Advice for parents about PCR COVID-19 testing

Nose testing on its own can be used for children
who find a throat swab too upsetting.

HSC Public Health Agency

The usual PCR tests for COVID-19 involve taking a swab from the throat and the nose. This is the best test to confirm COVID-19.

A swab is a thin plastic stick with cotton wool on one end
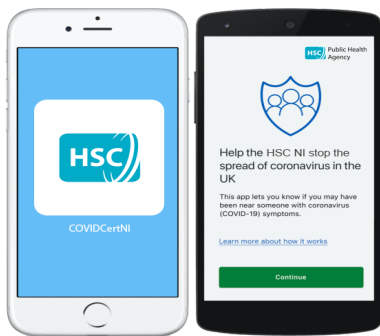

This swab is usually wiped against each side of the throat four times and up the nose on one side.

Some children and young people find it very difficult to have a throat swab.

Experts have said that taking a swab of just the nose (but in both nostrils) is OK for these children and young people.

This way of doing the test can be used if:

- your child has been named as a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19

or

- your child develops symptoms.

There are two ways to get a PCR test:

- at a testing centre

or

- by ordering a test kit delivered to your home.

Both types of test can be booked at:

www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

or call 119.

If you can't get a test kit, contact your Special School, who have a limited supply of home test kits for parents/guardians.

If you have questions about a test you've booked, you can call free phone **119** or **0300 303 2713**.

Doing the test

Useful guidance on how to take the sample is available at:

www.pha.site/PCRtest

Find us on: