

Education Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 02 July 2020

Today, I am going to concentrate on our plans for the autumn for schools, early years and further education. Getting our children back to school is a vital part of our national recovery from the Covid-19 outbreak. Our children's futures depend on it. They will be the doctors, the teachers, the engineers of tomorrow and we must make sure they are able to achieve their dreams.

More and more parents are being reassured by the measures we are taking to keep their children safe and are letting them return to schools and nurseries if they are eligible to do so. As of this week there are more than 1.6 million children back in our schools.

If you are one of those parents, I'd like to say thank you for putting your trust in us. I know many of you had doubts, and may still do. I want you to know that I treat my responsibility for your children with the utmost gravity. Their safety and wellbeing is my top priority. In welcoming more children back, we have followed not only the best scientific advice but also what other countries have been doing to manage a successful return for their children.

At my last briefing, I told you how it was my intention for all children to be back in school in September. Today I want to give you more details about how we are going to make that happen.

But before I do, I'd once more like to thank the fantastic school and college staff, childminders, nursery workers and carers who are all making this return possible.

Schools, nurseries and early years settings have been welcoming more children back since the first of June. They have been keeping children in small consistent groups, with stringent infection control, hygiene and cleaning measures in place.

Now that infection rates are falling, we can relax these bubbles and from 20 July we can lift the restrictions on early years settings, who will be able to return to their normal group sizes, although other safety measures must remain in place.

We know that keeping contacts to a minimum is still one of the best ways to reduce the risk of infection and from this autumn, when the whole school population returns, we are asking schools to make sure that they continue to minimise contacts. This should be done by distancing where possible and by keeping classes or year groups separate from one another.

We have suggested, for instance, that schools may stagger the start and end of a school day and that they keep their corridors as free from congestion as

possible.

We have issued full guidance on the approach schools and colleges should take and I expect them to apply this in a way that works most effectively for them, their students and their wider communities.

We know that maintaining distance and bubbles may be more challenging in schools where children and young people have special educational needs and disabilities, so we have issued specific guidance for them.

If anyone in a nursery, school or college develops Covid-19 symptoms they can already be tested. From September we are going to give all schools and colleges a limited number of home testing kits to give to any children and staff who are unable to get to a testing centre.

Parents expect their children to be safe in school, but they also expect them to be getting a first-rate education. Which is why, from September, we will be asking schools to resume a broad and ambitious curriculum and we expect exams to go ahead as normal in the summer of 2021.

We all know that the best place for children to learn is in school, which is why I have been so determined to get them back there as soon as we could. From September, attendance will once again be mandatory and no child should be out of school unless it has been agreed. This will be crucial if we are to minimise the effect of the pandemic on every child's long-term educational development.

I have already announced a £1 billion Covid catch up package to help children make up lost ground, including a £650 million catch up premium for state-funded primary, secondary and special schools and a £350 million National Tutoring Programme for the most disadvantaged pupils.

I am confident that by adopting this carefully planned return in September, we will be in a good position to recover and rebuild our education system and ensure that none of our children lose out. By working together we will make sure that their hopes and dreams for the future are not going to be knocked off course.

Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 3 July 2020

Good evening,

Since I last spoke to you from this podium, we have continued to make progress nationally against the virus.

We are now reporting regularly fewer than 1,000 new cases each day.

The Office for National Statistics estimates that between 14 June and 27 June, the most recent period they have analysed, 25,000 people in the community in England had the virus – 1 person in every 2,200.

SAGE assess that the R rate – the average number of people each infected person passes the virus onto – remains between 0.7 and 0.9 across the UK.

SAGE also assess that, in England, the number of new infections is shrinking by between 2 and 5% every day.

And while the number of people dying with coronavirus remains too high, the numbers do continue to fall.

Now of course this picture is not universal. There are areas – such as Leicester – where the virus is still more prevalent than we would like.

We always said there would be local outbreaks requiring local action. This is to be expected and will, I'm afraid, be a feature of our lives for some time to come.

But that should not take away from the great progress we have made, together, as a country against this vicious disease.

This progress is the reason why we have been able – slowly, carefully, cautiously – to ease the national lockdown.

Without doubt, lockdown has saved many hundreds of thousands of lives – but it has also had a devastating impact on our way of life and our economy.

