

**Part of**  
[Education and childcare during coronavirus](#)



Guidance  
**Coronavirus (COVID-19): home test kits for schools and FE providers**  
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## Overview

Anyone who experiences any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms can access a test at a testing site or at home using the [online booking portal](#). This includes all pupils, teachers, and staff. In July we set out a commitment that by the autumn, all schools and further education (FE) providers will be provided with a small number of home testing kits to complement these main access routes.

From 26 August, all schools and FE providers will receive an initial supply of 10 home test kits. Home test kits should only be offered to individuals in the exceptional circumstance that you believe an individual may have barriers to accessing testing elsewhere. The best and fastest way for students or staff to access a test is to visit a testing site.

This guidance is intended to support schools and FE providers in offering home test kits. It applies to all mainstream, special, alternative provision and FE providers.

## When to provide a test kit

Home test kits should only be offered in the exceptional circumstance that you believe an individual may have barriers to accessing testing elsewhere.

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. These symptoms are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. The government is making it as easy as possible to get a test through a wide range of routes that are locally accessible, fast and convenient.

These testing routes are set out below and should be used as the normal channels for accessing testing. If a child or staff member in your education setting becomes symptomatic, you should advise them to access testing through these routes.

However, in exceptional circumstances when you do not think a child or staff member would be able to access testing by these routes, you should consider using one of the provided home test kits to improve the chances that the individual will get tested.

Kits are suitable for people of all ages over the age of one. Kits should not be given directly to children, only to adults over the age of 18 or a child's parent or carer. Parents and carers will be required to administer the test to those under 11.

Full instructions on how to administer the test and what to do next are provided within each kit. Schools and colleges will not be expected to administer testing.

## Replenishment of test kits

Guidance on replenishment of kits will be published shortly. Once this is published, you will be able to re-order these kits. There will be a cap on how many and how frequently orders can be placed, based on pupil numbers for your education setting.

You will be provided with a unique organisation number (UON) in the email about your initial stock of home test kits. This will be needed to order replenishment kits.

## Storage of test kits

Kits should be stored securely at ambient room temperature (5-22°C).

## Usual testing options

When advising FE students to get tested, or advising parents or carers to get a school pupil tested you should advise them of the points below. You cannot require a child, young person or member of staff to get a test.

Booking a free coronavirus (COVID-19) test is done through the [online booking portal](#). This will then give you a range of testing options available in your local area. These will usually be:

- test centre – booking a test at a drive-in test centre is likely to be the fastest way to get a test - you should be aware of the location of local test centres in order to advise staff, students, parents or carers
- home test kit – staff, parents or carers, and FE students can order a home test kit for themselves or up to 3 members of their household

New ways to make accessing a test as quick and easy as possible are being added continually by NHS Test and Trace. Recently, 'walk in' local testing centres have opened in a number of locations. This network is continuing to expand to make it easier for people without cars to get a test.

Where these, or other testing options, are available in the local area, the portal will provide those options.

If a parent or carer, staff member or FE student does not have internet access, kits can also be ordered by calling 119. 119 can also be contacted for support at any point throughout the testing journey. 119 are able to provide support in up to 650 languages.

## Test results

You should ask parents and carers, FE students and staff members to inform you immediately of the results of a test.

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