

NI Special Schools COVID-19 LAMP Testing Programme

Information for Schools
2nd February 2021



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

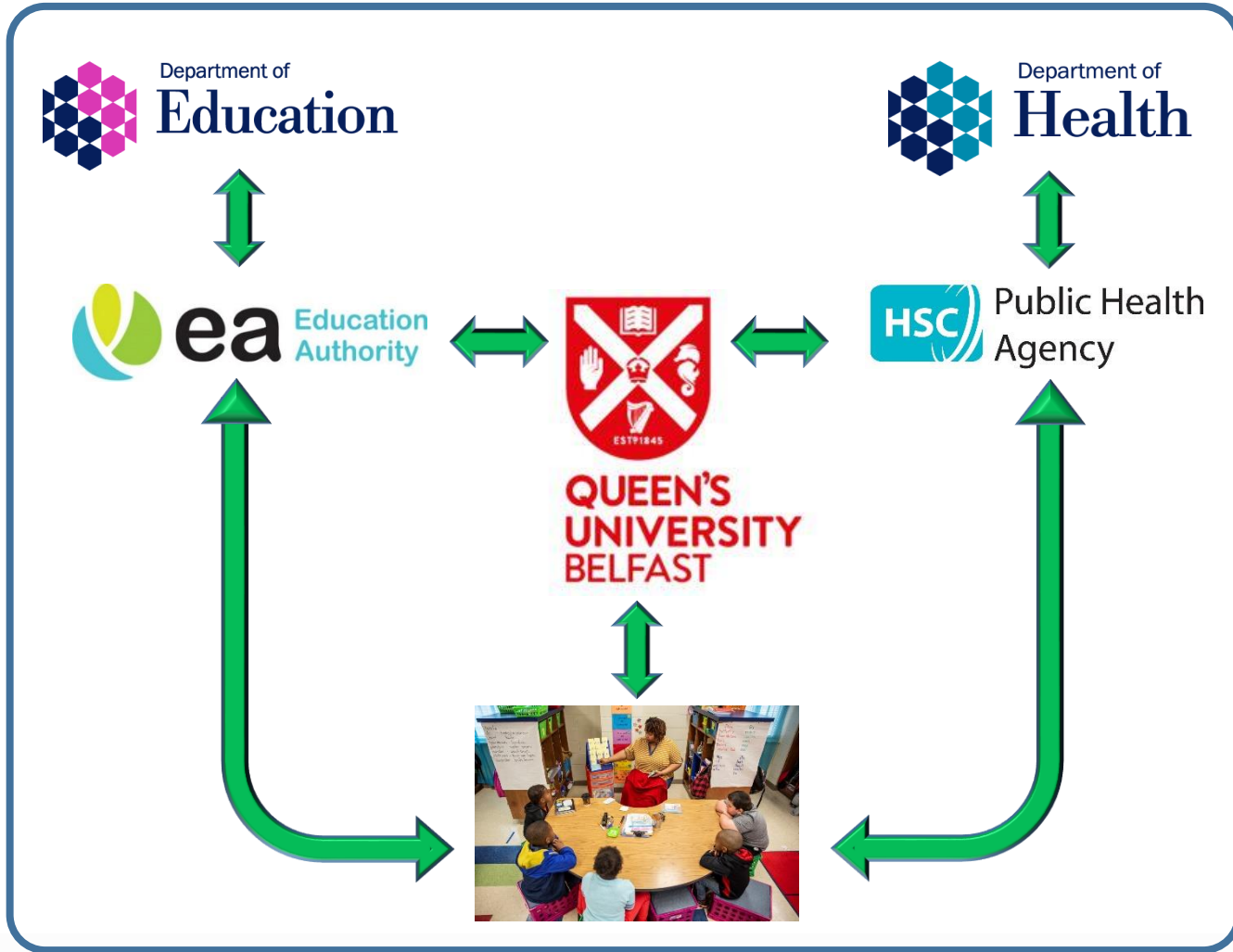


Introduction to the Testing Programme

- The COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruption to every Special School in Northern Ireland over the past year.
- Special Schools continue to provide face to face teaching for all pupils at this time.
- A programme of rapid testing for COVID-19 is now being offered to all Special School staff and pupils.
- This programme will begin during February and run until June 2021.



