

All,

Full minute of ministerial meeting – in Covid O format - on schools to follow. In the interests of time, key conclusions agreed by the PM, CX, Health Secretary, Education Secretary and CDL and immediate actions are below. Other attendees included the CMO and the GSCA and members of the PM's team.

- Return of secondary school pupils to be delayed by one further week nationally to allow additional time to set up testing for all pupils before they return from 18 Jan (exam cohorts – tested before return - from 11th, critical worker and vulnerable from the 4th). DfE to set clear expectation that **all** schools introduce testing.
- Weekly testing to begin for all secondary pupils from 18 Jan (in addition to the workforce testing and serial testing of contacts as already announced)
- Weekly testing of primary school workforce and serial testing of primary contacts to be introduced from 18 Jan
- Weekly testing of primary school pupils to be considered further with a view to introduction as soon as practicable
- Use of the contingency framework for schools to begin immediately. There should be a high bar for entry to the contingency framework for secondary schools, and a higher one for primary schools. All but in the very worst affected areas (“the overwhelming majority”) should see primary schools return on 4 Jan.
- **The first set of areas to go into the contingency framework (affecting both secondary and primary schools) to be agreed by Ministers tomorrow morning in the appropriate way using public health advice** (noting that on this occasion Gold has already agreed some areas as a basis for further intervention – though this will need to be narrowed down) - **for announcement tomorrow afternoon (statement currently in for 2.30pm).**
- **Wording to describe this shift in approach, the triggers and mechanism we will use, and the areas who will not see return on 4th January – to be agreed between DfE/DHSC and No10 in parallel.**
- University practical student cohort to be reduced from 40% to 20%, and return timetable of all other students to be reviewed on the 18th Jan, with a review to shifting return to the right. **DfE to provide wording to be used on this tomorrow, by 10am tomorrow morning.**

The parliamentary handling and comms on all of this will clearly be very important. Natasha I know you are confirming if the Health Sec wants to test two statements with the speaker ahead of the press conference, or roll into one. DfE and DHSC press teams to agree comms approach with No10 comms – likely need for press notice ready to go at time of oral statement.

Alex

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