



To: All Headteachers

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Ask For: Matt Dunkley  
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Dear Colleague

On Friday I mentioned that guidance relating to inviting additional primary pupils back to school was expected from the DfE, it has been published today.

The guidance makes clear that there is no expectation on primary schools to welcome back additional children where they do not have capacity to do so and this should only take place where schools have made provision available for children of critical workers, vulnerable children, and children in nursery, reception, year 1 and year 6 and have ensured as many as possible are able to attend. Schools should ensure they are still able to accommodate vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

There are no changes to the protective measures guidance and further opening should be in line with the existing guidance, including limiting groups to 15 children. Guidance continues to state that schools should not plan on the basis of a rota system, either daily or weekly.

It is up to schools to decide which pupils to prioritise, based on their knowledge of their children and communities. I encourage schools to consider inviting children back who you feel would most benefit, particularly those who have not engaged as well as others in remote learning

Not all schools will have surplus capacity to be able to invite more pupils back to school this term. The updated guidance recognises that schools may wish to have some face to face meetings in order to check-in with particular pupils and ensure they are supported before a planned return to school from September. This is now supported where it takes place within current social distancing guidelines and the protective measures for schools.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-primary-schools#inviting-back-additional-pupils-where-there-is-capacity>

During this unprecedented period, it is more important than ever that we take the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences delivering the curriculum to both those children at home and in school. I know that many will already be sharing emerging practices within professional organisations and associations. The DfE has published a suite of case studies outlining the experience of schools from across the country in delivering teaching to pupils at home, making the most of reduced classroom time and supporting wellbeing.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-practice-for-schools-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Dunkley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**Matt Dunkley CBE**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Children, Young People and Education**