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Test kits dispatched to schools in England, January to March 2021

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On 7 March 2021, the Prime Minister quoted that nearly 57 million lateral flow tests have already been delivered to schools and colleges across the country.

These figures were calculated using administrative data held by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). This document sets out the data and methodology used.

Background

Lateral flow device (LFD) test kits began being delivered to education settings in January, to support the full reopening of schools and colleges.

Figures for the number of tests conducted in schools and colleges is available weekly in the [NHS Test and Trace statistics](#). Further information on the rapid testing operation across different education settings can be found in the [NHS Test and Trace statistics methodology](#).

Data

Almost 57 million test kits were dispatched by the first week of March, and a further 77 million test kits were planned for delivery during the next 2 weeks.

Over 18 million test kits have been delivered to primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools, with a further 1.8 million due for delivery later in March.

Over 38 million test kits have been delivered to secondary schools and colleges, with a further 75 million due for delivery later in March. This includes test kits to support twice-weekly testing at home for all on-site students.

Table 1: dispatched and planned test kit deliveries for primary school, school-based nursery and maintained nursery school staff; and staff and students in secondary schools and colleges in England

	Dispatched: week commencing 4 Jan to week commencing 1 March	Planned: week commencing 8 March to week commencing 15 March
Primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools	18,117,840	1,793,232
Secondary schools and colleges	38,497,353	75,293,428
Total	56,615,193	77,086,660

Notes:

1. Dispatched and planned test kit deliveries to primary and nursery schools are for twice-weekly testing of staff at home.
2. Dispatched and planned test kit deliveries to secondary schools and colleges cover initial on-site testing of students upon return in January, and testing of staff (both initially on site and more recently at home). Planned deliveries also include test kits for twice-weekly testing at home for all students.

Methodology

Data for test kits dispatched and planned test kit deliveries are collected by commercial partners and collated centrally by DHSC.

This data covers educational settings in England only.

Planned test deliveries are calculated using an operational schedule for when future deliveries are due to be dispatched.

It is not possible to compare the number of LFD kits dispatched, with the number of LFD tests conducted in educational settings. This is because tests are counted when they are sent out rather than when they are registered by the user. In addition, not all tests sent out will be used.

Kits are sent to educational settings in packs of 3, 7 or 25 tests.

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