

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

- HMT analysis suggests that the evidence on the productivity impact of working from home is mixed. However, there is very strong and clear evidence that a major factor in reducing parents' productivity and ability to work has been additional childcare commitments caused by school closures. The reopening of schools should be the priority to address productivity.
- Linked, from a health perspective, a swift return to the office and associated uptick in public transport would increase the risk of transmission. An increase in transmission could jeopardise our ability to see schools return in September, or force us to re-close open sectors.
- A significant shift now away from working from home guidance would make us an international outlier. Most major European countries (France, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Spain) continue to recommend working from home where possible. This is also true in Singapore and in Hong Kong, where large employers practice home-working by default.