

## Prime Minister's Questions: 10 June

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Links are **orange** for news articles

Links are **green** for papers in academic journals.

Links are in **purple** for governmental statistics or advice

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## Question 1 - BAME reports

### Statements

- Feelings of black and minority ethnic groups are founded on a ‘cold reality’.
- Several reports on racial inequality in past three years.
- Most recommendations in the Lammy Report are yet to be implemented three years on from publication.
- Recommendations from Wendy Williams’ Windrush report are yet to be implemented.

WILL THE PM IMPLEMENT RACIAL INEQUALITY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THESE REPORTS?

### Relevant links:

<a href="#">Lammy review: final report - GOV.UK</a>	Lammy Report, 2017
<a href="#">Government response to Lammy report</a>	Government’s response, December 2017
<a href="#">Windrush lessons learned review by Wendy Williams</a>	Windrush lessons learned report, July 2018
<a href="#">The Windrush report shows the Home Office is broken. Here's how it must change   David Lammy</a>	David Lammy arguing that the Windrush report has not been implemented, in the Guardian
<a href="#">Oral evidence: Progress in the implementation of the Lammy review’s recommendations</a>	House of Commons Justice Committee, oral evidence on the implementation of the Lammy report: implementation remains inadequate

### Summative commentary:

Multiple Government reports have issued recommendations on how to improve the treatment of BAME people in the UK. However, many of these recommendations have not yet been acted upon by the Government. This was supported by oral evidence last year to the Justice select committee.

*This question was accurate in its content.*

## Answer 1

YES, THE GOVERNMENT ARE WORKING ON ENACTING THESE RECCOMENDATIONS



**Statements:**

- Understand very strong and legitimate feelings about death of George Floyd.
- The Government are progressing on with Lammy report and Windrush recommendations.
- Increasing number of BAME people in prison service, as recommended in the Lammy report.
- Increasing use of body-worn cameras for police.
- Trying to prevent young BAME people being immediately prosecuted.
- Must keep streets safe and “back our police”.

**Relevant links:**

<p><a href="#">2019 Parliament briefing paper - 'UK Prison Population Statistics'</a></p>	<p>In 2019, people of minority ethnicities made up 27% of the prison population compared with 13% of the general population. England and Wales had 144 prisoners per 100,000 head of population, the 8th highest rate among EU countries and the highest amongst western European jurisdictions.</p>
<p><a href="#">Wearing body cameras increases assaults against officers and does not reduce police use of force: Results from a global multi-site experiment</a></p>	<p>2016 paper by Ariel et al in <i>European Journal of Criminology</i> ‘Averaged over 10 trials, [cameras] had no effect on police use of force, but led to an increased rate of assaults against officers wearing cameras’.</p>
<p><a href="#">Investigation into body cameras finds nagging challenges for UK police</a></p>	<p>Freedom of Information request shows increases in spending on police body cameras by police forces across the UK.</p>
<p><a href="#">Gov't stats on ethnicity of the prison service workforce</a></p>	<p>Between 2015 and 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the percentage of prison officers from each ethnic group remained fairly stable</li> <li>● the percentage of prison officers who were Black went up from 2.3% to 3.1% (401 to 505)</li> <li>● the percentage who were White went down from 94.6% to 93.1% (16,180 to 15,269)</li> <li>● the percentage who didn't state their ethnicity went up from 9.8% to 30.1%, in part due to changes in the way new staff recorded their details</li> </ul> <p>So while there has been a small increase in the percentage of black prison officers, there has been little change in the ethnic composition of the prison service (which remains overwhelmingly white). Furthermore, it would appear that less</p>

	data is being collected on the ethnic identities of new prison officers, which would seem to counteract the Lammy report's recommendations.
<a href="#">BAME offenders 'far more likely than others' to be jailed for drug offences</a>	Shows that BAME individuals are far more likely to be prosecuted for drugs offences.

