

## Twitter Thread by [Tes](#)



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[@tes](#)



### How we got here, a thread (1/25)



Before Christmas, owing to rising infection rates, Greenwich advised their schools to shut before the end of term – several councils later advised the same. (2/25)

<https://t.co/zt5PKT06Xr>

.@educationgovuk threatened these schools with legal action if they did, resulting in schools re-opening their doors for the last few days of term. (3/25)

<https://t.co/F0msj2r7HL>

The General Secretary of the ASCL, [@RealGeoffBarton](#), accused the [@educationgovuk](#) of using "bully boy tactics" to stick to a "robotic mantra to keep schools open whatever the cost" but added "the costs could be incredibly high." (4/25)

<https://t.co/YOPeRqFzPj>

During this time, [@KevinStannard1](#) warned that we could be heading for another exams U-turn (\*spoiler alert\*: he was correct). (5/25) <https://t.co/ziSGCvXfQ5>

On 16 December, our reporters [@tweetsbyames](#) and [@JohnGRoberts](#) started to hear that there could be a delayed return in January. (6/25)

<https://t.co/z5AGSjhn1c>

There was also a whole outcry and U-turn around having school staff carry out Covid tests around the same time... (7/25)

<https://t.co/NrFTWrHeVC>

Schools were being put in an impossible position over lack of clarity about how and when the spring term would start, public accounts committee chair [@Meg\\_HillierMP](#) told top [@educationgovuk](#) official. (8/25)

<https://t.co/yJSnNpHohi>

Revealed in a scoop by us that most secondary school pupils would be learning online in the first week back next year. Only exam groups back in person. This is the same week [@educationgovuk](#) took legal action to stop some London schools moving online(9/25)

<https://t.co/66wpriA4Pk>

In order to get the [@educationgovuk](#) testing in place for January, [@MattHancock](#) wanted headteachers to work over Christmas to make sure it was ready. (10/25)

<https://t.co/u2pRzhiWFb>

The new variant of the virus was uncovered, which turned out to be more infectious – and experts warned it might lead to more cases among schoolchildren. (11/25)

<https://t.co/bas8TdxK8>

During this period (WE ARE NOT EVEN AT CHRISTMAS YET) [@GavinWilliamson](#) and the government claimed that schools didn't drive up the number of Covid infections. (12/25)

<https://t.co/TOs1tppQkU>

A crunch meeting between the prime minister and the DfE on 23 December about reopening schools was postponed until after Christmas. (13/25)

<https://t.co/l5WwaC1gIH>

The government also accidentally banned the education of children around this time as well... (14/25)

<https://t.co/Zwm2H7fLfE>

In an exclusive from us, we revealed the government's plans of school reopening after mounting pressure for a delayed start owing to Covid infection rates rising countrywide. (15/25)

<https://t.co/yeYDz0KRcy>

.@gavinwilliamson gave a speech to the Commons confirming everything we had reported on schools reopening. (16/25)

<https://t.co/AEUXPZGxff>

Some primary schools were to remain shut, raising questions over why some councils were chosen above others (17/25)  
<https://t.co/boQDtUPyFW>

'Schools are safe,' insists [@BorisJohnson](#). ■■■■■ (18/25)  
<https://t.co/uwHjsHh3aC>

On New Year's Eve, education secretary [@GavinWilliamson](#) said he is "absolutely confident" that there will be no further delay to school return plans in January (19/25)  
<https://t.co/pMTsY0cQN2>

School leaders started to demand [@educationgovuk](#)'s reasoning around certain primaries being closed and not others (20/25)  
<https://t.co/Rx6lzCntc1>

U-turn incoming! This raised questions about why all primary schools in London were closed but some in other Tier 4 areas across England were still scheduled to open (21/25)  
<https://t.co/aczChktDlk>

The government insists the U-turn wasn't about safety concerns... (22/25)  
<https://t.co/xvmncmls6A>

The unions then got involved, forming an alliance to protest [@gavinwilliamson](#)'s plan [@NEUnion](#) [@NASUWT](#) [@NAHTnews](#) [@unisontheunion](#) [@GMB\\_union](#) & [@unitetheunion](#) (23/25)  
<https://t.co/zLEc4W4rxo>

This all leads to last night's announcement. [@BorisJohnson](#) announced – at the end of a day when thousands had returned to school – that schools should close their buildings for all but vulnerable children and children of key workers (24/25)  
<https://t.co/eRMOQv8vEY>

There is likely a lot more coming in the next few days, so keep an eye out on our profile [@tes](#) and our website (25/25)  
<https://t.co/8l0Jt9nwzk>