

Weekly DfE/Taskforce Meeting Situational Report

Thursday 4 February 2021

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Summary

Early Years (EY)

- 78% of settings have remained open
- Attendance rates are at approx. 59% of the usual daily level.

Actions:

- Urgent work to communicate funding position to sector, working with HMT – significant risk of high profile negative stakeholder reaction.
- Comms plan on asymptomatic testing. Working with DHSC to clarify community mass testing rollout and explore options for the sector.
- National lockdown guidance for EY is being updated to reflect the decision made to delay schools reopening.

Schools

- 99% of schools have remained open and attendance rates have increased slightly to 15%.
- Attendance is approx. 71% for children of critical workers that requested a place.

Actions:

- Sustaining the national policy on school opening, with clear messaging to outline what is expected for VC and CWC provision.
- Regional teams following up schools with outlier attendance to offer support
- Comms – clarification on CWC attendance, emphasising that parents should only send in children if needed and availability of other children options
- Developing roadmap for school return from 8 March

Further Education (FE)

- 94% of colleges have remained open.
- Face-to-face attendance in FE colleges is at 1.3% of expected face-to-face attendance levels pre-lockdown (early Dec).
- Of those expected to attend FE colleges, 44% reported as attending.

Actions:

- Follow up with stakeholders and providers about how they are using the new flexibility for some FE students, who would otherwise be unable to complete their courses between now and end March, to return on-site.
- Continue to prepare for re-opening of settings from 8 March.
- Make the case for inclusion of 16-19 provision in additional catch-up support package.

Higher Education (HE)

- Staff and student positive Covid cases were higher in the early part of this term than the later part of last term
- HEP reports through OIS and ONS survey data indicate students studying face to face are returning broadly in line with our expectations (i.e. that 20% would return in Jan).

Actions:

- We continue to develop plans to manage the further return of students from March, and for returning students to be tested for Covid.
- Also developing plans for mitigations for learning outcomes for students who might not return this year
- £50m of extra Hardship Funding (on top of the £20m released in December) was announced on 2nd Feb

Cross-sector issues

Ensure access to high-quality remote education:

- Almost all schools/colleges report providing remote education in line with the expected/minimum hours set in guidance. Over 927k devices delivered, including over 365k since 4 Jan.
- Comms strategy to manage the narrative on remote education, lost learning and catch-up, and to build parent, sector and pupil/student confidence. Strengthened remote education expectations with schools and colleges expected to publish information about their remote education on their websites by 25 Jan and 18 Jan respectively.
- Increasing reports of digital poverty in HE students (e.g. VC letter indicating 18% lacking access). Extra hardship funding should be used to help students where needed

Testing:

- Over 2.2m tests have been conducted in primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and Higher Education Institutions
- Continued implementation of mass testing and ensuring schools and colleges are prepared to fully roll-out their programme for re-opening.

Maintain parental confidence especially among the most anxious:

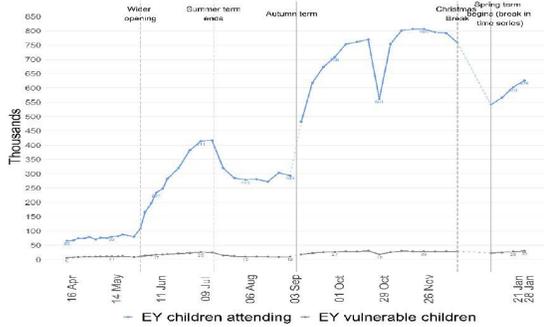
- Parent confidence in safety of school attendance remains low, currently at 32% for secondary parents and 37% for primary parents.
- Infection rates for 8 March are likely to be higher than for Sept reopening so need to build confidence in regular testing and secure influential teacher and medical voices

Vulnerable children and young people

- Attendance in schools 35% for children with EHCP, 41% for those with a social worker. In EY, attendance is 37% for children in need or with an EHCP. In FE, 60% of EHCP pupils in responding colleges attending 29 Jan, absolute numbers much lower than pre-Christmas.
- Some evidence of increased safeguarding risks: CSC referrals 21% lower than usual and lowest since previous lockdown in May and reports of increased hidden harms
- Focus to implement attendance actions inc comms, work with OGDs and REACT; and safeguarding priorities on vulnerable babies and teens, multi-agency arrangements, support for weaker LAs, and securing testing/vaccination for safeguarding workforces

Early Years (EY)

Priority to ensure sufficiency and quality of childcare places – especially for critical worker and vulnerable children



