

With almost two months having passed since most pupils attended their school building, it is clear that the risks surrounding Coronavirus cannot and will not be quickly resolved. It is of paramount importance that children's education and all that schools offer can continue as fully and as soon possible, while always balanced with the health risks that this may entail.



As has been the case for many schools, Church of England schools have remained open to the children of key workers and to vulnerable children, with teachers working extremely hard to provide as much support as they can for children who have come to school and those who have remained at home during the lockdown.

However remaining at home for a prolonged period will affect the mental, spiritual, physical and social wellbeing of children. We are particularly concerned about the impact on children from the most disadvantaged families and the potential this has for a widening in the attainment gap.

As parents and staff are concerned about both the feasibility and the wisdom behind a phased return from the 1st June, we can be pleased that the scientific evidence behind these proposals has been set out in order to give confidence. The phased plan to bring back a limited number of year groups initially will rely on ongoing monitoring to keep track of the situation.

It is right that schools themselves will decide how this phased return works in practical terms. We will continue to work to support school leaders at a local level as they move towards a phased reopening at the pace dictated by local circumstances and the overarching science.

School staff are doing a wonderful job of continuing to provide educational and pastoral support to students at a time of unprecedented challenges, and we should continue to support and pray for them as they do so.

Revd Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer for the Church of England

See also:

- [Our Faith at Home programme](#)