**Summative Commentary:**

The Prime Minister made several assertions around how the Lammy report is being acted upon by the Government. He was correct in stating that the use of body cameras has gone up. However, his statement around BAME prison officers is misleading, as it remains an overwhelmingly white profession with little change since 2015. It is unclear what the Prime Minister meant when he stated that the Government were trying to prevent immediate prosecution of young BAME people, however, there is clear evidence that they are considerably more likely to be prosecuted than those of white ethnicity. No reference was made to Government attempts to enact recommendations from the Windrush report.

**This answer was misleading, as there have been minor changes following the publication of these reports.**

## Question 2 - PHE report

### Statements

- The opposition will continue to scrutinise the implementation of the reports mentioned in the previous question.
- It is very apparent to the public when recommendations are made but not implemented.
- The Public Health England report on the disproportionate impact on COVID-19 determined that Black and Asian communities have the highest death rates.
- This report stated that it is already clear that guidance and policies should be adapted to mitigate the risk.

### WHY HAS THE GOVERNMENT NOT ACTED TO CHANGE POLICIES AND GUIDANCE TO PROTECT BAME COMMUNITIES?

### Relevant links:

<a href="#">COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes</a>	Confirms that mortality rates are highest among BAME communities. Also contains the assertion that policy and guidance must be adapted to mitigate the risk to certain groups.
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### Summative commentary:

Building upon the previous question around the implementation of recommendations from Government reports, the LOTO questioned how findings from the recent PHE report on disparate outcomes for BAME communities during the COVID-19 pandemic will be acted upon. In particular highlighting how essential it is for policies and guidance to be updated to provide greater protection for the highest risk groups.

***This question faithfully represented findings from the recent PHE report.***

**SEE UPCOMING SFL REPORT ON BAME AND COVID**

## Answer 2

[THE GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY ACTING ON PROFESSOR FENTON'S REPORT.](#)



**Statements:**

- The Government is looking into the particular exposure of BAME groups to COVID-19.
- BAME groups have been at the forefront of the struggle against the pandemic.
- 44% of London NHS staff are BAME.
- The Government is expanding testing for high contact professions.
- This has been agreed with Dido Harding of NHS Test and Trace.

**Relevant links:**

<a href="#">Black and minority ethnic workers make up a disproportionately large share of key worker sectors in London</a>	States that BAME people are disproportionately represented in key worker positions in London, including 48% of NHS staff.
<a href="#">Coronavirus and key workers in the UK</a>	ONS report stating that 14% of key workers come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19): getting tested</a>	Government advice explaining how to get tested. Includes a list of essential workers who can be referred by their employer at any time for a test.
<a href="#">Coronavirus: Essential workers in England to get tests</a>	All essential workers could book tests through the Government website from 23 April. Multiple problems ensued.

**Summative Commentary:**

The Prime Minister was correct in stating that a large proportion of key workers in London are from BAME groups. Whilst the Government has been expanding testing capacity for key workers, and has made them a priority for testing, this was seemingly implemented prior to the appointment of Baroness Harding in early May 2020, it is unclear what further steps have been taken since then. The Prime Minister did not answer whether policies and guidance would be updated as a result of the PHE report, implying that the expansions to key worker testing would suffice.

**The Prime Minister does not address whether policy and guidance will be updated to protect BAME groups in this answer. His reference to expanded key worker testing appears to have been in place for at least a month, indicating that it was not driven by the findings in the PHE report. The report itself has been heavily criticised.**



### Question 3 - UK excess deaths

**Statements**

- In reference to the previous question, will there be any further action beyond that detailed by the PM?
- Since last PMQs the Government’s daily report of total of deaths has gone over 40,000.
- The ONS figure stands at over 50,000.
- Excess deaths in the UK are over 63,000.
- These are amongst the highest numbers in the world.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID LAST WEEK HE WAS PROUD OF THE GOVERNMENT’S RECORD, BUT THERE’S NO PRIDE IN THOSE FIGURES, IS THERE?