- An estimated 53,000 settings are open as of 28/01. This represents 78% of all settings, with 10% closed and 11% unknown. If an LA does not submit a return, the data submitted by the LA in the previous week has been carried over.
- We estimate 626,000 children are currently attending early years childcare settings as of 28/01, which is approximately 59% of the usual daily level.
- This includes an estimated 30,000 who are vulnerable children. We estimate this represents approximately 37% of 0 to 4 year-olds classified as 'Children in Need' or with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Situational assessment

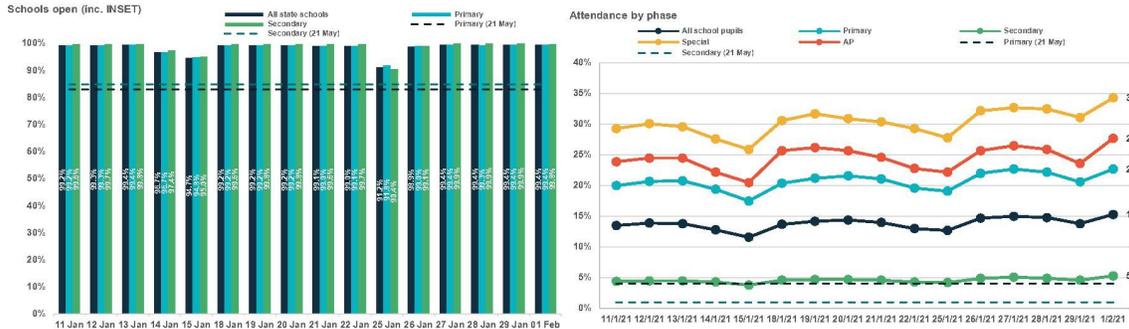
- Concerns of widespread localised failure of the Early Years market due to: drop in income (fewer children attending), workforce supply issues (sickness, isolation, childcare), COVID costs (cleaning, workforce) and parental confidence
- New data on Ofsted notifications of COVID cases has been published, and we have seen a large rise in COVID cases in settings in the first week of January. Latest data due w/c 1 Feb for publication Mon 8 Feb.
- Significant funding concerns from the sector - urgent work underway to communicate funding position to sector, working with HMT – significant risk of high profile negative stakeholder reaction.
- Concerns from sector around safety of Early Years settings remaining open to all. NEU/NAHT unions pressing for Early Years to be restricted in line with schools and some unions continuing to advise staff to remain absent if they do not feel safe under section 44 – we are hearing of some impact of this action, unclear to what extent.
- 20% Early Years sector included in asymptomatic home LFD test kits model (MNSs and SBNs). Significant concern that PVI providers do not currently have home LFD test kits and access via community
- Early Years Alliance to be part of DfE safety sub-group meeting w/c 1 Feb.

Updates on key actions:

- Frequent engagement with HMT continues, to discuss funding
- The national lockdown guidance for Early Years is being updated to reflect the decision made to delay schools reopening. Urgent work underway to communicate funding position to sector, working with HMT – significant risk of high profile negative stakeholder reaction.
- Comms plan underway on asymptomatic testing. Urgently working with DHSC to clarify details for community mass testing rollout and explore options for the sector.
- Working on putting in place a troubleshooting contract for LAs in regard to the entitlements.
- Developing a document on early years transparency and how we calculate increases in funding rates in response to the latest NAO report.
- Rationale for Early Years to remain open reconfirmed with PHE and DHSC in light of announcements on new variant. Working to assess implications of ONS and other infection data on rationale.

School opening & attendance

Over 99% of schools have remained open, barring bad weather, and the vast majority continue to report being able to meet demand for places. Trends over the last week show that attendance rates have slightly increased to approximately 15%.



- 99.4% of state-funded schools were open to children of critical workers (CWC) / vulnerable children (VC) on 01/02, stable from 99.4% on 28/01 and 99.1% on 21/01. (Comparisons are with 28/01 and 21/01 due to snow affecting opening/attendance rates on 25/01)
- 0.6% of state-funded schools were closed to all pupils on 01/02, previously 0.6% on 28/01 and 0.9% on 21/01
 - 0.4% closed for COVID reasons, previously 0.4% on 28/01 and 0.6% on 21/01
 - 0.2% closed for non-COVID reasons, previously 0.2% on 28/01 and 0.3% on 21/01
- Overall, 15.3% of children are in attendance in face to face learning in state-funded schools on 01/02, an increase from 14.8% on 28/01 and 14% on 21/01.
- Attendance on 1 Feb was 70.9% of children of critical workers who requested a place, previously 70.9% on 28/01 and 69.6% on 21/01.
 - 4.7% of open schools unable to provide a place for all CWC who requested a place, previously 4.9% on 28/01 and 4.9% on 21/01
 - This affects 1.2% of critical worker children who requested a place but are without a place in open schools, previously 1.2% on 28/01 and 1.3% on 21/01

