

# Primary schools to be given flexibility to bring back more pupils

Press release

Headteachers are being encouraged to invite back more primary pupils before the summer, where they have capacity to do so



Primary schools in England are to be given greater flexibility to invite back more pupils, but only if the school has capacity within existing guidelines and if protective measures are in place.

Children in early years, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 began returning to classrooms on 1 June, with over half of primary schools open to at least one of these year groups as of 4 June.

Updated guidance published today (15 June) gives heads and school leaders the ability to invite back additional children if – having invited back the pupils in eligible year groups – they are able and feel ready to do so within the existing guidance.

Schools will have flexibility to decide which additional pupils to prioritise for return, provided existing guidelines are followed and protective measures are in place, including limiting primary class sizes to no more than 15 pupils.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I want to make sure as many pupils as possible can get back into the classroom and be reunited with their friends and teachers before the summer, to support their wellbeing and education.

We have a range of protective measures in place in schools to reduce the risk of transmission and I would like to encourage primary schools to invite more children back if they can maintain those existing guidelines.

I would encourage parents to take advantage of a place if they are eligible, and I'd like to thank teachers and staff for all their hard work as we take the next step in our phased and cautious approach to returning all children to school.

From Monday 15 June, secondary schools will welcome back pupils in Year 10 and Year 12 and colleges will welcome back 16-19 students, with settings using a range of approaches to allow a quarter of students in at any one time.

Schools and colleges can invite young people who are not yet returning to on-site provision in for a face-to-face meeting before the end of this term, where it would be beneficial and as long as this happens in line with wider protective measures guidance. This time can be used to check-in on students before a return to school or college in September, or moving into employment or the next stage of education.

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