

[02/01/2021, 21:23:51] Henry Cook: These numbers are terrifying...

Irrelevant & Sensitive

Think whatever PM says tomorrow on schools needs to be in context of the fact we will very likely need drastic national action soon, including on schools....

[02/01/2021, 21:24:49] James Slack: Jesus...

[02/01/2021, 21:25:01] James Slack: Revised

q: should primary school teacher turn up to work tomorrow?

- Yes. Children will be attending school tomorrow and teachers will want to be there to teach them.

- Teachers have been working incredibly hard throughout this pandemic providing education for pupils.

- The last thing we want to do is close schools.

- There have been places - London, parts of Essex, Kent & Hertfordshire - where the transmission rates are extremely high and sadly still increasing.

- And it is in those areas, on advice of public health professionals, we have said that primary schools should only be open to vulnerable & key worker children and teach other pupils online.

- This decision was taken as a last resort and was not necessary for other parts of the country with the transmission rates where they are at this time.

- we obviously have to keep the situation under review and respond to the latest data that we have and advice from public health - but throughout make sure that young people can still access a high quality education

[02/01/2021, 21:25:16] James Slack: Is NR proposed answer. Which looks wise to me.

[02/01/2021, 21:30:49] Henry Cook: Yeah I think that's ok....

Beyond Marr, I think the place we need to get to asap is all schools closed nationally for the rest of January, while committing to longer school days and shorter holidays to make up for it later in the school year

But that needs to be linked to further wider restrictions beyond schools which we're not ready to announce tomorrow

Aspect of making up for lost time will need careful handling - but in this instance it's a fight with the unions we can win as parents will be onside

Think those lines for marr are ok as they don't preclude going further in due course...

[02/01/2021, 21:35:40] James Slack: I suspect parents know that we're in an impossible place. What we need to do is not add to the sense of chaos by lurching around. The unions are behaving appallingly. Whatever we do can't just look like us bowing to bad behaviour.

[02/01/2021, 21:43:13] Henry Cook: Yep. Unfortunately I think DfE have handled this so badly it looks like we're being buffeted around