

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19

From today (Tuesday 14 December), a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 is being introduced (including until the end of this term). All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing by close contacts will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [Online Reporting System](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the [Sunday 12 December press release](#). This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return in January.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and [order a PCR test](#) to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.

For primary aged children [LFD test kits are available through the usual routes](#) (community test sites, local pharmacies or online).

Anyone over the age of 18 years and 6 months who is not vaccinated, must isolate in line with government guidelines if they are a close contact of a positive case.

For students with SEND who struggle to or are unable to self-swab daily for 7 days, settings should work with students and their families to agree an appropriate testing route, such as assisted swabbing. Information on further support measures will be provided.