuals without symptoms. Those with symptoms must continue to follow the usual guidance. They must self-isolate and book a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test at a test centre or via a home test kit at the earliest opportunity. People with symptoms must not rely on a negative LFD result to continue to attend school.

NB: A negative test result must not be taken as leave to relax or ignore physical distancing or other measures intended to reduce transmission – testing is an additional intervention that contributes to reducing risk.

When will it start?

Once you have submitted your consent and once your school has received delivery of the testing kits, employees can collect their test kits from the school. You will be notified of the collection point and the times/dates when you can collect your testing kit by your manager. If you have more than one post with Tayside Contracts at different school/nursery locations, you will only be issued with one testing kit pack and this will be from your principal post location i.e. your post with the longest hours. Employees who are not currently attending work, can attend school solely for the purposes of collecting test kits shortly prior to their return.

Please ensure you observe physical distancing and wear face coverings when attending for these purposes.

Employees should then begin regular testing as soon as possible. If you receive your test kits in time, you are encouraged to start testing in the week before you return to regular in-person attendance at school. If employees have not received their test kits, but still wish to test, they can continue to request a PCR test via Tayside Contracts through the local authority employer portal. Please get in touch with your Assistant Facilities Officer/Area Catering Supervisor who will liaise with the HR Team to request this.

How will I know how to use the tests?

The school will provide those participating with the most up to date Instructions for Use along with their test kits. Participants will be asked to ensure they use these, and not the ones that are pre-packaged in the test kits.

The Instructions for Use set out clearly how to use the test kits, or how to support someone to do so. They also provide a number to call if there are any problems with the test kits.

Are the tests safe and accurate?

LFD tests have been widely and successfully used to detect COVID-19 in asymptomatic individuals. No test is perfect, but the speed and convenience of LFD tests supports detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals who would not otherwise be tested.

They are clinically approved and are crucial in the fight against the virus. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has authorised the use of these at-home tests for these purposes.

LFD tests are very accurate, which means that only a very small proportion of people who do not have coronavirus will receive a positive result (false positive). The tests are better at picking up true positive cases when a person has a higher viral load and is more contagious. There is a risk of returning a false negative result when viral loads are low (e.g. in the early stages of infection). This is why Public Health Scotland recommend two LFD tests 3 to 4 days apart, or regular testing, to enhance detection by picking up any cases which were not detected during the first test and to catch any new infections.

If you test positive using an LFD, it is likely that you are infectious at that moment, whereas people testing positive on a 'Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)' test could be in the less infectious early or late stages of disease. This means that by using the LFD, we can identify people with a high viral load who are the most likely to spread the virus further.

If you have issues with the test

Any incidents that could potentially impact the quality or safety of testing should be reported to the MHRA.

For incidents occurring in a home setting, please report any issues (for example: something damaged, or missing or difficult to use in the kit, you are unable to log result) to **0300 303 2713**.

If there is a clinical incident which led to, or has the potential for, harm (e.g. swab breaks in the mouth, bleeding, allergic reaction on using the kit etc.) please report it on <https://coronavirussyellowcard.mhra.gov.uk>.

This is not for seeking immediate medical care. Medical care should be sought through the usual route of contacting 111 or 999.

What happens if I test positive?

If you receive a positive result on your Lateral Flow Device at home, you should report the result online at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result_self-isolate and book a confirmatory PCR test. This can be done via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. We would advise visiting a community or drive-through test site as this is the quickest way to get tested, or you can order a home test kit.

It is important that you begin self-isolation immediately after you receive the positive result from the LFD test, and do not wait until the result of your PCR test.

What happens if I test negative?

You should report the result online at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result. Staff who test negative will be able to stay in school/ELC and resume their activities as normal.

What happens if the test result is “void”?

This means the test has not run correctly. You should report the result online at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result. You need to take another test. Use a new test kit, and do not reuse anything from the first kit.

What if I have been in close contact with someone who tests positive?

If a pupil or member of staff has tested positive, they will have to self-isolate as per government guidelines. The pupil or member of staff should also inform the school of their absence, and are strongly encouraged to report a positive case to their school to support contact tracing activities.

Test and Protect and/or the school will get in contact with staff members and pupils who were in close contact with a positive case to inform them that they need to self-isolate.

What if I develop symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If you develop symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) you must immediately self-isolate, and book a PCR test by calling 0800 028 2816 or visiting <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>. People with symptoms must not rely on a negative LFD result to continue to attend school.