

People • Cumbria House • 110 - 117 Botchergate  
Carlisle • Cumbria • CA1 1RD  
[john.readman@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:john.readman@cumbria.gov.uk)

To all Cumbrian Headteachers and Principals

8 June 2020

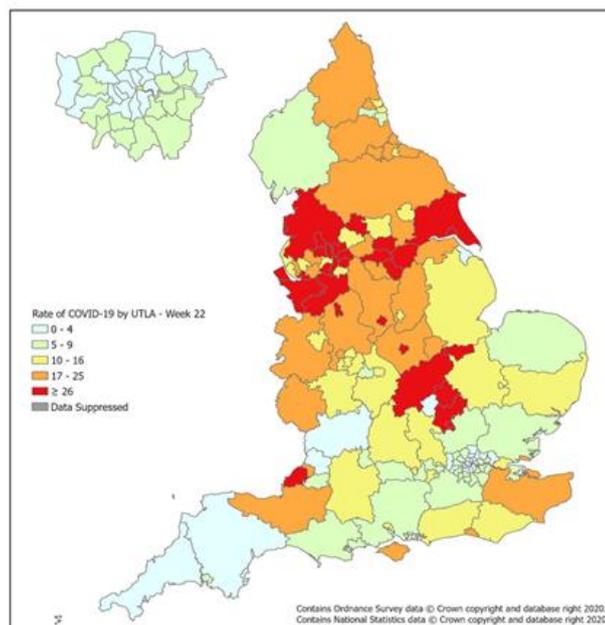
Dear colleague

We wanted to write to you at the start of this key week to update on last week's activity and to reaffirm our collective approach to working with you on the implementation of national guidance for the wider opening of schools, with decisions based on local risk assessment.

Last week schools across Cumbria began to open more widely in a planned and cautious manner. By the end of the day on Friday approximately 250 schools had been open over the course of the week, with further schools scheduled to open from today. All of these schools had planned to prioritise vulnerable children and the children of key workers, before moving on to those year groups identified by the government as next in line. Up until 1<sup>st</sup> June, the hub model adopted by the county had kept the significant majority of schools physically closed.

As a new weeks starts, we are conscious of a number of stories which broke in the media at the end of last week in relation to the R rate for the North West of the country, and of the concern that these have led to for Headteachers and for school staff.

We have discussed these concerns and in light of the current low new infection rate in the county (see map) would like to reaffirm our commitment to the approach as outlined above; a cautious, gradual wider opening of schools, based on a rigorous, dynamic risk assessment.



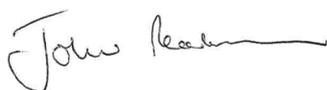
Key to all risk assessments is staffing capacity and we understand that, in some cases, last week's media stories may impact on schools' capacity from today. In those cases, following a review of your risk assessment, our advice would be to adjust your pupil capacity accordingly, focusing on continuity of provision for vulnerable children and the children of key workers as a minimum.

From this afternoon and on a weekly basis, we will be producing a digest of key public health data to support ongoing risk assessments and decision making. This data summary will be amended each week as the situation changes.

We understand that this is an incredibly challenging time, and if any head teacher would like to speak to us individually then we would be happy to do so.

We would like to thank colleagues, as ever, across the county in both primary, special, PRU and secondary schools, for your continued commitment and dedication to children and young people's learning in Cumbria.

Yours sincerely



**John Readman**  
Executive Director – People  
(Deputy Chief Executive)



**Dan Barton**  
Assistant Director – Education  
& Skills



**Colin Cox**  
Director of Public Health