

Health and Safety Bulletin 2021 No. 14

Updates to the Coronavirus Risk Assessment 01/04/21, confirmatory PCR tests, support payments and implications for schools.

Introduction.

Following changes to government guidance issued after the last risk assessment update the risk assessment version 5.03 has been updated. Please find attached a control document listing the updates to the Covid 19 Risk Assessment Version 5.03, the latest version of the risk assessment (V 5.04) and amended flowcharts.

ANY CHANGES TO THE RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN RED.

Sample Covid 19 Risk Assessment for Schools from 8th March 2021 is now Version 5.04.

General Issues to Consider.

1. Confirmatory PCR tests for all LFD tests - government guidance has changed to state that :

“All positive results from rapid tests, whether conducted at home or at a school or college need to be confirmed with a PCR test **within two days** of the positive lateral flow test. Following a positive lateral flow test, a confirmatory PCR test should be booked immediately either online or by calling 119. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, pupils, students and staff and close contacts should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is negative, **provided it was taken within two days of the positive LFT**, it overrides the lateral flow test and pupils, students and staff can return to school or college, and close contacts and other household members can stop self-isolating.”

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) asymptomatic testing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges)

Previously there were no requirements for LFD tests at assisted sites to have a confirmatory PCR, there were no time lines placed on when the confirmatory PCR had to be taken or when a negative PCR overrode the positive LFD test.

The guidance above has been incorporated into the flowcharts and risk assessment. It is recommended that you inform staff and parents / carers that confirmatory PCR tests need to be taken within 2 days of a positive LFD test, and that negative PCR results will only override positive LFD results if the test is taken within 2 days.

2. Test and Trace Support payments

Parents / carers - template letters have been provided by both DfE (on the schools portals) and LCC for you to send to parents / carers of children asked to self-isolate. They can also be used for staff if needed. It is important that the letter is shared promptly with all parents / carers of children that have been asked to self-isolate as it allows parents who are on a low income and unable to work from home to apply to their local authority for financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. They will not be

able to make an application without providing this letter as supporting evidence. The letter must detail the name of the child required to self isolate and the dates of their isolation period

You must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

When a parent or guardian applies to the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme because they need to care for a child who is self-isolating, their local authority will be required to contact their child's school via phone or email to verify information about the child. This includes the child's name, age and dates of self-isolation. This is a standard check against fraudulent claims, and may take place before or after a payment is made.

You will only be asked to share information on children whose parents have made an application to their local authority for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. We recommend you update your data privacy notice to reflect this.

Staff - Staff identified as close contacts of a positive case will require an NHS Test and Trace Account ID number (CTAS number) to be able to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment.

The Department for Health and Social Care has launched the self-isolation service hub (020 3743 6715). The phone line is open 7 days a week, 8am to 8pm, allowing a school to provide contact details of any staff who have been asked to self-isolate and are likely to be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment.

In order for any of your staff who may be eligible for a payment from the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme to be able to claim, you must follow these steps :

- Ensure that you collate a list of appropriate close contacts for the person who has tested positive within your establishment and inform these close contacts that they now need to self-isolate.
- Call the service hub on 020 3743 6715 as soon as you have the 8-digit NHS Test and Trace Account ID (sometimes referred to as a CTAS number) of the person who has tested positive.
- Provide the details of the person who has tested positive, along with the details of the relevant staff members you have identified as close contacts. If you do not have NHS Test and Trace Account ID for the person who has tested positive, Hub staff will assist in tracing the person in order to register their contacts on the Test and Trace system (CTAS).
- NHS Test and Trace will then contact individuals to formally advise them of their need to self-isolate and provide them with an NHS Test and Trace Account ID.

Following this, individuals who are employed or self-employed, on a low income, unable to work from home and losing income as a result may qualify for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme through their local authority.

[Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance)

Schools should now ask staff that test positive to provide them with their 8-digit NHS test and trace account number and then contact the above number with details of any other staff asked to self isolate as a result of close contact.

Originator -
Schools Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.

Circulation - All Schools.