***eLife’s* transparent reporting form**

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* You should state whether an appropriate sample size was computed when the study was being designed
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* If no explicit power analysis was used, you should describe how you decided what sample (replicate) size (number) to use

Please outline where this information can be found within the submission (e.g., sections or figure legends), or explain why this information doesn’t apply to your submission:

This manuscript characterizes SARS-CoV-2 positive nose and throat swabs from the UK’s national infection and immunity survey. The sample size calculation for the original survey is in the freely available protocol (link given in manuscript), but there was no specific sample size for the number of positives.

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This manuscript reports findings from a national surveillance study, not experiments. Inclusion criteria were SARS-CoV-2 positive nose and throat swabs. There is no sequencing data included.

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* Statistical analysis methods should be described and justified
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* For each experiment, you should identify the statistical tests used, exact values of N, definitions of center, methods of multiple test correction, and dispersion and precision measures (e.g., mean, median, SD, SEM, confidence intervals; and, for the major substantive results, a measure of effect size (e.g., Pearson's r, Cohen's d)
* Report exact p-values wherever possible alongside the summary statistics and 95% confidence intervals. These should be reported for all key questions and not only when the p-value is less than 0.05.

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(For large datasets, or papers with a very large number of statistical tests, you may upload a single table file with tests, Ns, etc., with reference to sections in the manuscript.)

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