Coronavirus (COVID-19): Primary School Rapid Testing Policy

Contents:

Statement of intent

Statement of intent

In order to safeguard the health of our school communities, Derby Diocesan Academy Trust (DDAT) schools will be implementing the use of rapid-result testing from January 2021 onwards. This will help us to identify asymptomatic cases, which make up a third of all cases, thereby limiting the spread of the virus.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, testing will allow us to take further measures to help staff members to work in as safe an environment as possible. Up to one in three people who have Covid-19 have the virus without symptoms so could be transmitting the virus unknowingly. Tackling the pandemic requires identifying asymptomatic, infectious individuals. By testing, we will help to reduce the spread in schools.

This policy has been developed to ensure that the rapid testing process is implemented correctly by schools, that staff understand how to access information on how to conduct tests safely, and where staff can find further information and support.

1.   Legal framework

This policy has due regard to the relevant guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2020) 'Schools and childcare settings: return in January 2021'
- NHS (2021) 'Your step-by-step guide for COVID-19 self testing'
- NHS (2021) 'How to Guide: Rapid testing of primary and nursery workforce'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following documents:

- COVID-19 Rapid Testing in Primary Schools Risk Assessment

2.   Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Communicating the purpose of the testing to develop an understanding of the service amongst staff and the wider community.
- Communicating with staff via letter to inform them of the testing activities taking place, including all relevant guidance provided by the NHS/DfE, a privacy notice, and a consent form to be completed and returned.
- Ensuring that legislation and official guidance is adhered to at all times during the process of testing.
- Raising any questions about the school's responsibilities in relation to rapid testing with the DfE via the DfE coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline.
- Appointing members of staff to roles required to deliver the testing programme: COVID-19 Coordinator and Registration Assistant.
- Handling any complaints about the conducting of rapid tests in line with the relevant school policy, e.g. Grievance Policy.

The COVID-19 Coordinator is responsible for:

- Communicating with stakeholders.
- Ensuring staff are using the right instructions and that they sign for the test kits using the 'test kits log'.
- Reporting incidents and carrying out risk management.
- Storing and reporting any required data.
- Reordeing tests when required.

The Registration Assistant is responsible for:

- Distributing the correct number of test kits to staff and managing the schedule for the distribution of the next sets of kits. The Registration Assistant must wear an appropriate face covering when giving out the test kits, and ensure social distancing of 2 metres is maintained.
- Inputting test results from staff into the school's 'test results register/log'.

- Sending reminders to participants to communicate their results to NHS online or by phone, and to the school.
- Responding to staff questions.
- Working with the COVID-19 Coordinator to manage the stock of kits.

The Trust DPO is responsible for:

- Updating the Trust Privacy Notice to reflect the processing of data in relation to rapid testing of staff.
- Advising schools on any data protection, handling and processing queries.

3. Consent

Participation in the rapid testing programme will be voluntary and tests will only be conducted on staff for whom consent has been given.

Consent forms will ensure that consent is required for the weekly testing. All staff must read the privacy notice available here: https://ddat.org.uk/gdpr/ to understand what will happen to their data.

Participants' consent will include providing their confirmatory test results to the NHS online using the following link: https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result or by calling 119. Staff must also confirm the result of each test to the school.

4. Data security and handling

The Trust DPO ensures a privacy notice compliant with data protection guidance will be shared with staff in regards to the rapid testing process.

The privacy notice will be shared alongside the NHS guidance regarding the rapid testing process to ensure that decisions about consent are made with a full understanding of how personal data will be processed.

A copy of the privacy notice will be provided on DDAT's website here: https://ddat.org.uk/gdpr/

The language used in any material intended to explain what data is being collected, why it is being collected, and how it will be used, will be clear and easily understood.

The school will raise any concerns about data security and handling by contacting the DPO for the DfE via dp.enquiries@education.gov.uk by marking the subject as "COVID Testing in Schools/Colleges – Data Protection Issues".

5. Storage and Distribution of Test Kits

Upon arrival of the test kits, schools must record the lot number(s) of the test kits delivered.

Test kits must be stored in a secure location within the school. The school should determine who has access to the test kits – i.e. Registration Assistant/s and COVID Co-ordinator.

Test kits should not be stored outside. Temperature for storage of test kits should be between 2 and 30 degrees.

