

Christ Church (C of E) Primary School
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Saturday 6th June 2020

Returning to School Postponement

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am very sorry to be writing to you at such late notice, but we will not be able to open for those pupils in Y6 and Y1 who had booked places to return to school next week.

You might have heard on the news or social media last night that the infection rate, referred to as the R, has increased in the North West to a score above 1. Schools were notified yesterday evening and we then discussed the implications of this with CDAT and Wirral Local Authority before concluding that it is not yet safe to open to additional pupils.

The Government set out 5 tests that must be met to safely ease lockdown and reopen schools to wider numbers; these being:

1. Making sure the NHS can cope
2. A sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rate
3. Rate of infection decreasing to manageable levels
4. Ensuring supply of tests and PPE can meet future demand
5. Being confident any adjustments would not risk a second peak that would overwhelm the NHS

What is the 'R' and why is it so important?

The R is a way of rating a disease's ability to *Reproduce* and spread, it refers to the number of people an infected person will pass the virus on to.

The R has been based upon numbers of deaths and hospital admissions. As testing increases and becomes more regular the R reporting is more aligned with actual times and more up to date as it will refer to people who are recently infected rather than when they are admitted into hospital.

If the R is below 1 it means the virus will eventually peter out as fewer and fewer people are being infected, so the outbreak will not be sustained. If the R reaches 1 or above, it means that the number of infections is increasing and will continue to do so if people are in contact with each other. This is the reason why we have been in lockdown and why children have not been able to come into school in their usual numbers; to reduce contact and minimise the possibility of the virus spreading.

Protective measures such as social distancing, handwashing and face coverings are important in helping to reduce the R as it minimises the contact and possible infection opportunity between people. The North West region had an R of 0.73 when the data was last released just a few weeks ago so it was deemed safe to ease some of the lockdown measures, however the R has now risen to 1.01 in the North West.



@CCMPprimary and @ChristchurchMor

Region	Median Rt	95% CrI (lower)	95% CrI (upper)
East of England	0.94	0.73	1.14
London	0.95	0.72	1.2
Midlands	0.9	0.73	1.07
North East and	0.89	0.75	1.04
North West	1.01	0.83	1.18
South East	0.97	0.78	1.17
South West	1	0.77	1.29

The Secretary of State has previously made it clear as one of his 5 tests that the R value should be below 1 before it would be safe for schools to open for more children. All our risk assessment and Health and Safety monitoring relies upon the rate of infection reducing. As the infection rate is increasing it is not safe to increase the numbers of children and adults coming into contact with each other.

We really want to open Christ Church to wider pupils and know how important it is for children to return to their usual routines, but we will not do that until it is safe. We cannot risk our children, and families or staff and their families becoming infected and the spread increasing in our community.

Our trust CDAT and Wirral LA are supportive of the school leadership and Governors' decision to postpone wider opening. We will continue to remain open for keyworkers and vulnerable children and we are incredibly proud that our school has now been continuously open since February 24th to support our community.

Miss Shahi, Mrs Grant-Jones and myself have been into school this morning to personally contact all those parents in Y1 and Y6 who had booked places for next week and we are so sorry to have to disappoint your children and cause you any inconvenience with work. We expect to get daily advice from Public Health and Wirral LA as next week progresses and will keep you fully informed about when we can re-start our plans.

I urge you to ensure your families follow the Government's advice to stay alert so that we can reduce the virus spread in our region. The current advice is to:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Work from home if you can
- Limit contact with other people (we can now mix with up to 6 people outdoors whilst continuing to practice social distancing)
- Keep your distance if you go out (2m apart where possible)
- Wash your hands regularly

DO NOT LEAVE HOME IF YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS SYMPTOMS

We will be in touch again next week with further updates. Thank-you so much for supporting Christ Church; we are all looking forward to seeing you as soon as it is safe to do so.

Take care and keep safe,

A Donelan

Amanda Donelan
Headteacher