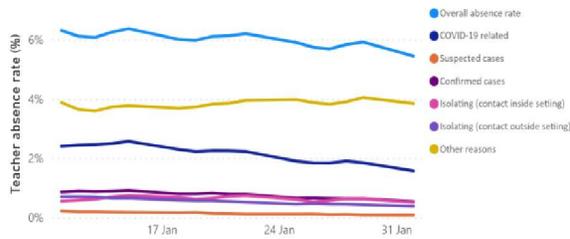
Actions to support schools to make effective decisions to manage attendance, particularly of critical worker children:

- Continued monitoring of critical worker children's attendance to ensure levels are manageable and engagement with the sector to reinforce messaging and learn about concerns.
- Messaging agreed with PHE and DCMO which reflects government position that both critical worker children and vulnerable children should be able to attend schools and there is no need to limit numbers in individual schools as current attendance levels will help lead to a reduction in transmission rates
- Operational checklist for regional teams developed and in use by regional teams to help schools note what they should consider when managing on site provision, remote education demands rates, and existing workforce mitigations.

School workforce capacity

There is a slight downward trend in the proportion of teachers and school leaders unable to attend on site or remotely now at 5.5% - higher in special schools/PRU (10.6%) than primary schools (7%) and secondaries (3.2%).

Percentage of teachers unable to teach on site or remotely by reason



As of 01/02, 38.5% of teachers and school leaders were on site in responding state-funded schools compared with 36.8% on 25/01. By phase:

- 50.0% in primary schools compared with 48.0% on 25/01;
- 23.4% in secondary schools compared with 22.0% on 25/01;
- 62.1% in special/AP/PRU settings compared with 61.9% on 25/01.

As of 01/02, 5.5% of teachers and school leaders were unable to teach on site or remotely in responding state-funded schools compared with 5.9% on 25/01. By phase:

- 7.0% in primary schools compared with 7.6% on 25/01;
- 3.2% in secondary schools compared with 3.6% on 25/01;
- 10.6% in special/AP/PRU settings compared with 11.3% on 25/01.

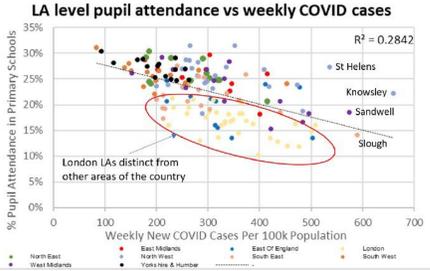
Note: Analysis is based on reporting in responding schools only. How schools have interpreted the questions and the absence reasons might not be consistent and some schools are likely to still be basing their responses on the old questions.

Actions underway to support schools to manage school workforce absence:

- Feeding into wider policy work which affects the workforce e.g. mass testing in schools, curriculum decisions and catch-up strategy, and more recently vaccinations for teachers.
- Monitoring pressures on schools' workforce (including pupil attendance, remote ed, exams, availability of supply staff) to identify workforce pressures/ further mitigations if needed.
- Planning for school re-opening considering the impact of different scenarios on workforce absence and developing policy approach to mitigate risks, including developing a workforce funding proposal for scenarios where this may be needed.
- ONS have updated their analysis on infection rates by occupation with data up to 7th January. This may show that education staff are more at risk of catching COVID than other workforces. We are preparing actions to respond to this possibility, including reviewing safety measures in schools and working with stakeholders on workplace safety. We are working closely with PHE to ensure effective public health regarding this analysis. Safety concerns will have knock-on effects for reopening plans.

Regional & local impacts

Attendance is lowest in areas in London & South East. Attendance remains higher in areas with lower COVID rates.



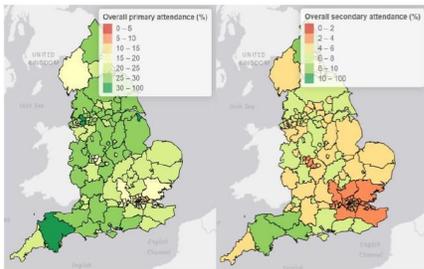
- Attendance rates within LAs are very consistent with last week's figures. This may suggest that decisions made by parents about which pupils are attending are not typically changing on a week by week basis but are more likely to be fixed for the period of lockdown.
- Attendance remains higher in areas with lower COVID rates and conversely, lower in areas with higher COVID rates. This correlation is weakening over time (the r-squared has dropped from 0.63 on 4th Jan to 0.28 on 1st Feb)

General themes from feedback to regional teams:

- Most regions reporting lower levels of vulnerable children attendance across their LAs, whilst some are still raising concerns that the numbers of critical worker children/ vulnerable children remain too high.
- Testing and vaccinations remains a concern for a number of regions, with access to testing and the roll out of vaccinations being the major concern. Furthermore, inconsistent prioritisation across different LAs within the same regions being raised multiple times.
- A number of regions have raised concerns over funding for the delivery of the testing
- A number of regions have requested a clear plan for reopening schools. Whilst a specific date for reopening is important, regions feel clear expectations for reopening are vital and as such are requested as soon as possible.
- There are still concerns being raised by a number of regions around the allocation of devices for Early Years and vulnerable children.

