



## Academy chain failing to protect staff and pupils

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**GMB have today warned that the a national academy chain, the David Ross Education Trust, has failed to consult staff properly on Covid-19 risk planning ahead of a wider reopening of its schools**

GMB have made a formal complaint to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) about the trust, which runs 34 schools in total across London, the East Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside.

In their letter to the HSE, GMB say the trust has put the safety of employees and pupils at 'serious and imminent risk'. This is as result of the academy chain leaving insufficient time to consult with staff over the return or explain how they will be protected, on issues such as testing and tracing.

GMB are also concerned the trust failed to inform all its staff at Charnwood College in Loughborough that an employee had been infected with Covid-19. This was one of three known cases in its schools – the other incidents both occurred in Northampton, at Malcolm Arnold Academy and Briar Hill Primary.

The GMB believes that the multi-academy chain – part of a group of school leaders advising the government on schools reopening – should have delayed plans to open its primary schools to more pupils this week and that they have failed to provide full details of its Covid-19 risk assessments and left insufficient time to train staff on how to manage the return of pupils.

The letter adds: "We are extremely concerned that the trust has opened its schools to an increasing number of pupils and staff during an epidemic without fully engaging staff and unions on the risk in each school and the measures needed to be taken to mitigate these



risks.”

**GMB organiser Rachelle Wilkins said:**

"GMB warned DRET repeatedly about not having risk assessments in place, rushed consultations and ever-increasing reports the track and trace system will not be up and running until the end of June.

“Yet they've still rushed ahead with wider re-opening of their primaries which is very concerning.

"The trust now needs to keep staff and trade unions regularly updated and involved with any new cases of Covid-19. DRET also must keep them briefed about the steps they're taking to keep our member and pupils protected and safe."