**Relevant links:**

<a href="#">UK excess deaths during pandemic reach 62,000</a>	FT graphs: excess deaths
<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) roundup</a>	ONS figures show that deaths with COVID-19 listed on the death certificate have passed 50,000 across the entire UK.
<a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK</a>	UK government statistics on deaths of COVID-19, which are lower than the ONS figures on COVID-19 deaths
<a href="#">Free to read: Coronavirus tracked: has the epidemic peaked near you?</a>	FT international deaths, where Britain is 4th highest in the world, after the USA, Mexico, and Brazil
<a href="https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus">https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus</a>	Our World in Data, international deaths comparison, total deaths shows the UK as the country with the most deaths after the US.

**Summative commentary:**

The question asked about the deaths of COVID-19, and excess deaths, in the UK, since the last PMQs. The LOTO brought up the fact that there are still a large number of people dying of COVID-19 in the UK, and that the UK death rate is amongst the highest on earth.

***This question was factually accurate***

## Answer 3

[THE GOVERNMENT HAVE A PLAN, THEY ARE FOLLOWING IT AND THEY'RE GOING TO STICK TO IT.](#)

### Statements:

- The best scientific evidence says we must wait until the end of the epidemic in order to draw international comparisons.
- The construction of the Nightingale hospitals was a success for the NHS.
- The country did well following social distancing to keep deaths down.
- This Government announced a plan on 11 May to get the country back on its feet, and we are going to stick to it.

### Relevant links:

<a href="#">UK wrong to rule out global coronavirus comparisons, experts say</a>	A team from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine have stated that the UK Government is wrong to rule out international comparisons.
<a href="#">Understanding excess mortality</a>	Excess deaths is the best way to make international comparisons – expert opinion.
<a href="#">Covid-19: Nightingale hospitals set to shut down after seeing few patients</a>	The Nightingale hospitals were mothballed in May having seen very few patients.
<a href="#">Report 24: Anonymised and aggregated crowd level mobility data from mobile phones suggests that initial compliance with COVID-19</a>	Report showing that compliance with social distancing was initially high amongst the UK population.

### Summative Commentary:

The Prime Minister did not respond to the follow up from the previous question regarding further modifications to guidance and policy to mitigate risk for vulnerable groups. He made a robust defence of the national response to the pandemic, citing the Nightingale hospitals, which have seen very few patients. The Prime Minister also asserted that international comparisons will not be appropriate until the pandemic is over, which has been repeatedly refuted by multiple academic sources, including the LSHTM last month.

**The Prime Minister has again rejected international comparisons of mortality figures, which is contrary to the opinions of many scientists.**





## Question 4 – Schools’ Reopening

### Statements

- Everyone can see the international figures and can see the disparity, we need to learn from those other countries
- What did they do more quickly than us? What did they do differently to us?
- In order for schools to reopen in a safe manner a robust plan, consensus among all key stakeholders and strong leadership from the top was required - all three are missing
- The Government’s arrangements are in tatters, parents have lost confidence in the Government’s approach, millions of children will miss 6 months’ worth of schooling and inequality will go up

**WILL THE PRIME MINISTER TAKE LOTO UP ON CREATING A NATIONAL TASKFORCE ON SCHOOLS?**

### Relevant links:

<a href="#">The need for summer scheme support in response to Covid-19</a>	Children’s Commissioner says that the UK has not done enough to support
<a href="#">Perception of government handling of COVID-19</a>	Decline in public confidence in the government’s handling of COVID-19. However this does not specify what parents think of the government’s schools policy
<a href="#">This is how the school shutdown will affect children for many years</a>	Trade article on research on the long term negative consequences of school disruption of the sort we are seeing due to COVID-19

### Summative commentary:

The question asked about the government’s handling of schools during the pandemic, and stated that stakeholders had lost confidence in the government. Although the government schools’ policy has been criticised by experts as probably having long term negative consequences, there are no polls on parental views of government schools’ policies.

