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Des Morris
Teachers' Side Joint Chair
SNCT

by email

15 May 2020

Dear Des

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Teachers Side of the SNCT about decisions on when to re-open schools in Scotland.

Whilst the Scottish Government is clear that we don't want restrictions to be in place any longer than they need to be, the decision on when and how to re-open schools will not be taken lightly. As you say in your letter, we believe that "stay at home" remains the right message at this time but we are continuing to assess different means of easing restrictions.

Any decisions made regarding the timing of school opening will be guided by the science and schools will not re-open until the science indicates that it is safe to do so. Decisions on this will align with the Scottish Government's Coronavirus (COVID-19) framework for decision making which sets out the challenges Scotland faces and outlines the approach and principles that will guide us as we make decisions about transitioning out of the current lockdown arrangements.

The C-19 Education Recovery Group has met frequently over the last three weeks to consider practical options and provide advice on the purpose and priorities for re-opening schools. The first main task for the group has been to model what a phased approach to school re-opening will look like. The ERG has been asked to consider the practical steps involved in phased re-opening, but not the timing as this will be a Ministerial decision guided by the evidence on progress in suppressing the virus. Ten work streams have been established with partners (reporting to the ERG) to consider the wide range of policy, practical and operational issues related to reopening schools. I firmly believe that this cross-cutting work is the most effective way to prepare fully for a safe and positive reintroduction of children and young people to our schools.

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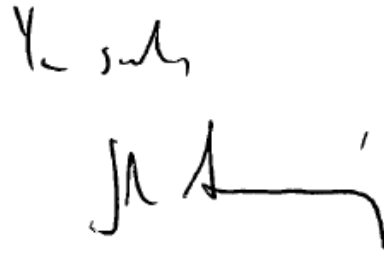


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I am incredibly grateful for the ongoing commitment that you and your colleagues are showing towards supporting the children and young people of Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Swinney', written in a cursive style.

JOHN SWINNEY

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