

School 'back to drawing board' for September reopening



GMB says schools are back to the drawing board after the Education Secretary formally announced plans to reopen fully in September.

The union support schools fully opening in September – as long as it is safe to do so – but the Government needs to be clearer and more prescriptive about the measures needed to achieve this.

GMB, along with other education unions, has outlined key demands that must be met for schools to reopen safely.

Stuart Fegan, GMB national Officer, said:



"Today's announcement will force schools back to the drawing board desperately trying to work out how to open safely in September.

"Government policy seems focussed more on making published guidance fit the plan rather than a well-thought out strategy.

"There is no evidence regarding pupil-to-pupil, and pupil-to-adult transmission.

"Is it 'Covid-secure' to work in a class of 30 pupils if you are clinically vulnerable, extremely vulnerable, BAME, male, older, with no social distancing and no PPE?

"There's little in the way of a plan B if schools are unable to open fully or have to close due to a local outbreak. This seems to be largely delegated locally, leaving schools with the potential to feel 'damned if they do and damned if they don't'.

"There should be greater clarity and direction from DfE/PHE on this to support local decision making. This is what GMB members have been calling for, many of whom have been working in school throughout lockdown supporting children of key workers and vulnerable children.

"The Government has announced a full return to school without giving them the tools they need to control outbreaks."

Press office

07958 156846

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

