

## Media Release

**Date: 20 August 2021**

### **Start of the academic year provides widespread testing opportunity**

---

As students and staff prepare to return to education settings at the start of September, a widespread testing programme for COVID-19 is being put in place, across the Bailiwick, for teachers and students

The phased changes to border restrictions have increased the number of people travelling into and out of the Bailiwick over the summer. As a community we do need to accept that we will see cases of COVID-19 and we may see cases cropping up in schools and education settings. That being said, before everyone returns to education settings next month, we have an opportunity to do widespread COVID-19 testing of all students and teachers with the aim of reducing the risk of infection. This is part of the surveillance programme which is being supported by Education with clinical direction and oversight from Public Health.

In order to carry out this testing, arrangements have been put in place starting next week, as follows:

**Early Years settings** – any child who attends a pre-school, childminder or nursery will be asked to have a lower nasal PCR test in late August/ early September.

Children are asked to participate in this testing programme irrespective of whether they have been attending any Early Years setting during the summer break and/or have had a PCR test during that time as they have returned from travelling outside of the Bailiwick.

Early Years providers will liaise with parents and will provide the COVID-19 Scheduling Team with the names and contact details for all children. Parents will then be contacted in order to arrange a time for the PCR test which will be carried out at the drive through testing tent at the PEH.

### **Key Stage 1 and 2 – Primary/Junior school-aged children**

In the week before primary children return to school, they will be asked to carry out two parentally supported and observed lateral flow tests. These should be spread out over the week i.e. not done on consecutive days.

### **Key Stage 3 and 4 and Post16 education – Secondary school aged children and young people and anyone attending post 16 education (full and part-time).**

In the week before students return to school/college, they will be asked to carry out two lateral flow tests. These should be spread out over the week i.e. not done on consecutive days. Parents/carers are encouraged to support children and young people with their lateral flow tests.

Once they have done 2 tests prior to returning to school/college, students will be asked to continue doing twice-weekly lateral flow tests as part of our ongoing surveillance testing.

### **Teachers and Support Staff**

In the week before teachers and support staff return to school/college, they will be asked to carry out two lateral flow tests. These should be spread out over the week i.e. not done on consecutive days.

Once they have done 2 tests prior to returning to school/college, they will be asked to continue doing 2 lateral flow tests per week as part of our ongoing surveillance testing.

Full details of the testing requirements are on our COVID-19 website here:

<https://covid19.gov.gg/guidance/education>

Packs of lateral flow tests will be posted out to all children, young people, teachers and support staff, starting next week (week commencing 23 August 2021) and will be sent out in batches. Those asked to undertake two lateral flow tests in the week before attending an education setting should ensure that one of those tests is done no earlier than the day before their return. Anybody whose test shows a positive result should contact the COVID-19 Clinical Helpline on 01481 756938.

The packs of lateral flow tests were provided through our UK supply chain. We were advised that we would receive Innova testing kits and a set of step by step instructions was developed to go with each pack. It became apparent after around 1,000 packs had been labelled and sent out for delivery that the specification of the kits was different with this

delivery and they were, in fact, Sure Screen kits. We have been unable to recall these packs, so they have, therefore, gone out with the wrong instructions. Please use the manufacturers detailed instruction leaflet or use this link here: [Lateral Flow Test \(LFT\) packs - Frequently Asked Questions | States of Guernsey - COVID-19 \(gov.gg\)](#) to view the step by step guide for the Sure Screen packs. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience or confusion this may cause, and we have been working quickly to develop and highlight revised guidance.

Helplines will be open from **Monday 23 August 2021** for anyone who has any questions regarding the education testing programme - 01481 733017 or email [educationqueries@gov.gg](mailto:educationqueries@gov.gg)