

# Headteachers' Update

For Schools and Academies

## DfE Updates

### [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges](#)

Page summary - Information for parents and carers about going back to schools, nurseries and colleges in January 2021.

Change made - This guidance has been updated following the PHE position statement on daily contact testing.

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) asymptomatic testing in schools and colleges](#)

Page summary - Information for schools and colleges about testing from January.

Change made - Guidance updated following the PHE position statement on daily contact testing.

## Lateral Flow Device Testing Risk Assessments - update

Following on from the revised risk assessments issued in Thursday's Head's briefing, we have now had clarification regarding self-isolation requirements of close contacts of Covid19 positive cases identified via the LFD school testing programme. The risk assessments have been updated and confirm that following a positive LFD test, schools should identify close contacts within the establishment, of the positive case and provide self isolation advice to these contacts. Self isolation should only cease if the PCR test of the positive case returns a negative result. The updated text is marked in red (this small amendment has been incorporated into existing versions):

[Testing Programme - Schools - Primary Settings v1.0.docx](#)

[Testing Programme - Schools - Secondary Settings v2.1.docx](#)

As always, the Corporate Health and Safety Team are available to discuss any specific queries you may have regarding the Covid19 arrangements in place within your school. Please speak to a member of the team (Amanda Young, John Froud, Nigel Chopping or Bryony Smith) or email [healthandsafety@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@northumberland.gov.uk).

Public Health queries can be directed to the Council's Public Health Team via the enquiry form: <https://northumberlandeducation.co.uk/flowchart/>.

**Note: Please also see article on confirmatory PCR Testing - a further revision of the secondary settings risk assessment will be available on the Northumberland Education website from Friday 29 January.**

## Asymptomatic LFD Testing being carried out on School sites

Following a recommendation from Public Health England, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has announced that with effect from Wednesday 27 January 2021 (for a period of at least 2 months) **a confirmatory PCR test will no longer be mandatory for those staff/pupils who test positive via an LFD test carried out on a school site.**

This will impact on procedures within Secondary, Special and other schools who are permitted to carry out a testing programme on their premises. Positive LFD results will trigger the legal duty to self-isolate. Close contacts should continue to be identified and provided with self isolation advice.

Confirmatory PCR testing will remain a requirement for primary school staff where tests are undertaken in the home.

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The Corporate Health and Safety Team are updating the model risk assessment for testing in Secondary and Special schools to reflect this change. The revised risk assessment will be available tomorrow via the Northumberland Education website.

## **Attendance**

There is considerable interest from MPs and Elected Members regarding attendance at, and absence from, school. The Local Authority Data Unit can extract attendance information from the system and it has been agreed that it will be extracted weekly at school partnership level; the report will show: % attending: % absent (all reasons): and % Other (incl. unrecorded/ missing registers, and planned closures).

To ensure the data that we extract reflects the actual attendance in your school, please can the AM and PM daily attendance marks for the week be input into SIMS (or whichever MIS System, i.e. Bromcom, Scholarpack your school uses), by close of work on Wednesday of the following week. The report will then be run on the Thursday. We are aware that some staff do not have access to the relevant software when working from home, so hopefully this will allow time if they need to be in school in order to record it.

Since the issue of gaps in recording in SIMS was raised last week, the position has improved, so thank you for that; colleagues in Education Welfare and the Data Unit have been supporting schools with it, and other attendance practice matters on a daily basis. Once the recording into SIMS is sufficiently comprehensive, the weekly report will be shared with headteachers, as well as with the leadership within the LA. If there are any queries about how to record the attendance onto SIMS, please contact the SIMS team and a colleague will be more than happy to assist.