***This question was broadly accurate, though specifics on what parent’s think of government policy have not been studied by an independent pollster***

## Answer 4

**THE GOVERNMENT IS BEING CAUTIOUS AND FOLLOWING THEIR PLAN TO REOPEN SCHOOLS**



**Statements:**

- The Prime Minister has suggested LOTO to be releasing contradicting statements on children going back to school
- There are countries in the EU where no primary schools children are going back to school
- The UK is being extremely cautious in our approach, the Government is following the plan that they have set out and people of this country will want to follow it
- 97% of schools that have submitted data have had kids return to school

**Relevant links:**

<a href="#">Not all EU countries have opened up their schools.</a>	Schools in 22 out of 27 EU countries have reopened.
<a href="#">Government’s 11 May plan</a>	“The government expects children to be able to return to early year settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point [1 June]”
<a href="#">Survey of school leaders</a>	Of the 2 million children entitled to return to school, only half will show up saysschool leaders.
<a href="#">Government drops plans to reopen schools</a>	Government drops plan for all primary schools to reopen.

**Summative Commentary:**

The Prime Minister was correct in saying there were some countries in Europe that were not going to reopen their schools this academic year. However, the Prime Minister also suggests the Government have been following the plan set out on 11 May. Said plan stated the Government expected children in Reception, Years 1 and 6 will be back in school by 1 June, which has not been the case. On 9 June, the Government dropped plans for all primary school years in England to return before the summer holidays.

**The answer was factually incorrect.**



## Question 5 - Youth Inequality

### Statements

- European countries are getting children back to school, Wales is an example and [the UK] are the outlier on this
- LOTO suggests the Prime Minister is trying to blame others but should take responsibility for his own failures
- One month ago [10 May], the announcement about schools reopening was made by the Government without consulting the relevant parties, without warning about the dates and without any scientific backing
- The consequences will be deepening education disadvantage gap - inequality in children
- The Children’s Commissioner has described an emerging picture which does not give confidence that there exists a strategic plan, and called for the Government to scale up their response
- The Government should have realised there was going to be a problem with space in schools and the need for temporary classrooms to allow for the extra space needed

**WHY ARE THE GOVERNMENT ONLY STARTING EFFORTS TO PLAN FOR SCHOOLS REOPENING NOW?**

### Relevant links:

<a href="#"><u>School closures and disadvantaged students</u></a>	Sutton Trust Research and Policy Manager, Dr Rebecca Montacute ,on the effects of school closures on disadvantaged students
<a href="#"><u>Back to School? Tracking COVID Cases as Schools Reopen</u></a>	Center for Global Development analysis on the effects of opening schools on COVID-19 cases, which shows the number of countries in which students have returned to school.
<a href="#"><u>Coronavirus: Can primary schools adapt to a post-lockdown world?</u></a>	Architects’ Journal article from 11th May 2020 acknowledging the fact spacing will be a problem in schools

### Summative commentary:

It is clear that many other countries are returning students to school. Bodies such as the Sutton Trust acknowledge that closures are deepening disadvantages. The government announced maximum class sizes of 15 in early May and as a result. Practical concerns surrounding this, including the fact there would not be enough space, appear to have remained unengaged with. This suggests sufficient planning has not been done to this point.

***This question was factually accurate.***



## Answer 5

### NO, THE OPPOSITION SHOULD BE SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO GET CHILDREN BACK INTO SCHOOLS

#### Statements:

- The Prime Minister suggests LOTO has contradicted himself in statements regarding schools reopening. The public want consistency
- 37% of year 6 children have returned to school
- The Prime Minister suggests that teachers want to hear all parliamentarians support the return of kids of schools and that they are encouraging kids back to school as it is safe

#### Relevant links:

<a href="#">Back to School? Tracking COVID Cases as Schools Reopen</a>	Center for Global Development analysis on the effects of opening schools on COVID-19 cases
<a href="#">Education unions' statement on the safe reopening of schools</a>	NAHT statement on the reopening of schools, signed by major teaching unions.
<a href="#">Coronavirus: All primary pupils no longer going back to school</a>	BBC article providing both statistics on the number of children who have returned to school and reflections of public opinion.

#### Summative Commentary:

Teachers' unions have made no reference in their statement to wanting to hear that all Parliamentarians support the return of schools; but have stated they want to open when a defined set of tests have been met.