Specific regional issues raised to regional teams include;

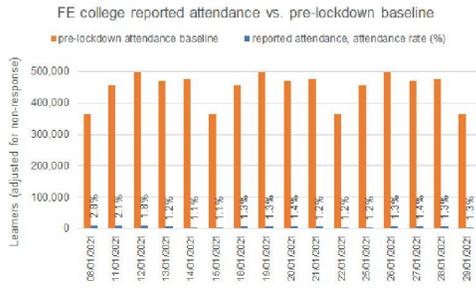
- East of England/ North London** – issues raised around Children's Social Care referrals and how they appear to be presenting later. Cases are becoming more complex with multiple issues - concern around hidden harms this may cause.
- East Midlands and Humber** - there is concern in some Early Years establishments regarding not being eligible for devices, with some schools appealing for donations so they can support their pupils. Also concerns about mass testing in Early Years due to the rural nature of the area and distance some would have to travel to get to a mass testing centre and allowing people to cross borders to access testing.
- New SA variant** – in some areas we are needing to reiterate messages that schools and nurseries should remain open. We will continue to monitor attendance in these areas and manage the stakeholder response.



- Attendance is currently lowest in areas London & the South East. On 01/02, overall attendance lowest in:
 - Redbridge (6.6%)
 - Hounslow (8.2%)
 - Barking & Dagenham (8.5%)
 - Slough (8.8%)
 - Newham (8.8%)
- Areas with highest attendance are in Yorkshire & the Humber, North West, North West and South West. On 01/02, overall attendance highest in:
 - Devon (22.4%)
 - Wigan (22%)
 - Barnsley (21.6%)
 - North Tyneside (21.5%)
 - North East Lincs (21.4%)

Further Education (FE)

Vast majority of FE colleges are open and report meeting remote learning requirements.



Daily Attendance data (as of 1 Feb):

- 93.9% of FE colleges (exc. NMSS and SPIs) reported being open (200 out of 214 responses).
- 99.5% of FE colleges report that they are meeting the remote learning requirement.
- There is a 1.3% attendance rate* vs. pre-lockdown attendance levels. Of those expected to attend FE colleges, 44.2% were reported as attending.
- 1.1% of teachers and leaders were absent due to COVID, 1.8% due to non-COVID reasons.

*experimental figure comparing current national attendance to the relevant day's expected attendance during reporting period 30 Nov to 11 Dec 2020

Situational assessment

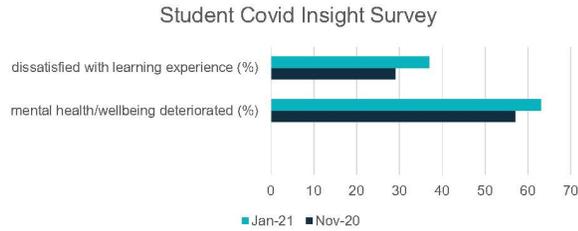
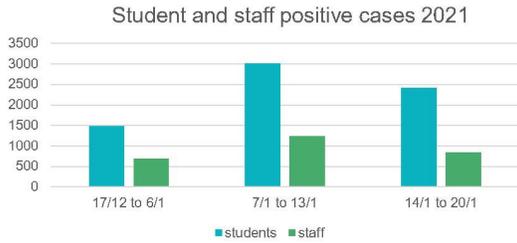
- Very high response rate (96%) from the FE sector to the daily attendance monitoring form.
- We have agreed x-govt that a small number of students who are due to complete assessments between now and end March can return to on-site delivery, where these cannot be completed remotely. This includes those who are due to undertake a license to practice or other occupational assessment and those who are training for some critical worker roles e.g. health and social care.
- We have now reached one million completed COVID tests in schools and colleges since January, with 4000 positive cases found through asymptomatic testing.
- We are identifying FE providers for a pilot to test daily contact tracing in secondary schools and colleges.

