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Date: Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020

### **Advice Note to Schools and Childcare Settings 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Tameside Council understands that this is an extremely challenging time for all who live in our borough but recognises fully the many acts of kindness which local residents have undertaken to support each other. We would like to pay special tribute to the work of headteachers, staff, school governors and childcare providers for their fantastic work in supporting children and families during this and your brilliant contribution to the Borough's response to Covid 19.

Nationally, the government is requesting that schools and childcare settings start to increase the numbers of pupils attending over the coming weeks. Our local approach, as you know, has been to focus on making **safe and sensible** decisions and maintaining, wherever possible **collective approaches** which can inform local decisions. Headteachers and their staff, in partnership with the Local Authority, have done excellent preparatory work undertaking and completing risk assessments in their schools.

Members of SAGE (Scientific Advisory Group on Emergencies) and the Association of Directors of Public Health advised caution and concern about the too rapid easing of lockdown and the increased risk of a second pandemic wave. Balancing this concern, the national R number being between **0.7 to 1.0** and estimated at **0.73** in the North West and the importance of having our children back at school, I supported the limited increase in the number of children attending planned in the Borough from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June.

However information released at 2pm today estimates the R value is now above the critical value of 1 for the North West, at **1.01**.

Because of this change in R, and despite the excellent work undertaken, I am therefore strongly advising all schools and childcare settings to delay wider opening until at least 22<sup>nd</sup> June for us to be more assured that the rate of infection is reducing and R is firmly below 1.

All settings should continue to remain open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers as they have been since the start of the national lockdown.

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I will continue to monitor what is a fast-evolving situation very closely and keep my advice to you under constant review. I will write to you all again next Friday with a further update and advice on wider opening.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'de Gruchy', written in a light grey or blue ink.

**Dr Jeanelle de Gruchy**  
**Director of Population Health**