



Dear Fellow Parents

The provision of safe schooling to children is of critical importance. In recent weeks members of various local authorities have stated that they will not be opening schools on 1st June 2020, or in anytime soon, contrary to the government's guidance, the published scientific advice and to parent's and children's legal rights. If you are one of the parents who are not happy with this position, we want to hear from you.

No one would want to put their children in danger, however, we believe that there is clear evidence that suggests now is the right time for children to be returning to school, rather than waiting to the Autumn or Winter. Children have been denied a proper education and normal interaction with teachers and other children for several months now and continuing with this approach is having a detrimental effect on their development as well as their mental and physical health.

The position taken by some local authorities in relation to re-opening schools has been a blanket "No". Taking a position such as this needs to be fully explained as it will allow those affected to have a full understanding of the decision-making process.

The local authorities have been running schools during the lockdown for 'key workers' which it can be assumed, was done safely during the height of the pandemic. How then, can it be less safe now for others to return to school on the same basis?

The right to a suitable education is enshrined in; The Human Rights Act 1998, the Education Act 1996 and partially in the Children Act 1998 and 2004. Schools also have a duty to ensure that schools are safe environments for children and teachers, and in this respect, their legal obligations are to make **reasonable adjustments** to minimise risks. The government has provided a staged plan and operating guidelines to ensure these reasonable adjustments can be made. To attempt to make schools a 100% risk free environment is both an unrealistic aim and goes well beyond any legal obligation.

We have already taken legal advice from a leading Barristers Chambers and believe there are good grounds to challenge any local authorities that have taken this approach to; (i) provide the specific scientific data, risk assessment and mitigation options that they have reviewed and the resulting legal basis they are relying on to justify their refusal to open schools and (ii) On the basis the local authority either refuses to disclose the information or their disclosure is inadequate, we are prepared to pursue various legal avenues that have been identified on your behalf. This will involve writing to the local authority with a pre-action letter asking them to provide the scientific grounds and evidence for their decision. In the event that such advice is not forthcoming we are prepared, subject to parents' support and funding to pursue various legal avenues.

Thinking Slow is not a political organisation. We just believe that it is inappropriate for children to be denied the education to which they are entitled to due to potentially politically motivated agendas or for decisions not to be based on scientific evidence. At the same time, we perfectly understand that parents with vulnerable family members will not wish to send their children to school. This initiative is only concerned with provision of schooling for those that want it and agree that now is the time to return to school. We know it is an emotive subject but just look at some of the evidence on our website. We believe all local authorities should disclose relevant evidence publicly and fully as an appropriate first step. In order to do this, we are looking to identify any parents who are willing to participate in such a challenge. To participate in this programme please contact us at legal@thinkingslow.org with your name, confirmation of what local authority catchment area you are in and one of our representatives will contact you.

Yours Faithfully

The Thinking Slow Group

The Thinking Slow Group – www.thinkingslow.org Email: legal@thinkingslow.org



Without going into a long discussion of the science around COVID-19, we would simply like to highlight some selected data points;

The COVID-19 disease is not fatal for the vast majority of the people that catch it, in fact a significant number of people with COVID-19 do not even know that they had the disease. Furthermore, the disease is fatal primarily for older people (80 years old) suffering from other serious diseases (2.7 comorbidities). Looking at deaths related to COVID-19 reported by English hospitals to 5th May 2020 for individuals younger than 60 with no comorbiditiesⁱ, there were 238 such deaths, compared to an estimated 400 deaths per year from drowning. Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter, professor of the Public Understanding of Risk at the University of Cambridge estimates that the risk to children of catching and then dying from coronavirus is one in 5.3 millionⁱⁱ. Furthermore, the role of children in transmission is unclear, but there is some evidence that children do not play a significant role, one analysis followed a child who “attended three schools while symptomatic, but did not transmit the virus”ⁱⁱⁱ.

In addition, as more data on COVID-19 becomes available, it appears likely that initial estimates of COVID-19’s fatality and speed of transmission were significantly overestimated. This is a similar pattern to the 2009 swine flu pandemic with initial estimates of fatalities in a worst-case scenario being 750,000 whereas the actual outcome was 457 in total^{iv}.

Looking at the minutes from the SAGE meetings, it appears that the dangers from COVID-19 have been exaggerated partly to encourage compliance with coronavirus related legislation and restrictions^{vi}.

Finally, many European countries have already opened schools with various restrictions in place.

To find out more about Thinking Slow, please visit; www.thinkingslow.org

About Thinking Slow

One of the reasons that we are writing to you is that Thinking Slow has carried out a very extensive survey of the coronavirus literature and statistics. One of our participants wrote to the chair of the Commons Select Committee on 16th April 2020 setting out a case that; (i) the infection fatality ratio (IFR) proposed by Imperial College was not supported by evidence and likely significantly overstated and (ii) the deaths “related to” COVID-19 did not accurately reflect deaths “from” COVID-19 and were overstated (iii) that the policy response was causing a significant part of the excess deaths. At the time of writing that letter, these were considered radical views shared only by a tiny handful. As time has progressed, it is clear that all of those warnings were accurate.

Based on this analysis, Thinking Slow is acting as a platform and facilitator to lobby for the resumption of normal life and prevent further excess deaths and pointless continued economic destruction. Our website includes a lot of our analysis supporting our conclusions (www.thinkingslow.org)

ⁱ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-daily-deaths/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.channel4.com/news/factcheck/factcheck-what-are-the-coronavirus-risks-to-children>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://academic.oup.com/cid/advance-article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciaa424/5819060>

^v <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-into-the-response-to-the-2009-swine-flu-pandemic>

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882722/25-options-for-increasing-adherence-to-social-distancing-measures-22032020.pdf