

Government campaign launches to get children 'back to school safely'

Schools have received Public Health England endorsed guidance on protective measures they should implement to be as safe as possible and reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus.

Measures such as staggered break times, increased hygiene and handwashing, and children remaining in consistent groups will all contribute to minimising risks, while allowing schools to get back to doing what they do best – teaching.

The campaign, which forms part of the government's wider Stay Alert campaign, will show teachers welcoming their students back into school, experiencing all the benefits that entails.

Newspaper, digital, radio and billboard adverts will showcase a range of new creative approaches to engage parents and students in returning to school.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The government is committed to doing everything necessary to deliver on our national priority of all students returning to schools and colleges in September.

All children deserve to be back in school as it is the best place for their education and wellbeing. I know families are growing more confident that schools and colleges are ready and waiting to get back to teaching, with the right protective measures in place.

As the start of term approaches, now is the time for families to think about the practicalities of returning to school in September, whether that's reassuring themselves that school is the best place for their child to be, or planning the school run to avoid public transport where possible.

Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty said:

Education is essential for a child's development so it is crucial we get children safely back to school in September.

A number of important risk reduction measures have been put in place to help students and teachers return to school with confidence.

Newspaper and billboard advertising will be launched from tomorrow, with

radio and digital adverts live from Monday 24 August and running until early September, alongside wider engagement with the teaching profession and local communications.

The latest ONS statistics show there is growing confidence among parents that their children will return to school in September, testament to the hard work of school staff putting in place safety measures.

The launch of the campaign comes as the government delivers over £40 million in funding for local transport authorities to create alternative dedicated school transport to alleviate pressure on public transport. New guidance to support local authorities to manage capacity and reduce risk on school transport was published this week.

Over £700 million has also been provided or pledged to bus and light rail operators during the pandemic, to keep services running despite reduced capacity.

Students and staff who have the option to walk or cycle to get to school are encouraged to do so. The government recently announced £2 billion of investment to increase active travel, as well as publishing its [new Cycling and Walking Plan](#).

Parents are encouraged to visit gov.uk/backtoschool for information and practical guidance to help them plan for their children's return to school.

Leaflets explaining more about the safety measures in place will be made available over the coming days.