

Covid-19 testing information for education settings

What tests are available

There are two main types of test to check if you have coronavirus.

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests are for people with symptoms and must be run through a laboratory to get a result.

Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests – which are commonly referred to as rapid tests – are for people without symptoms and can yield results within 30 minutes of taking one.

The type of Covid-19 test you should take depends on whether you have any symptoms.

Testing for people without symptoms

People who do not have any symptoms can test themselves for coronavirus with rapid tests. Free rapid testing is available to everyone in England, with people encouraged to test themselves twice a week.

How to get a rapid test

The main port of call for accessing rapid testing will usually be through your school or college.

However, there are a number of other ways you can access rapid testing:

- [Order home testing kits online.](#)
- Many business offer [workplace testing programmes](#), on-site or at home.
- You can [collect home testing kits at your local test site](#)
- You can collect a box of 7 rapid tests to use twice a week at home at participating pharmacies. [Find your nearest site.](#)

What to do if you test positive using a rapid test

If you or your child's rapid test result is positive, you and your close contacts will need to self-isolate immediately and book a confirmatory PCR test via the NHS as soon as possible. You will need to communicate this with your child's school.

Testing for people with symptoms

If you or your child have **one or more** of the following Covid-19 symptoms you must isolate immediately and book a PCR test via the NHS:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

What to do if you don't have any classic Covid-19 symptoms

If you or your child have other new or unusual symptoms or if in doubt, **you can still get a PCR test**. However, you do not need to immediately self-isolate for 10 days.

How to get a PCR test

If you or your child has any of the three classic symptoms, you can get a PCR test here:

<https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/antigen/essential-worker>

If you or your child do not have any of the three classic symptoms, proceed through the questions and then tick the box that says: "My local council or health protection team has asked me to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms".

What to do if the PCR test is positive

If the result is positive, everyone who lives in your household must self-isolate from the day your symptoms started and the next 10 full days.

What to do if the PCR test is negative

If the result is negative, you do not need to isolate.

Outbreaks in education settings

In the event of an outbreak of Covid-19 at a school, pupils may be asked to self-isolate for 10 days if they have come into close contact with a positive case. They may also be asked to take a PCR test.