When distributing test kits, schools must allow enough space to ensure social distancing and Registration Assistant/s who are coordinating the handing out of the tests, should wear appropriate face covering at all times.

Schools must ensure that the correct (updated) 'instructions for use' documents are provided to staff with the tests. These instructions replace those instructions found within the inside of the test kit box.

Staff must sign for receipt of the test and instructions.

Registration Assistant/s should set up a Register and must record which staff are undertaking the testing. The Register must include the following:
- Name of School
- Name of person issuing the test
- Date of Issue
- Lot number of test kit
- Name of person using the test

6. Conducting tests

The testing programme will be managed in line with the school's existing system of controls, including:

- Maintaining social distancing where possible.
- Promoting good hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.

Testing is for asymptomatic members of staff only; testing will not be conducted on symptomatic indivduals. If an individual has symptoms, they should continue to book a test via the NHS Coronavirus (COVID-19) service or by calling 119.

Participating staff will need to carry out twice weekly testing at home (3-4 days apart) before they come into the workplace in the morning.

Staff must continue to maintain 'hands-face-space' as asymptomatic testing does not replace current guidance for those with symptoms or those identified as a close contact of a positive case. Anyone with symptoms, whether they are involved in this programme or not, should book a free NHS test and follow Government self-isolation guidance untol the results of their test are known.

Tests are only for the use of the person assigned the kits – they should not be taken by anyone else, including household members.

When taking the test, members of staff should follow the instructions provided by the NHS in the document titled 'Your step-by-step guide for COVID-19 self testing'.

Before taking part in testing, all staff should watch the instructional video available here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvaBZskxS7tzQYlVg7lwH5uxAD9UrSzGJ

It is recommended that staff test themselves in the morning before attending school (so there is less chance they get infected between taking the test and attending school). However, staff may take the test the evening before, especially the first time, to get more accustomed to the test and so the school has more time to react to a positive test result.

7.   Test results

The results of the test should show after 30 minutes. It is important that a timer is used by staff as results are invalid after 30 minutes.

Staff who test negative can attend their workplace as normal.

If the test shows a void result, another LFD test should be taken. If two void results are received in a row then the individual should book a PCR test.

Staff who test positive will be required to self-isolate immediately and take a confirmatory PCR test. Staff are advised to visit a community or drive-through test site as this is the quickest way to get tested, alternatively a home test kit can be used. It is important that the individual, and members of their household and support bubble, isolate until the result of the PCR test is known.

Staff who subsequently test negative following a PCR test will be allowed to return to school as normal, provided they have not had a high temperature for 48 hours and do not feel unwell.

For every test taken, members of staff must report their result to the NHS online using the following link: https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result or by calling 119. Test results need to be reported even where they are negative or void. It is a requirement to share results with NHS Test & Trace so that contact tracing and clinical evaluation of the testing programme can continue.

All staff must also share the results of the test with the school.

On receipt of a positive LFD test, the school will identify close contacts and instruct them to self-isolate until the result of the confirmatory PCR test is known.

If the PCR test confirms that the individual has tested positive for COVID-19, then all close contacts must continue to self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days in line with Public Health advice.

8.   Reporting Concerns or Issues

If members of staff have any queries relating to consent, privacy and/or data protection, they should speak to the Headteacher in the first instance who may then seek advice and guidance from the Trust DPO.

If a member of staff testing at home has any clinical issue from taking a test, they should raise a Yellow Card. This can be done by reporting the issue at: https://coronavirusyellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

The member of staff should inform school as soon as possible. For medical attention, the member of staff should follow usual procedures:

- call their GP or for advice/medical support
- call 111 for advice/medical support
- call 999 for urgent medical help

If staff require assistance in completing the tests, they should contact the COVID-19 Coordinator.

Schools can contact the DfE coronavirus helpline (0800 046 8687) to raise questions, concerns or report issues.

If the school is approached by a member of the media, they must contact the Department of Health and Social Care press office (020 7210 4850) in the first instance.

Anyone with one or more symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change in sense of smell or taste) should self-isolate and book a test or call 119.

9. Monitoring and review

The DDAT Chief Operating Officer will review this policy regularly in line with new and updated guidance from the government.

All changes to this policy will be communicated with the relevant stakeholders.