Updates on key actions:

- We updated our FE guidance on 29 Jan to reflect the latest position on which students are now able to attend on site during the period of national lockdown.
- We continue to plan for the re-opening of settings from 8 March at the earliest. Further to SoS's letter (22/01) to the PM, setting out his priorities for return, we have sent Ministers detailed advice about re-opening FE providers, covering which FE students could be prioritised for on-site attendance first. We are also seeking to maintain parity with schools and HE for learners studying similar qualifications.
- Rollout of devices as part of the Get Help with Technology service is progressing well, with all eligible FE providers having now been invited to order devices. As of 1 Feb, a total of 53,544 devices were ordered by FE providers. Agreement has also been secured from six mobile network operators to expand their free data offer to include learners aged 16-19 in FE.
- We are analysing responses to the joint consultation with Ofqual seeking views on a range of proposals for awarding Vocational and Technical Qualifications. Responses show broad agreement for our proposals.

Higher Education (HE)

c.20% of students back on practical clinical courses. Nearly all providers offering testing. Increases in poor mental health and dissatisfaction with learning experience.



Situational assessment

- Reporting through the OfS data tool was paused between 17 Dec and 3 Jan. Over the course of the autumn term the reports showed a steady decline in the number of student and staff cases: in the final 3 weeks of reporting to 16 Dec, there had been an average student cases per week of 898 and staff cases of 193 per week. The early data from Jan 4 therefore indicates increases in both student and staff cases compared to the last few weeks of last term, especially for staff, although the higher level of staff cases has fallen in the most recent week of early data.
- ONS Student Covid Insight Survey data continue to indicate that students' wellbeing and satisfaction levels are worsening over the course of the academic year.
- ONS survey and OfS data indicate around 20% of students were expected to be engaged in blended learning and that a similar % had returned by 18 Jan, indicating students are returning in line with our expectations.

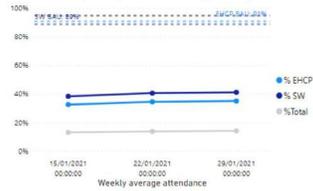
Updates on key actions:

- We are preparing to issue revised guidance on HE generally (the renamed "HE reopening"). It is nearly complete but we need a date that doesn't conflict with other guidance or give wrong messages.
- We are setting up a Data Steering Group comprising owners of/parties interested in our key data sources (i.e. DHSC, PHE/JBC and ONS).
- We know that **540, 840** tests completed as of COP 28/01 (301,905 in December and 238,935 in January). We estimate that January tests relate to 155k individuals. We are working with analysts to get a more realistic estimate of the number of students actually on campus.
- £50m of extra Hardship Funding for students has been agreed with HMT and announced on 2nd Feb 2021
- We will continue to develop a broader package of student support in case the academic year continues to be severely disrupted and students can't return to their term time accommodation. This includes consideration of different levels of maintenance loan write offs.

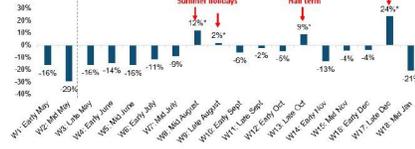
Vulnerable children (VC)

Attendance for vulnerable children remained stable in the week ending 29 Jan from the previous week and some evidence of greater safeguarding pressures

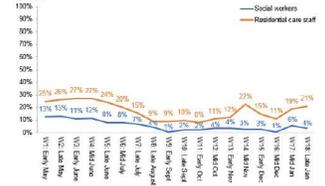
Attendance (average week ending), non-grossed



Difference in the total number of referrals compared to same week in previous years



Proportion of LAs with over 10% of social workers or residential care workers unavailable due to COVID



Attendance for vulnerable pupil groups:

- Attendance in schools has remained stable over week ending 29 Jan:
 - 35% of children with an EHCP attending (48% in primary, 26% in secondary)
 - 41% of children with a social worker attending (53% in primary, 25% in secondary)
 - In special schools, attendance is stable at 31%
 - In alternative provision, attendance is stable at 25%
 - Most regions improving attendance rates for week compared to previous week.
- In Early Years, VC attendance is approximately 26,000 pupils as of 28th Jan. Average number of VC per open setting is 0.56 compared to 0.55 as of 21st Jan.
- In FE, 60% of EHCP pupils in responding colleges attending 29 Jan. (NB FE figures not directly comparable to schools).

Safeguarding pressures and risks to vulnerable children:

- Total referrals 21% lower than same period last year, at lowest term-time levels since May. Referrals only part of story on rising risk of hidden harms (where harms are below the statutory threshold).
- Referrals below baseline levels from all sources, particularly from schools (-61%). Police referrals had seemed to compensate partially but are now 16% below baseline levels.
- Stable/ slightly improving picture of social worker availability only 4% of LAs reporting over 10% of social workers absent due to COVID (vs 6% in early Jan and high of 13% in May)
- 21% of LAs reporting over 10% of residential care staff absent due to COVID compared to 19% in the previous wave (mid-Dec)
- Reports of increased hidden harms inc online grooming, NSPCC report increase in calls about CYP facing domestic abuse, concerns about potential knife crime spike as lockdown eases.
- Service backlog issues being monitored: especially back log of highest risk family / public law cases involving children at greatest risk.