And of course, lockdown has not yet been lifted entirely.

Indoor gyms, nail bars and swimming pools are still closed, mass gatherings are still prohibited, social distancing is still essential.

I want these restrictions to be lifted as soon as possible – of course I do.

We have established taskforces to work rapidly and closely with the sectors that remain closed to explore how they can be Covid Secure. I am pleased to report good progress is being made.

Next week we will set out a timetable for their re-opening – though of course I can only lift those remaining, national restrictions as and when it is safe to do so.

Our goal remains to enable as many people as possible to live their lives as close to normally as possible – in a way which is as fair and as safe as possible.

To achieve this we need to move away from blanket, national measures, to targeted, local measures.

So instead of locking down the whole country, we will lock down specific

premises or local areas where the virus is spreading.

Instead of closing down non-essential retail and hospitality nationwide, we will only shut establishments locally as required.

Instead of shutting all schools for most pupils, from September we will only shut those schools where it is absolutely necessary to control an outbreak.

And instead of quarantining arrivals from the whole world, we will only quarantine arrivals from those countries where the virus is, sadly, not yet under control.

We are already implementing this targeted approach in England.

In Weston-Super-Mare, we identified an outbreak in a hospital, closed it to visitors and new admissions, tested all staff and patients and gave the hospital a deep clean. The outbreak was contained and the hospital is open again.

In Kirklees, we identified an outbreak at a meat packing plant, shut down the plant, moved in a mobile testing unit, tested all employees and traced the contacts of those who were positive. The outbreak was contained and the plant has reopened with additional safety measures in place.

And of course more recently in Leicester, we identified a community-wide outbreak which was not restricted to a single location, unlike Weston-Super-Mare and Kirklees. Public Health England engaged with the local authority, mobile testing units were deployed, full data was shared – council-wide data was shared on 11 June, and postcode-level data was shared last week.

This enhanced monitoring through additional testing showed that the infection rate in Leicester was three times the next highest infection rate in any other city in the country. So on Monday, the Health Secretary announced local lockdown measures in Leicester for an initial period of 2 weeks.

In each of these cases, the problems identified were specific to Weston-Super-Mare, Kirklees and Leicester. So of course it made sense to take action locally, rather than re-impose restrictions on the whole country.

And we are learning the whole time. With each local outbreak, we see what works well and what not so well, so that we do better next time.

Informed by our experience of these cases, we have developed an approach for controlling future local outbreaks which has five principle components: monitoring, engagement, testing, targeted restrictions and finally, as a last resort, lockdown.

First, monitoring. Public Health England, working with the Joint Biosecurity Centre, will examine carefully data on the spread of the disease and people's behaviour across the country. They will look out for emerging trends, rising case numbers and other indicators, while taking into account local factors. Critically, we have made local data available to all Directors of Public Health in local authorities, so they too can monitor what is happening in

their area. And local data will also be available to the public on the gov.uk dashboard.

Second, engagement. If monitoring identifies local problems, NHS Test and Trace and PHE will work with the relevant local authority to develop a deeper understanding of the problem and identify solutions. Working with local agencies, we will seek to keep the local community informed at every stage, so they know what is happening and what actions, if any, they need to take.

Third, testing. We now have substantial testing capacity nationwide and we have the ability to target that capacity at local areas in order to get a grip on emerging outbreaks. Scaled-up testing at a local level, combined with contract tracing through NHS Test and Trace, can control the virus and thus avoid more stringent measures.

Fourth, targeted restrictions. If the virus continues to spread, we will restrict activities at particular locations and close individual premises. As in Weston-Super-Mare and Kirklees, we will restrict access to places which become hotspots for the virus, while testing people who have spent time in those places, and tracing the contacts of anyone who tests positive.

Fifth, local lockdown. If the previous measures have not proven to be enough, we will introduce local lockdowns extending across whole communities. As in Leicester, that could mean shutting businesses venues that would otherwise be open, closing schools or urging people once more to stay at home. Local lockdowns will be carefully calibrated depending on the scientific and specific circumstances of each outbreak and we are continually exploring smarter means of containing the virus.

So that is the approach we will take as local outbreaks occur and we will set out more detail soon.

Let me end by looking forward to this weekend.

