

Questions from ASCL members with regard to the further opening of schools and colleges

5 May 2020

Question	Staff	Governors	Parents	Pupils
<i>Rationale and scientific advice</i>				
What is the main reason for opening schools further at this time? Is it concerns around children and young people's education, concerns around their safety and wellbeing, or concerns around the economy?	x	x	x	
Does the proposed process and prioritisation for opening schools further align with this rationale? For example, a policy driven by economic concerns might prioritise younger children; one driven by children's safety might prioritise vulnerable children; one driven by education might prioritise those partway through exam courses.	x	x	x	
Will any proposed dates for opening further be revised if the government has not met its five tests by that date?	x	x	x	
On what scientific evidence and sociological modelling has the decision about when and how to open schools further been based? In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assumptions have been made about the transmission of the virus between children, and between children and adults? • What assumptions have been made about the capacity for schools and colleges to implement social distancing? 	x	x	x	
Does the proposed approach to phasing (assuming this is how the return is managed) align with this evidence and modelling?	x	x	x	
How much capacity will there be for individual schools and colleges to adapt the government's direction to work in their own contexts?	x	x		
Might plans to open schools and colleges further vary in different geographical regions, to recognise the different rates of infection across the country?	x	x	x	x
Has consideration been given to how a phased re-opening based on year groups might work in post-16 settings, where 50% of students are likely to be in Year 12?	x	x		
Has consideration been given to how a phased re-opening based on year groups might work in three-tier systems (i.e. areas with first, middle and high schools)? If children in transition years were to be prioritised, this would mean Year 4 and Year 8 in these areas, rather than Year 6.	x	x	x	x

If we move to phased approach based on year groups or rotas, presumably the expectation will still be that children of key workers and vulnerable children can attend school or college at all times?	x	x	x	x
Does the government's modelling of potential phased approaches recognise the impact of many more teachers' own children needing school places?	x	x		
Might there still be a role for hubs or clusters of schools for the foreseeable future?	x	x	x	x
Has the government taken into account that any three week lead-in time starting imminently will include the half-term holiday, when many school and college-based staff will be trying to take some much needed time off?	x	x		
What mechanisms will there be for schools and colleges to feed back to government on how well the approach is working, and any concerns they may have?	x	x		
What mechanisms will there be for parents to feed back to government on how well the approach is working, and any concerns they may have?			x	
<i>Safety of staff, pupils and families</i>				
Which staff and pupils will be expected to come into school or college, and which will continue to need to stay at home?	x	x	x	x
What about staff and pupils who may themselves be considered fit to come into school or college, but live with one or more vulnerable people?	x	x	x	x
What about staff and pupils who are deemed able to attend school or college, but are too scared or anxious to do so?	x	x	x	x
What about staff who struggle to find childcare for their own children at the moment?	x	x		
What will schools and colleges be expected to do if they don't have sufficient staff able to work on site?	x	x		
What social distancing measures will schools and colleges be expected to implement?	x	x	x	x
What PPE will be provided to pupils and staff in different settings, how will this be procured, and how will it be expected to be used?	x	x	x	x
Will schools and colleges be expected to take pupils' temperatures on a regular basis?	x	x	x	x
What additional hygiene measures will schools and colleges be expected to implement? And will appropriate cleaning products be supplied?	x	x	x	
What additional health and safety processes will schools and colleges be expected to implement?	x	x	x	x
Will regular testing of non-symptomatic pupils and staff be implemented?	x	x	x	x
What role might contract tracing play in education settings?	x	x	x	x

If someone in a school or college community were to test positive, would the institution be expected to close for a period?	x	x	x	x
Legal and financial issues				
Will pupils in targeted groups be required to attend, or will this be optional?	x	x	x	x
What will be the implications for schools and colleges if targeted pupils don't attend?	x	x		
What will be the implications for parents and pupils if targeted pupils don't attend?	x	x	x	x
Who will have the final say if there are disagreements over whether or not pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils, should attend?	x	x	x	x
What legal protections will there be for schools and colleges if staff or pupils become ill, or even die, as a result of attending their setting?	x	x		
Are schools and colleges legally accountable if pupils or staff don't follow social distancing rules? And what disciplinary powers will they have if these rules aren't adhered to?	x	x	x	x
Which current statutory requirements will be disapplied during a phased re-opening?	x	x		
What risk assessments will schools and colleges be expected to do prior to opening further – and will government provide a template for these?	x	x		
What new or updated policies would schools and colleges need to have in place before opening further?	x	x		
Is there any expectation that schools and colleges will be open over the summer holiday period, for some or all pupils? If so, who would be expected to staff this provision?	x	x	x	x
Will the government continue to reimburse any additional costs incurred by schools or colleges as a result of opening further?	x	x		
Teaching and learning				
Will the National Curriculum be suspended during this period, to enable schools and colleges to focus on providing the education, care and support they believe their pupils most need?	x	x	x	x
Will schools and colleges be expected to provide the same curriculum to pupils in school and those at home?	x	x	x	x
If a school or college believes it can more effectively educate all pupils remotely during this period, would they be permitted to continue to do so?	x	x		
When will decisions be made about potential changes to exams in 2021? This will affect curriculum planning for students in these years, and what schools and colleges prioritise in the coming months.	x	x	x	x

Will PE and games lessons be permitted? With what restrictions? What about sports fixtures with other schools?	x	x	x	x
How can we make sure any further re-opening helps to reduce rather than widen the disadvantage gap?	x	x		
<i>Other practicalities</i>				
Will school buses, taxis, and public buses and trains used by pupils be up-and-running from the date that schools and colleges open further – and able to cope with potential staggered start and finish times or half-day opening?	x	x	x	x
What and how might social distancing be implemented on school buses, taxis, or public buses and trains used by pupils – or indeed among pupils walking to or from school?	x	x	x	x
What will be the expectations on schools and colleges in terms of providing food?	x	x	x	x
Will the free school meals voucher scheme continue during a period of phased opening?	x	x	x	x
What will be the expectations on schools in terms of wraparound care?	x	x	x	x
Will contractors and visitors be allowed on site?	x	x	x	
What will be the expectations on social distancing in boarding schools? Will they be treated as large 'households', hence negating the need for internal social distancing?	x	x	x	x
For boarding schools with international pupils, when might those pupils return, and what would the quarantine arrangements be?	x	x	x	x