

## 96% of school staff worried reopening schools will risk children's health

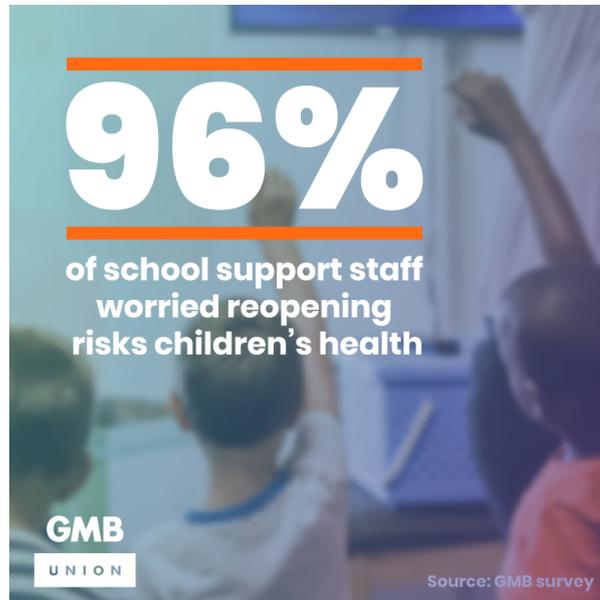
13 May 2020

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### Survey of more than 14,000 school staff shows only 0.6% per cent think social distancing possible with very young children

Almost 96% of school support staff are worried reopening schools too early will put children and their families at risk, a GMB survey shows.

According to the poll, which received more than 14,000 responses from workers in England including teaching assistants, admin staff, caretakers and admin staff, an overwhelming 96% of respondents are worried about the health of children under current proposals.



The survey also shows that only 0.6% of respondents think it's possible for young school children to socially distance in school.

Meanwhile fewer than 12% of school support staff are confident adequate coronavirus testing will be available for staff.

The Government yesterday published plans for primary schools to open more widely for Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 from June 1.

**Karen Leonard, GMB National Officer, said:**

"Our members are desperate to see the pupils and return to doing the jobs they love, but only when it is safe to do so.

"Our survey responses demonstrate how terrified they are of the Government's careless approach to a wider reopening of schools.

**“ Ministers are playing Russian roulette with the youngest pupils in schools leaving parents and staff feeling scared, confused and with no confidence in the process.**

**Karen Leonard, GMB National Officer**

"It's impossible for young children to socially distance and current plans would put lives at risk.

"Ministers are playing Russian roulette with the youngest pupils in schools leaving parents and staff feeling scared, confused and with no confidence in the process.

"Unless this changes, we are likely to see thousands of worried families boycott schools reopening.

"We urge the Government to enter into immediate talks with the education unions to plan



a clear strategy to protect communities, pupils and staff.”