Tomorrow, there will be a moment of remembrance for those whose lives have tragically been lost before their time.

And at 5pm on Sunday, the NHS's 72nd birthday, we can all come together to clap those who have worked tirelessly and selflessly to help the nation get through this pandemic.

I know everyone will be looking forward to the relaxation of national restrictions. As lockdown eases, we should focus on supporting the livelihoods of business owners and their employees up and down the country – all of whom are opening their doors for the first time in more than three months.

They are our local restaurants, hairdressers, libraries, museums, cinemas, and yes, pubs. They are also hotels, B&Bs, indeed much of our tourism industry.

All these businesses and their workers have put in a heroic effort to prepare their venues for this reopening, to work out a way to trade in a way that

keeps their customers safe.

But the success of these businesses, the livelihoods of those who rely on them, and ultimately the economic health of the whole country is dependent on every single one of us acting responsibly. We must not let them down.

Lockdown only succeeded in controlling the virus because everyone worked together, and we will only succeed in reopening if everyone works together again. Because we are not out of the woods yet. The virus is still with us and the spike in Leicester has shown that. If it starts running out of control again this Government will not hesitate in putting on the brakes and re-imposing restrictions.

Anyone who flouts social distancing and COVID-Secure rules is not only putting us all at risk but letting down those businesses and workers who have done so much to prepare for this new normal.

So as we take this next step, our biggest step yet, on the road to recovery, I urge the British people to do so safely.

Remember – don't gather in groups of more than 6 outside or 2 households in any setting.

Keep your distance from those outside your household – 2 metres if you can, 1 metre with precautions if you can't.

Wash your hands.

Let's all stay alert, control the virus, save lives – and enjoy summer safely.

[Global Britain and the CPTPP](#)

This is a vital time for the UK and for our trading relationships with the rest of the world.

And I can tell you, as we emerge as an independent trading nation once again, it's great to have the support of close friends and allies.

Not least Australia and Canada, and both Tony and Stephen.

Both of you have signed a number of comprehensive trading agreements on behalf of your countries ... and we hope to follow in your footsteps.

It's great to be here too with Minister Chan, who I wrote a joint op-ed with back in March on the importance of keeping free trade flowing during Coronavirus and resisting protectionism.

We have heard a lot over the last week or so of FDR's New Deal over the last week or so and our plans to level up the United Kingdom. So I'd thought I'd talk to day about a bit of history myself and explain how it relates to modern day international trade and British aspirations.

FDR's New Deal was born after an era of unprecedented protectionism where we saw barriers rise across the world and lead into a prolonged global recession. Not only did FDR sweep all before him with the New Deal, what he also did was roll back tariffs. He ushered in an era of international cooperation.

If we're looking to FDR for some do's, I also think we should look to President Herbert Hoover for some don'ts.

During the Great Depression tariffs were raised on over 20,000 goods. Impossibly high barriers to trade were erected and it's estimated that American imports and exports during that time fell by 70%.

Almost 100 years on as we again try and recover from a very serious crisis, I believe it's vitally important that voices of free trade are heard and that we resist these calls for protectionism.

The UK has a very important role to play as a newly emerging independent trading nation.

My ambition, and the Government's ambition, is for Britain to be a fierce campaigner for free trade. An optimistic forward-facing country that looks beyond its own shores.

We have a new opportunity to do that having left the European Union. And if you look at the patterns of our trade, since 2001, value of the UK's trade with the rest of the world has grown 60 percentage points more than our value of trade with the EU. What we want to do is go further, faster.

Right now we are currently negotiating free trade agreements with the United States, with Japan, with Australia and New Zealand.

We've got a team of negotiators working around the clock to make this happen.

I see this as a broader strategy of the UK becoming a central hub, a network of free trade agreements. A Networked Britain, not Fortress Britain.

I think we're in a very strong position to fight against protectionism with our allies, to lead by example through this network of free trade agreements. It's a very important principle for us that we are working with like-minded nations, countries who have high standards and, who importantly, play by the rules.

What we will do is we will be able to challenge those who don't play by the rules and we'll be able to force those nations to up their game.

There are, of course, some protectionist voices but what I would say to them is that we have been through an era where British business has been cut out

of opportunities. We haven't had the trading opportunities we could have had, particularly with those fast-growing parts of the world.

