

# UK govt fails in plan to fully open primary schools

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Britain's government on Tuesday admitted defeat in its efforts to have all primary school children back for a month before the summer holiday following lockdown.

Staff shortages and strict new safety protocols including smaller classrooms made it impossible to deliver the plan, with schools already full to capacity under the new system.

"While we are not able to welcome all primary children back for a full month before the summer, we continue to work with the sector on the next steps," education minister Gavin Williamson told parliament.

Britain has recorded the second-highest number of coronavirus deaths, behind only the United States.

Union leaders had already warned that a "premature" return was over-ambitious and risked triggering a second wave of infections.

The schools were closed as part of the lockdown measures introduced on March 23 to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

As the infection and [death rates](#) dropped, the government announced that the measures would be eased from June 1, beginning with a phased return of year 1 and 6 children.

Teaching unions resisted the plan, worried about the safety of teachers, while headteachers said they could not implement the stringent safety measures in time.

Department for Education guidance was for schools to limit classes to 15 pupils.

The government did not say what proportion of eligible children had returned to school so far, but did say it still planned to have all children back in [school](#) in September.

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