



Supporting schools to safely begin reopening

The County Council is continuing to work closely with West Sussex schools to support a phased return of pupils in a safe and managed way.

Detailed discussions have been held with school and academy representatives and unions to consider the government's position that schools should begin to reopen from next month.

The council's aim is for the phased return to start from June 1, in line with national guidance. Schools are showing support for this approach.

Schools' individual risk assessments are identifying how they can best manage this and maintain the safety of their pupils and staff. Priority places will continue to be given to children who are vulnerable, those with Education Health and Care Plans and the children of key workers across all year groups. The council is also asking schools to prioritise disadvantaged pupils and those who have limited access to online resources in both primary and secondary schools.

It means that the way schools will manage the return of different year groups will vary across the county and may mean that not all of the specified year groups will go back to school at the same time.

Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said: "I would like to thank all of the teachers and school staff across West Sussex who continue to work tirelessly for their pupils. I am also extremely grateful to the children, parents and carers who have adapted so well in very difficult circumstances.

"We are supporting schools to plan for a phased reopening in a safe and managed way for all pupils and staff.

"Throughout the lockdown, our education team has worked together with headteachers, governors and unions. The number of children, including those who are vulnerable, attending school during this period has been above the national average. Everyone involved in education in West Sussex wants what's best for our children – to keep them safe and keep them learning."