These free trade agreements are a vital part of reducing those barriers but also protecting us against protectionism by making sure we keep tariffs and barriers low.

But of all the opportunities I've seen, I think CPTPP is one of the greatest. It covers 13% of the global economy – if you had the UK that would be 16%.

Together with USMCA, that means that almost 40% of the global economy would be covered by high standards, rules-based, modern trade agreements.

Membership of CPTPP would hitch the UK to the fast-growing Pacific region. It also helps us strengthen our ties with some of our key international allies like Canada, Singapore and Australia.

This to me is about strengthening the group of countries that believe in free trade but also believe in the rules-based global system.

It's important that we make sure we gain and keep the support of the British public for those trade deals we're looking to strike. They must benefit British jobs, families and businesses.

We won't compromise on our high food standards and they must share wealth across our country as part of our levelling up agenda.

I also think it's important to recognise these benefits we could gain by joining CPTPP that wouldn't have been able to access as a member of the European Union. We would be able to accede to this agreement in ways that doesn't damage our national sovereignty.

There is no ECJ and there is no harmonisation of domestic regulation and there is no seizing of our sovereign power. What it allows us to do is to be part of a modern, rules-based free trade area.

It enables us to sign up to advanced digital provisions. In effect, become part of a digital free trade area and I think that is incredibly important for the UK.

We are third in the world in terms of the number of our billion dollar tech companies, after the US and China. It is a real comparative advantage for us.

The fact is that services and digital trade, we haven't seen the progress that we should have done at the World Trade Organisation.

The rule book was invented in 1995 before this trade was fully developed and it hasn't yet moved forward sufficiently.

I believe that by becoming part of CPTPP and by signing up to these advanced agreements in areas like services and digital, we will help push the World Trade Organisation to adopt new rules and modernise its rulebook, particularly in these types of areas.

Of course, we want to see a reformed WTO. We want to see leadership which promotes those ideas but at the same time we need to pursue the plurilateral approach to put pressure on that organisation to reform.

CPTPP is very much part of that plan.

Over the coming months we are working with CPTPP countries to secure our accession. As I've mentioned we're already pursuing bilateral agreements with Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and we're in discussions with a number of CPTPP members.

To my mind, the potential gains are enormous and that is both economically and strategically. I believe that membership will deliver for our businesses, it will deliver for our people and will help turn Britain into bulwark against protectionism, and a country that fights for rules-based free trade and advances it globally.

[UN Human Rights Council 44: UK Statement for the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict](#)

World news story

UK's Political and Human Rights Counsellor, Matthew Forman, delivered the statement during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madame Chair,

The United Kingdom thanks Special Representative Gamba for her report. We are a staunch supporter of and contributor to her mandate.

2020 marks an important year in the global commitment to protect children affected by conflict; it is the 20th anniversary of the UNCRC Optional Protocol and the 15th anniversary of the UN's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism and Security Council Working Group. These mechanisms have contributed to significant achievements for children on the ground.

However, children continue to suffer the brunt of war.

The UK sees reintegration programming as critical for building sustainable peace. We find it troubling that only a small fraction of children released or separated from parties to conflict in 2019 have benefitted from such programming.

We are concerned by the high levels of children deprived of liberty for their real or alleged association with armed groups. We support the Special Representative's call on Member States to treat these children primarily as victims, prioritising their reintegration into society, and to establish or strengthen juvenile justice mechanisms. Special Representative,

What new measures and policies might Member States and child protection organisations consider to improve recovery and reintegration of child survivors of sexual violence, and to support access to justice?

Thank you.

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Last updated 6 July 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 6 July 2020

Change in the title and substantial edits to text.

2. 3 July 2020

First published.

[Outstanding Roman figures of Celtic Hounds at risk of export](#)

- Figures are valued at £2 million and thought to be more than 1,800 years old
- Excavated from the villa of the Emperor Antoninus in the 1790s

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage has placed a temporary export bar on two

marble figures of Celtic Hounds carved during the Roman period.

The figures, thought to have been completed in the 2nd century AD, are one of two surviving sets from the period and have been valued at £2,000,000 plus VAT. They are at risk of being lost abroad unless a UK buyer can be found.