Reports are also showing mixed opinion among parents regarding the reopening of schools, and therefore conclusive statements about what the public want are unclear. There does not appear to be any released statistics about the number of year 6 students specifically back in schools, however, figures have shown that approximately three quarters of those who could have returned (year 1, year 6 and children of key workers) are still at home. Evidence has shown that, in general, most counties who have reopened schools have seen a continued downward trend in cases, however, there are notable exceptions.

**The answer was factually incorrect.**



## Question 6 - National Meal Voucher Scheme

### Statements

- LOTO states he “wants as many children to go back to school as possible, as soon as possible, as quickly as possible, when safe” and affirms that he’s been repeatedly being saying just that
- One way the government can help people worse affect is to extend the national voucher scheme, 1.3 million children in low income families rely on these vouchers (children who can’t go to school due to coronavirus restrictions get free meals)
- The Labour Government in Wales continue to fund these meals through summer, Education Secretary said this won’t be the case in England (which will lead to further inequality)

**CAN I URGE THE PRIME MINISTER TO RECONSIDER THE EDUCATION SECRETARY RULING OUT FUNDING TO ENSURE CHILDREN CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC?**

### Relevant links:

<a href="#"><u>Government may face legal action after ruling out free school meal vouchers for disadvantaged children this summer</u></a>	Government is facing the prospect of legal action after Downing Street ruled out providing free school meal vouchers for disadvantaged children in England over the summer holidays.
<a href="#"><u>Government urged to keep feeding children during school holidays</u></a>	Food charities stating 1.3 million children in low income families rely on these vouchers.
<a href="#"><u>Wales has become the first country in the UK to guarantee ongoing funding for children to continue to receive free school meals during the coronavirus pandemic</u></a>	Welsh Government press release stating it will guarantee ongoing funding to ensure children continue to receive free school meals during the coronavirus pandemic.

### Summative commentary:

The question asked about providing support for children who are entitled to free school meals (referred to correctly as low income families relying on the [national voucher scheme](#)) over the summer through continuing ongoing funding to ensure children eligible for free school meals receive free school meals over the coronavirus pandemic, matching what the Welsh government have done.

***This question was factually accurate***

## Answer 6

### WE WILL NOT BE CONTINUING FREE SCHOOL MEAL, INSTEAD PUTTING MONEY INTO A LOCAL WELFARE ASSISTANCE SCHEME

**Statements:**

- We don't normally continue with free school meals over summer holidays
- Announcing £63 million into a "local welfare assistance scheme to be used by local authorities at their discretion to help the most vulnerable families.", no further details given.
- We have protected the NHS, we have provided a huge number of ventilated beds

**Relevant links:**

<a href="#">Free meals and summer holiday activities for children</a>	Free meals are provided by various organisations during summer holiday with the support from the government through the Holiday Activities and Food scheme.
<a href="#">Reduced spending on crises provision</a>	The Children’s Society has found spending on schemes has been cut by 86% (£250 million) since 2011.
<a href="#">Coronavirus: Ventilator availability in the UK</a>	The history of procurement & availability of ventilators during Covid-19 has been very checkered to say the least.
<a href="#">Boris Johnson's 'ventilator challenge' delivered just 4% increase in machines before coronavirus peak</a>	The article covers the confusion about targets for additional ventilators and the fact that the numbers given by the DHSC are not always reliable.

**Summative Commentary:**

An announcement was made on 4 January 2020 for an additional £11.8 million, and a further £9 million, to be put into breakfast clubs in disadvantaged areas and summer holiday activities, respectively. However no more information regarding the £63 million announcement could be found in the time available. Although an increase in spending on schemes is welcomed, the sums that have been announced are not enough to make up for the £250 million cut in spending for such provisions since 2011. With regard to ventilator ability, it has been noted that ventilator procurement targets were not reached. Initially the Health Secretary set a target for 18,000, however a month later the NHS had under 12,000, and only 4% of those ventilators were produced by UK manufacturers.



**The Prime Minister has announced a £63 million scheme which will be welcomed, but doesn't make up for the cuts consecutive Governments have made since 2011. Further, the target set out by the Government for ventilator procurement was missed.**

