

LANCASTER, MORECAMBE AND DISTRICT PRIMARY HEADTEACHER'S GROUP

20 May 2020

A statement by north Lancashire primary schools on their re-opening:

Dedicated and caring staff in primary schools across the district continue to stay open to children of critical workers and vulnerable children – children with a social worker or unmet needs at home and those with an education health care plan (EHC) if appropriate. We are encouraging all eligible children to attend school (where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household).

We want to see all our children return to school but the safety of our pupils, staff and families is always our first priority. We are deeply concerned about the government's plans for our youngest children in Reception, Year 1 and Nursery age to return on June 1st. Although the Government states that, 'Early years and primary age children cannot be expected to remain 2m apart from each other and staff.' they ask that 'If you can keep older children within those small groups 2 metres away from each other, you should do so.' Sufficient evidence to base this difference of approach has not been shared and therefore the risks around managing our youngest children are unclear.

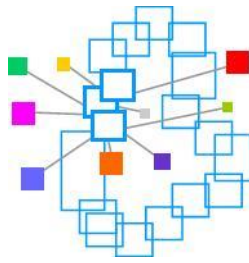
We are asking the government to publish the scientific and medical evidence that underpins their guidance and the decision to reopen schools at this stage. We believe that this clarification is important in assuring parents and staff that it is safe to return.

Schools were asked, 'to begin to plan for a phased reopening of schools from June 1st at the earliest' and the Prime Minister aspires to all pupils to be in school for a month before the end of term. The government's guidance to schools has been changing each day since the announcement. Also, following the safety advice will make it difficult for many schools to physically accommodate the proposed children and it is incompatible with the prime minister's plan to open for further year groups. This lack of clarity is deeply concerning. Currently, schools cannot commit to arrangements for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 in addition to the children of key workers and vulnerable children on June 1st.

When school leaders have a clear understanding of the safety risks to children, staff and their families, individual schools will make decisions about specific year groups and the provision that will be offered based upon their own building capacity, staffing levels and risk assessments.

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Stephen Belbin,	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Adrian Ibison,	Carnforth Community Primary School
Roger Shone,	Moorside School, Lancaster
Mr. J. Wilson,	Cawthorne's Endowed School, Abbeystead
Rune Duncan,	Thurnham Glasson Christ Church C of E Primary School
Sarah Baines,	Quernmore CE VC Primary School
Mel MacKinnon,	Willow Lane Community Primary School
Cathy Thomas,	Ellel St Johns Church of England Primary School
Kirsty Sutton,	Lancaster Road Primary School
Nicola Holt,	The Cathedral Catholic Primary School
Alison Aylott,	Scotforth St Paul's C of E Primary and Nursery School
Claire Weymouth,	St Wilfrid's CE Primary School, Halton
Paul Slater,	Trumacar Nursery and Community Primary School
Daniel Hargreaves,	Bolton-le-Sands C.E. Primary School
Linda Pye,	Ryelands, Primary and Nursery School
Katie Walsh,	Silverdale St John's CE Primary School
Mrs Katrina C Gale,	Yealand C.E. Primary School,
Dianne Cross,	Dolphinholme Community Primary School
Joanne Easthope ,	Overton St Helen's CE Primary School
John Ross,	Great Wood School, Morecambe
Keith Wright	Westgate Primary School, Morecambe
Siobhan Collingwood	Morecambe Bay Community Primary School
Sue Penney	Torrisholme Primary School
Paul Bowden	Slyne with Hest, St. Lukes CE Primary School
Catherine Armistead	Skerton St Luke's CE Primary School
Rose Starkey	Dallas Road Community Primary School
Peter Harrison	St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
Emma Simpson	Christchurch CE Primary School
Rob Smith	Mossgate Primary School
Sarah Watson	Archbishop Hutton V.C. Primary School
Ged McKeivitt	St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School