Attendance: Implementation of attendance actions include:

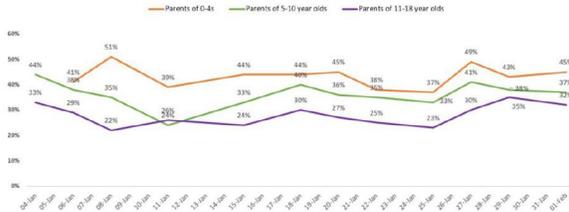
- Communications:** Guidance updates to strengthen expectations on children in need attendance to be published imminently, followed by updated resources for social workers. Social media activity showcasing school activities to support VC attendance underway. Field work underway by PMIU on best practice case studies to share with LAs and schools struggling with attendance.
- REACT:** follow-up calls to 18 LAs with low VC attendance during w/e 22nd. Vast majority of LAs directly involved in / following up of 75-100% of cases of VCYP with a social worker who are not attending. REACT follow up continues with schools not providing VC places
- OGD supporting actions:** actions from OGDs (MoJ, HO, MHCLG) so that wide range of services/programmes accessed by VCYP and families support school attendance.
- Cohorts and places:** follow up plans for serious violence hot-spots with low attendance, consulting SEND reference group on tackling EHCP/ special outliers. London VCYP attendance work led by seconded HMI.
- Safeguarding:** Workstream priorities on safeguarding babies and older teens; supporting weaker LAs; supporting multi-agency safeguarding partnerships; and securing testing and vaccine prioritisation for safeguarding / children's care workforces and children newly entering care system (inc. UASC)
- Reviewing whether to extend children's social care flexibilities beyond 31 Mar, consultation to launch w/c 1 Feb
- Conversations ongoing with ADCS about frequency and content of LA VCYP survey. Increasing feedback from LAs and schools on burden of intel and data requests.
- Work underway to respond to risks of online harms and serious violence incl. DfE/HO using schools comms channels to reach parents about online risks. Planning now to prevent potential spike in serious violence post-lockdown

Parental confidence

Parent confidence in safety of attending educational settings remains low, but more than half of parents are confident they would send their child/ren in if they re-opened to all in March.

How safe or unsafe do you think it is at the moment for a) Pupils to be attending school or college?
b) Children to attend nursery or a childminder?

Showing % believing it is 'very' or 'fairly' safe for children to attend nursery/childminder (parents of 0-4s only) and pupils to attend school/college (parents of 5-16s and 17-18s)



Parent confidence in the safety of children attending education settings remains at the lower levels seen since the start of this year.

- 37% of parents of primary children think it is safe for pupils to attend compared to 32% for secondary parents and 45% for pre-school parents. (Cabinet Office polling, 29-31 Jan)

Just over half of parents (56%) are currently confident (very or fairly) that they will send their child back to school/college should it reopen to all in March. Just under a third (31%) are not confident.

- Confidence levels are the same among parents of primary aged children (59% confident their child will return) and parents of secondary/college aged children (58%). This represents an increase in confidence among secondary parents over the last week (Cabinet Office polling, 29-31 Jan).
- Currently less likely to feel confident are those parents in lower socio-economic groups (particularly DE), BAME parents, parents of older children (particularly 16-18s), and those with a long-term illness. Those in London are currently less likely to agree that their children will return to school in March.

- DfE continuing action to **understand parental concerns, and tailor communications** to reach those groups who may be most anxious (for example BAME).
- Comms activity currently focussed on helping parents to support their children with **remote education**, including a press partnership across 600 titles including BAME and community titles in community languages and PR/consumer media with a child psychologist to help parents support their children on remote learning and mental health.
- Work with health colleagues at DH and PHE on communications to build confidence in regular LFD testing** in advance of wider opening. This includes a scientific explainer film on LFD testing, social media to clarify what testing is available in education settings for staff and students and why it is important.
- Ahead of a decision on wider opening, planning **back to school campaign** as part of a wider government shift in message away from stay at home. Carrying out both qualitative and quantitative insight into parents' intention to send their children back to school alongside measures to support their confidence. Insights will feed into comms plans leading up to wider opening, as well as identifying ways to support parents whose children may not be able to return (in a staggered return scenario).
- Whilst the focus of the return to school campaign will be on the **wider education/developmental and wellbeing benefit** to the child – we know that **Infection rates** for 8 March are likely to be higher than for Sept reopening so it is essential to build confidence in regular testing and any other additional safety measures, especially if ONS data suggests teachers are at greater risk.
- Sector and workforce confidence has strong influence on parents and young people, so wider DfE engagement with the sector is vital as part of our confidence building. Safety and scientific rationale messages are key in building this sector confidence.

