

Covid-19 Antibody Survey of education Staff

Frequently asked questions

Which staff groups can take part in this study?

We encourage anyone working in an Early Learning & Childcare setting as well as primary or secondary schools to participate in our study.

I am not a teacher, but I work in a school. Can I still participate in the study?

Yes, the study is open to all adults working in a school or Early Learning & Childcare setting in Scotland.

I have not taken part in the study before, is it too late?

No, it's not too late. We would encourage you to take part in the study as your results can still help us understand more about Coronavirus in adults working in a school or Early Learning & Childcare setting.

Why are you not focusing on other occupations or the public?

The fundamental importance of education for the health and wellbeing of children has meant that understanding how Coronavirus is affecting education is a focus for PHS and our surveillance, and the COVID-19 Antibody Survey of education Staff (CASS) study is part of this programme.

The SARS-CoV-2 Immunity & REinfection Evaluation (SIREN) survey currently in progress is exploring whether specific Coronavirus antibodies provide immunity in healthcare workers.

Household surveillance is also taking place through the ONS infection survey, in which participants will be PCR tested, and a proportion will also have antibody testing.

Why are participants encouraged to participate in the study on a four-weekly basis?

Repeat testing helps us understand how the proportion of education staff with antibodies to Coronavirus changes over time and we would like you to help by completing our survey questions and requesting a new test every four weeks until

the study ends. While we would appreciate your participation every four weeks, you do not need to do this, and you can stop taking part whenever you wish.

I have taken part in the study before but not every four weeks, can I still take part?

Yes, while we would like you to help us by requesting and completing a new test every four weeks, any repeat testing is very useful to the study.

I requested a test kit but this hasn't arrived. What should I do?

We are aware that some individuals have been experiencing a delay in receiving their kit from the UK Government testing service due to the high volume of requests being processed.

If you don't receive the kit in the next few days and you are unsure whether your antibody test request was submitted, then it would be best to complete this again, if possible - <https://www.gov.uk/register-coronavirus-antibody-test>.

Any duplicate responses will be flagged and removed in our analysis.

The registration service is operated by UK Government, if you would like to give some feedback about your experience please do so using the following link - https://nhsdigital.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1TR2VUiWUQAGN7f

I have received a positive result in the antibody test. Do I continue to participate in the study?

Yes, please continue to participate in the study each month even if you received a positive result. This helps us understand changes over time in the number of education staff who have antibodies to Coronavirus.

I have tested positive for Coronavirus. Can I join/continue to participate in the study?

Yes, please. Part of the importance of the survey is in monitoring how many people are testing positive over the school year, and how many of these have also had a positive swab test.

For information, it is possible that your antibody test may still remain negative, as antibodies can take some weeks after infection to be detectable.

I have had the Coronavirus vaccine. Can I still participate in the study?

Yes, we encourage eligible participants to participate in our study even if they have taken the Coronavirus vaccine.

Can I give an unused test to someone else?

Unfortunately, the test cannot be passed on to someone else as, at the moment, the tests are for education staff only. In addition, the kit has been registered in your name and so may lead to confusion within the results system if someone else were to use it.

What will the results mean for individuals?

The tests will not influence the activities of individuals who take part our study. This is because an antibody test provides information about whether someone is likely to have had Coronavirus before. It does not provide information on whether they are protected from Coronavirus or whether they can or cannot spread the virus to other people.

What will the results mean for health measures taken in schools and education?

The results will help us understand the levels of past Coronavirus infection among education staff compared with the general population. They will also help us track how these levels change over the school year and inform us about whether there are particular job roles in which people are more likely to have had Coronavirus. Taken together, this information will help inform how we manage and introduce health measures in educational settings to minimise the risk of infection.

How will data be handled?

All information gathered by Public Health Scotland as part of this work will be held by PHS on secure networks. Detailed information on data management is provided to participants within the participant information.

What has the study found out so far?

All published results from the study can be found [here](#). We will continue to update this webpage as more results become available.

Who can I contact if I have further queries?

Our Study Helpdesk would be very happy to answer your queries. Please contact us at phs.covid-19@phs.scot.