The figures depict a male and female celtic hound and are made of white marble, possibly north Italian or Greek. The male hound is seated upright with his head tilted upwards, tail between his legs and wearing a studded collar. The female is seated and wearing a wide studded collar with her right foreleg raised. Parts of both figures bear signs of historic restoration in the 18th century.

The figures are outstanding examples of ancient sculpture. The Committee noted the exceptional craftsmanship and remarkable, fine carving on the female figure. The inclusion of collars on both sculptures implies that they may have been household pets which offers a valuable insight into and understanding of the display of sculpture in antiquity, especially in Roman imperial villas.

The figures were excavated from the villa of the Emperor Antoninus in 1795 – 1796 and became part of the collection of Thomas Hope, who formed one of the most renowned art and antiques collections in the country.

Culture Minister Caroline Dinenage said:

These exquisite figures show that even nearly 2,000 years ago, dogs held a special place in people's hearts. The beautifully carved hounds are two rare survivors and it would be a great shame to see them lost abroad.

Despite these challenging times I hope that a UK museum or gallery is able to come forward and save these figures for the benefit of the nation.

The Minister's decision follows the advice of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA). The committee noted that the figures were outstanding examples of ancient sculpture with significant British provenance.

RCEWA member Stuart Lochhead said:

Excavated from the villa of the Emperor Antoninus in 1795-6 this pair of hounds, naturalistically rendered in marble, were acquired soon after by the great neoclassical collector and decorator Thomas Hope who displayed them in his London home, partly open to the public, for almost 50 years.

The remarkable provenance and the fact there are only two other similar sets of hounds surviving from antiquity make these objects a fascinating and important view into the display and use of sculpture in antiquity and their subsequently profound influence on early 19th century British taste and cultural history. They are interwoven in so many ways to our cultural heritage that their export abroad would represent a great loss to the nation.

The RCEWA made its recommendation on the grounds of the figure's outstanding significance to the study of the history of collecting in the UK and their display and use in antiquity.

The decision on the export licence application for the figures will be deferred until 2 October 2020. This may be extended until 2 February 2021 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £2,000,000 plus VAT .

ENDS

Notes to editors

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the figures should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

[Download an image of the two Roman figures of Celtic Hounds](#)

Details of the figures are as follows:

- The objects consist of two roman marble figures of Celtic hounds, dated around the 2nd century AD. They are made of white marble, possibly north Italian white marble, but also possibly Greek (Thassian or Parian), exact provenance of marble cannot be easily surmised.
- The male hound is seated upright with his head tilted upwards, wearing a studded collar, its body with a visibly defined ribcage, seated with its tail between his legs on a base.
- The female Celtic hound is shown seated wearing a wide studded collar, the slender body naturalistically carved, with her right foreleg raised, her hips and left paw resting on an integral arch-shaped base. Her muzzle, ears, part of the neck and the lower half of the raised right foreleg bear signs of historic restoration (probably conducted in the 18th century).
- The objects are 74.5cm and 68cm high respectively. The sculptor or school that produced the hounds is unknown.

Provenance:

- Found among the ruins of Antoninus Pius' Laurentine Villa, by Prince Chigi, at Torre Paterno, circa 1795-6, as recorded by C. M. Westmacott, British galleries of Painting and sculpture, London, 1824.
- Thomas Hope (1769-1831) collection, acquired in Italy circa 1795-1803;

and thence by descent to Lord Henry * Francis Hope Pelham-Clinton-Hope (1866-1941). Originally displayed as a pair in the statue gallery, Duchess Street, London, 1804-1849. The hounds were subsequently moved to Deepdene House, Dorking, Surrey, where Adolf Michaelis recorded them in the Gallery of the Entrance Hall.

- Catalogue of the Celebrated Collection of Greek, Roman & Egyptian Sculpture and Ancient Greek Vases, Being a Portion of The Hope Heirlooms; Christie's, London, 23-24 July 1917, lots 226 and 227.
- Purchased from the above sale by a UK collector, for 720 gns and 280 gns each; and thence by descent.
- Sold at auction to the present owner 3 July 2019
- Bonham's, 3 July 2019, lot 151 where sold to the present owner

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.

The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

www.artscouncil.org.uk.