



LA statement on pupils potentially returning to school

Kirklees Council issuing statement on pupils potentially returning to school

Dear colleague

We know that you are being approached by many parents who are concerned about pupils potentially starting to return to school. The local authority are issuing the following statement this afternoon:

Kirklees Council is working together with local schools to plan for them to reopen safely, but they will only do so when it is right for children and their families, teachers and school staff.

On Friday, the council will host an online conference for schools across Kirklees to support them through the changes they need to make before opening safely for more pupils.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Shabir Pandor, said: "The truth is that no one has yet decided that schools will reopen on 1 June. It's a government ambition that depends on several factors. We need to know a lot more before we make a judgment that's right for families, teachers and schools in Kirklees.

"Anyone who cares about the welfare of our children would be planning for their safe return to school. That's exactly what we're doing here in Kirklees.

"We are standing shoulder to shoulder with schools and colleges across Kirklees, working with trade unions and supporting families. We will do what's in the best interests of all our children and families and make sure they have the best possible environment to return to school.

"It could mean some children return to school on 1 June, or it might be later. Either way, we will be guided by the evidence, not the politics."

On Friday, Cabinet Member for Learning, Aspiration and Communities, Cllr Carole Pattison, will host an online meeting with schools to hear their views and concerns about the public health challenges tied to the government's guidance on reopening.

Cllr Pattison said: "We are talking to schools all the time to support them through the transition. We will continue to do that until they reopen, and beyond.

"In many ways, the government's timetable and guidance has raised more questions than answers. We are helping schools to navigate the confusion.

"We are listening to their concerns and helping them overcome the barriers. The government is asking a lot of schools,

but they have been doing a fantastic job. We will continue to support schools, listen to the unions and do the best for our children in these difficult circumstances.

"We will be guided by the evidence and by the individual circumstances of schools. Parents and schools will then be free to make their own choice."

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