

## **A study of daily contact testing of close contact groups in schools and colleges**

As a school/college we will be taking part in a new study called 'Daily Contact Testing' which is being led by the Department for Health and Social Care through NHS Test and Trace.

### **Why is this study important?**

Normally, when we identify a person has COVID-19, the whole group of people that have been in close contact with that person have to go home and self-isolate for 10 days to stop the virus spreading. This can mean lots of people being absent from school or college, but it is important to do this to protect the other people in school and at home.

This study will seek to understand if students and staff can continue to come to school safely after they have been in close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19, by testing them daily for 7 days with rapid tests. If a student does not have a positive result, they will be able to take part in school activities. Students will need to self-isolate when not at school.

### **Is taking part voluntary?**

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. If students do not wish to take part they must continue to follow national guidance and self-isolate if identified as a contact. The school will continue to support students self-isolating at home. If a student chooses to take part in the study, they can change their mind at any time. If they stop taking the tests they must self-isolate for 10 days after contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19.

### **What does the study involve?**

When a positive case is identified in school, for example through the twice weekly home testing, the school will be asked to tell the research team those individuals who are taking part in the study that had been in close contact.

Students and staff identified as a close contact who are taking part in the study will be asked to perform COVID-19 tests for 7 days:

- A rapid test at school every day – this will involve rubbing of a soft cotton bud on the inside of the nostrils to test for the virus. The result is available within 30 minutes.
- A Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test at home on day 2 and 7 – two home PCR testing kits for the study will be provided. These are similar to the tests performed at NHS Test and Trace sites. A swab is taken at home from the nose and throat to be processed in a laboratory at the end of the study (there will be instructions on how to return the swab). Results of these tests will therefore not be available until after the 7-day testing period.

Unless the rapid test is positive, students and staff will be able to take part in school activities. They will need to continue self-isolating when not at school. Rapid test results will be given verbally by the school or by text message.

Students and staff will be asked to complete a brief survey on day 7 and may be invited to speak to a researcher about daily testing.

## **What happens on non-school days?**

On non-school days students and staff will not receive a rapid test and will be required to self-isolate. If the last day of daily testing falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a final rapid test will be needed to complete daily testing on Monday.

## **What if a rapid test is positive during the study?**

A positive result with the rapid test means the individual must follow [the national guidance](#) and self-isolate for 10 days.

If someone who is taking the daily tests comes into contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus again, the 7 days of daily testing will restart. If they do not want to do the tests again they can self-isolate as per national guidance.

If a student receives a positive test at any point during the study they will be asked to take an additional special home PCR testing kit for the study.

## **What happens if the rapid test is NOT positive during the study?**

This means students can continue with normal school activities until the next test is due. Students will need to continue self-isolating when not at school.

Sometimes, a student could still have COVID-19, even if they do not have a positive test result. This means everyone should continue to wash their hands, cover their face and maintain social distancing as normal.

## **What are the benefits and risks of taking part?**

As this is a new study and has not been done in school before there is an additional risk to taking part as we cannot know exactly what the impact will be. Sometimes a person may still have the virus, even if they do not have a positive test result. However, it is thought they are less likely to spread COVID-19, as they either do not have the virus or have a very low level of virus. It is very important that the national guidance to stop the virus spreading (including social distancing, hand washing, using face coverings) is followed at all times.

Consideration should be given to how taking part in the study may affect the other people in your house or people you see regularly. For example, if you live with another person who has health problems you may decide you would prefer to self-isolate rather than continue attending school/college. This is because the rapid test is best at identifying those who are infectious and most at risk of transmission but there may still be some individuals who have the virus and are not detected by the test.

## What will you do with my information?

This is a summary of the School's Privacy Notice for Daily Contact Testing Trial, with which you will be provided a copy.

We will collect personal information, including name, date of birth, contact details and names of contacts at school for you and the people you have been in contact with. This information, together with COVID-19 tests results will be provided to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) so they know when someone tests positive to help stop the spread of the virus. Information is also shared with DHSC to help assess how effective the trial is. DHSC are the 'controller' for this use of personal data – they decide how it will be used and are responsible for it. The school use this information to help us manage our COVID-19 response within the school – where we do this, we are the controller of the personal data.

The use of personal data by the school and by DHSC is made lawful as it is being used for the protection of public health. We will keep all the information securely in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

If you would like to ask about how your personal data is used or if you have a complaint you can contact:

School: [dailytesting@rainford.org.uk](mailto:dailytesting@rainford.org.uk)

DHSC: [data\\_protection@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:data_protection@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Are household contacts or other people able to participate?

This study is **only** open to students and staff at schools/colleges who have been identified as a close contact of a student or staff member at school/college. If a student or staff member has a positive household contact, they (the student or staff member) are not able to participate and must self-isolate as per national guidelines. In addition, other people who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 need to self-isolate, following the [national guidance](#).

## What should a you do if you develop symptoms?

If students develop symptoms at any time during the study, they must immediately self-isolate and book a test at <https://www.gov.uk/get-COVID-19-test> or by calling 119. The school/college should be informed if the test result is positive.

If you have any questions about this, please contact the school/college via [dailytesting@rainford.org.uk](mailto:dailytesting@rainford.org.uk)

## What is the difference between daily contact testing and self-isolation?



Positive case self-isolates at home for 10 days and does a Research PCR (following current government guidelines)

Close contacts are identified and contacted



If your school/college has been randomly selected to:  
Continue with self-isolation (Control Group)

- Individuals (close contacts) self-isolate at home for 10 days.
- In addition to this, they should do 2 x Research PCR tests (one on day 2 and one on day 7) which will be posted to and from the individual's house and the lab.
- PCR results are not available automatically but are available on request 2 weeks later.
- As a school/college, there is less impact to normal operations if assigned to this group as it is most like current mass testing nationwide.
- Funding to each randomly selected group will be equal.



If your school/college has been randomly selected to:  
Trial Daily Contact Testing (Intervention Group)

- Rather than isolate for 10 days, the individuals return to school/college and have a rapid test every morning in school/college for 7 days. They can engage in all school/college activities only after a negative result is returned but must self-isolate in the evenings and weekends until the daily testing is finished.
- The Orient Gene LFD (Lateral Flow Device) test takes approximately 15 minutes to produce a result.
- In addition to this, they should do 2 x Research PCR tests (one on day 2 and one on day 7).
- PCR results are not available automatically but are available on request 2 weeks later.

For any enquiries, please email  
[dct-pilotpmo@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:dct-pilotpmo@dhsc.gov.uk)