Who is organising this testing programme?



This testing programme is sponsored by the Department of Health and the Department of Education.

The Education Authority and the Public Health Agency are working in partnership with Queen's University Belfast to deliver the testing programme to all special schools.

A group of principals from the Special Schools Leadership Group are co-designing the programme and representing the views of the schools in the programme management structures.

What is a LAMP Test?

LAMP is a shortened form for the full name of the test, which is Loop-mediated Isothermal Amplification.

It is an alternative test to PCR and Lateral Flow tests which you may also have heard about in the media.

The test works by copying the viral RNA many times and detecting if COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) is present. It can provide a result within a few hours.



You can read more detailed information at this link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/clinical-evaluation-confirms-accuracy-of-lamp-test>

Who will get tested?

The test programme will include all pupils and staff working in Special Schools. This means tests will be offered to:

- All pupils
- Teaching Staff
- Classroom Assistants
- Office and Administrative Staff
- Cleaning and Catering Staff
- Bus Drivers and Escorts
- Other staff based in our Special Schools

All students and staff members will be offered one test kit per week. It is up to you to volunteer to be part of this programme, it is not compulsory to participate.



How do staff members provide a sample?

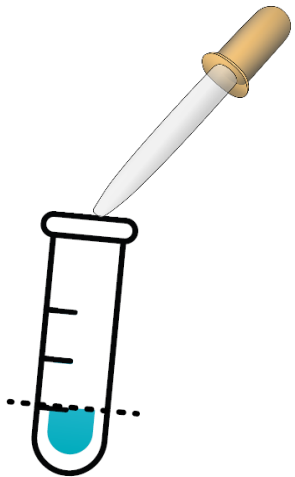
Spit ➡ Seal ➡ Submit



1. The sample kit comprises a collection container with a barcode and two clear bags.
2. On testing day each week to provide a sample you will **spit** saliva into a sample container.
3. You then **seal** this inside two clear plastic bags.
4. You then **submit** this to the collection point in your school.
5. From there your sample is transported by EA that day for testing in the QUB laboratory in Belfast.

How do pupils provide a sample?

Support ➡ Seal ➡ Submit



1. Pupils will receive a testing kit to take home consisting of a sample container with a barcode and two clear plastic bags.
2. Many pupils will be able to provide a sample in the same way as staff.
3. Some pupils in your class may have difficulty in providing a sample. In these cases you may need to support and advise their parents on how to collect a sample.
4. For pupils with more complex needs parents may need to use a pipette and further advice will be provided on how to do this before testing starts.
5. You will collect the sample sealed within two bags and ensure these are available for collection in your school.

Where does my test sample go?



- Your test sample will be transported by EA to the laboratory in the QUB School of Pharmacy.
- The sample is identifiable by its barcode only once it leaves your school.
- Your barcode enables your school principal and the PHA to contact you if your test is positive.
- The PHA will maintain a record of all test results.

How do I hear about my test result?

If I test positive...

- You will be contacted by your school principal.
- You will then self-isolate for ten days.
- Your in-school close contacts will also self-isolate for ten days.
- Your details will be passed to the PHA Contact Tracing Service who will contact you to identify your close contacts outside of school.



If I test negative...

- You will be informed by your school that your COVID-19 was not detected in your test result.
- You continue to follow all health and safety measures in school and all other public health advice at that time.

What do I do next?

Participating in the testing programme is voluntary, but the more people who take part the more effective the programme will be. In the coming days your school will make consent forms available.



Consider the information provided and decide if you want to participate with your colleagues.



Read and complete the consent form to participate in the LAMP testing programme.



Return the consent form to your school.

What happens then?

The programme will begin in February using a staged approach. First you will decide whether or not to take part. Testing kits are now being ordered for your school and will be delivered in the coming weeks. Once the testing kits are available testing will start with groups in your school on a phased basis. Each school will introduce testing in a phased and managed way.



As staff and pupils return their consent forms your school will begin to register you in the programme.



The testing kits will be delivered to your school during February. You will be able to familiarise yourself with the kit and the process.



The testing programme will begin to operate after when your school is ready to begin.