Remote education

Schools
Further education
Higher education

Almost all schools and colleges report providing remote education in line with the expected/minimum hours set in guidance. Over 927k devices have been delivered, including over 365k since 4 January

Remote education expectations:

As of 01/02, almost all schools and colleges continue to report providing remote education in line with the expected/minimum hours set in guidance:

- 100.0% of state-funded primaries
- 100.0% of state-funded secondaries
- 98.2% of state-funded special schools
- 100.0% of further education colleges

We will triangulate this data against further evidence sources as this is available, including Ofsted and REACT intelligence and surveys of parents, pupils and teachers.

Support accessed:

A comprehensive support package available via the Get Help with Remote Education page on gov.uk:

Universal support offer – data as of 1 Feb	
Get Help with Remote Education page on gov.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated 15k users to site since w/c 26 Jan* • 'Good practice and resources' pages most popular section w/c 26 Jan <p><i>*Based on 593 recorded users and a cookie acceptance rate of 4%</i></p>
Review your education provision tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published 12 Jan • 21,804 total downloads of schools tool since publication (up from 19.5k last week) • 1,256 total downloads of FE tool since publication (up from 1.1k last week)
Oak National Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In w/c 26 Jan, 2.8 million users visited the Oak National Academy platform • Since the start of the spring term, 58.7 million lessons have been viewed (up from 48.6 million last week)
National CPD webinar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted in partnership with sector on 27 January • 1,500 viewers tuned in live to the sector-led National CPD webinar we ran on 27 January

We continue to provide **direct, targeted support** to schools:

School to School Support Programme – 667 schools supported to date (61 with remote education focus) with 5 days+ of National/Senior leader time

EdTech Demonstrator Programme – provided tailored support and training to over 3,300 schools and colleges to date with remote education

Regional roundtable event – planned for 10/11 Feb, targeted at weaker schools in South East and South London regions

HE remote learning:

- We estimate that 84% of students are currently undertaking online-only learning based on reports from higher education providers (HEPs)
- Of HEPs reporting to us their tiers of restriction relating to teaching provision, 80% are in tiers 3 and 4, which is where the majority of learning is provided online
- ONS survey data indicate growing dissatisfaction amongst students with their academic experience: in Jan 2021 37% said they were dissatisfied with their academic experience, up from 29% in November 2020

Devices update:

- Over 1.3 mill devices commitment (additional 300k announced 12 Jan)
- 927,689 delivered, including 365,268 delivered since the 4 January
- All FE providers have been invited to order.



Updates on key actions:

- National CPD webinar held 27 Jan; follow up Q&A session on 1 Feb
- 'Review your remote education provision' tool will become digital from mid-Feb
- Parents guidance updated 1 Feb, with resources for parents while supporting their children learning from home
- Comms and media activity continues, raising profile of remote education support to the sector and highlighting advice and resources for parents
- Preparation for inviting schools to order uplifted device allocations from w/c 8 February
- Engagement with HMT following approval to purchase additional devices
- We are laying the remote education information SI on 5 Feb and it will come into force on 12 Feb. It will impose duty on schools to publish information on their remote education provision
- Ofsted are continuing monitoring inspections this term for inadequate and some Requires Improvement schools

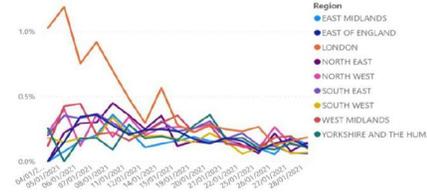
Testing

Over 2.2m tests have been conducted in primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and Higher Education Institutions

Daily testing MI:

