

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-988
Ein cyf/Our ref KW/05672/20
Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

8 October 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your email following my correspondence dated.

Please be assured that keeping schools and colleges open remains a key priority for the Welsh Government. This is vital. Vital for our young people's education and their overall wellbeing. The transmission rates within schools remain extremely low. Evidence here and indeed worldwide shows that there is no significant relationship between schools reopening and COVID cases in the community.

Our current planning assumption is that we would not close schools (or childcare). We will be doing all we can to keep provision open for as long as possible, and to ensure that even where schools need to restrict who is on site they remain open for those learners that need to be on site.

My officials are currently working on and are aiming to publish the Coronavirus Control Plan for Education and Childcare Settings later this week, which sets out what services should look like at the five stages of response. This includes advice on the issues to take into account when looking to limit who is on site, and does confirm that schools should look to prioritise the children of critical workers as well as vulnerable children and those who may be digitally excluded. However, it also confirms that we would not be looking to reinstate the hub model, with schools looking to stay open for their own learners, and supporting remote or blended learning.

I hope the information that I have provided clarifies the situation.

Yours sincerely

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kirsty Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping underline.

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