



## Government data on schools covid variant cases should be published

27 May 2021

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**Eight trade unions, which collectively represent the majority of school and college staff, have written to the Secretary of State to call for immediate publication of the data held by the Government and Public Health England (PHE) on the total number of variant cases linked to schools and colleges.**

The letter says: “Education unions have repeatedly requested this data since early May.

“It should have been released in advance of the change in guidance on face coverings, which came into effect on 17 May.”

The unions involved are GMB, ASCL, NASUWT, NAHT, NEU, NSEAD, UNISON and Unite.

The joint letter adds: “There are growing concerns around the variant B.1.617.2 and reports from areas such as Bolton that cases are growing fastest amongst school age children, with cases in Bolton higher now than at any point during the pandemic.”

The letter asks for three urgent questions to be answered immediately.

- When did PHE first share data with ministers on variant B.1.617.2 spread in schools and colleges?
- Did the Government instruct PHE not to release this data? If so, why?
- Will the Government now commit to sharing the data immediately? If not, why not?

The letter has been sent to Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education.