- Primary:**
 - 15,621 unique providers commencing testing as of 31/01/21.
 - 631,065 tests completed as of COP 31/01/21 with 0.23% positivity rate.
- Secondary:**
 - over 90% of secondary schools/colleges have registered on the NHS Digital Solution to record test results (6,277 sites as of 01/02).
 - 5,553 secondary schools/colleges started testing as of COP 28/01, with 0.21% positive results.
 - 1,044,922 tests completed as of COP 28/01 (plus an additional >50k orphaned results).
 - 13,219 contacts to the DfE Mass Testing helpline in total by COP 29/01.
 - 225 helpline enquiries mentioned military support (as of 12pm 22/01). Of these, 145 fit within the MACA and have been supported.
- HE:**
 - Over 95% of eligible providers testing
 - 540,840 tests completed as of COP 28/01 (301,905 in December and 238,935 in January) with 0.54% positivity rate (0.33% for December and 0.8% for January)
- Phase 1 now completed, and have implemented testing capability in the three main education sectors: (1) Primary, attached and state maintained early years (2) Secondary and Colleges and (3) Higher Education Institutes. Still yet to have testing in private, independent Early Years, Children's Social Care and some of the FE Sector (namely Independent Training Providers and Adult College Learning Providers).
- Over 97% of maintained schools/colleges and academies are registered to test and over 95% of eligible Higher Education Institutions are testing. Over 1,000,000 tests have been taken across secondary schools and colleges since the start of January, 630,000 in primary/nurseries and 530,000 in universities since Dec 2020.
- Primary and secondary school/college staff can now access two LFD tests per week, and secondary school/colleges were able to offer all students who were attending school/college a 'return to school' test in January.

Testing by Region LFD test results from 04/01/2021 to 28/01/2021
Positivity rate (%) per day by region



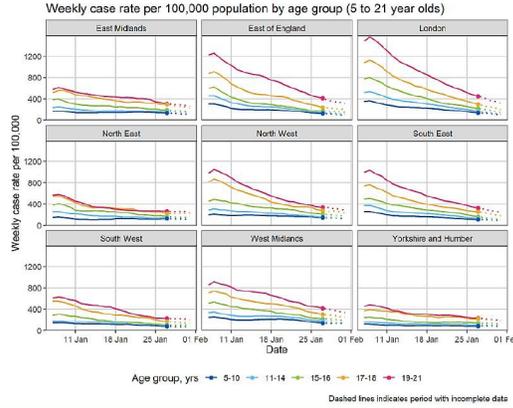
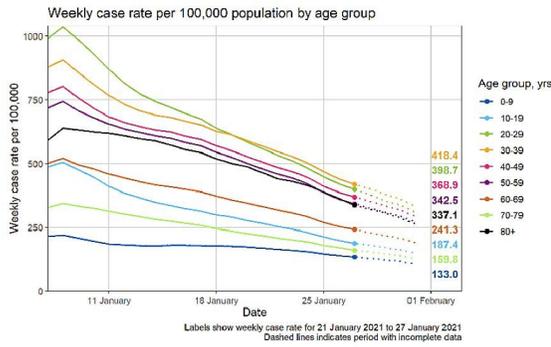
Institution type	No	Yes	% TL registered
Academies	30	2386	98.8%
Local authority maintained schools	31	716	95.9%
Free Schools	20	279	93.3%
Special schools	71	800	91.8%
Colleges	23	215	90.3%
Pupil referral unit	45	293	86.7%
Independent special schools	93	452	82.9%
Independent schools	245	1032	80.8%
Other types	43	101	70.1%

Next steps:

- Progress on Phase 2 planning and the scale up of testing in education settings. Ready to move quickly pending COVID-0 decision on expanding into wider education settings (private EYs, CSC and FE) and introducing regular weekly testing for pupils/students in secondary schools and colleges.
- Finalising the expansion and priority order of test at home kits, ahead of COVID-0 w/c 8 Feb. Challenges remaining on Phase 2 due to major delivery dependency on MHRA approval for home test kit use with secondary school pupils and the need for digital solutions for sector specific reporting. For digital, this could lead to a roll out without reporting capability via sector. If MHRA notification not received in time, we would have to delay any expansion or further roll out.
- Work planned to re-align programme focus onto user experience and reducing burden on education settings.
- Progress continues on pilots in Secondary Schools to evaluate daily contact testing in order to un-pause it in secondary schools as soon as possible but unlikely to be evaluated in time to feed into any decision on school opening.

Annex: wider COVID public health context

The national picture continues to improve, with case rates falling across all age groups, however rates remain higher than those experienced previously in this pandemic.



- Case rates continue to fall across all age groups nationally, however, rates remain very high and are significantly higher than the rates seen in September 2020.
- Case rates continue to fall across all young person cohorts in all regions, with the exception of the North East, where case rates appear to have levelled off in recent weeks.
- All regions continue to show the 19-21 age group as having the highest case rates among those aged 5-21 years old. That said, the case rate for 19-21 year olds has been converging to a similar rate to that seen in 17-18 year olds in many regions in recent weeks.
- Nationally, case rates amongst the 10-19 age group remain the third lowest age group cohort by case rate ranking, while 0-9 year olds continue to see the lowest case rates.