



**Gavin Williamson MP**  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
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Sent by email: [sec-of-state.ps@education.gov.uk](mailto:sec-of-state.ps@education.gov.uk)

17 August 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

### **TAKE URGENT ACTION ON VENTILATION IN OUR SCHOOLS**

We are concerned that when children return to school in September very few mitigations to slow the spread of Covid 19 will be present.

For example, according to DfE guidance, it won't be necessary to keep children in consistent groups, only very limited numbers of children will be contact traced by NHS Test and Trace and in general face coverings are 'not advised' for pupils, staff, or even visitors, anywhere on school premises.

In these circumstances there is a strong possibility of steeply increasing Covid cases in the Autumn, with some children suffering from Long Covid as a result. There are also concerns about a new wave of other respiratory diseases such as flu and RSV which are worse for children than Covid.

School staff, some of whom will not be double vaccinated, or are in a vulnerable group, are also in some cases still at risk of serious illness. Staff who are fully vaccinated are also still at risk of catching the virus and potentially developing Long Covid, which is already afflicting tens of thousands of school staff.

We are, therefore, very concerned that in an answer to a parliamentary question the DfE has confirmed that they have 'not provided specific additional funding for schools to improve classroom ventilation since January 2021'.

It was only on August 11<sup>th</sup> that it was announced that thirty schools in Bradford would be taking part in a research project to trial the use of air purifiers. The benefits of ventilation in the control of airborne diseases are already well understood and accepted, and we already know that air purifiers work. This project should have been undertaken more than a year ago and is just delaying protections which could be put in place now.

Therefore we, the undersigned, call for urgent action by the DfE to invest in ventilation measures in our schools, including but not limited to the provision of CO2 monitors to monitor air quality and other measures, including where appropriate HEPA filters, which can help slow the spread of such diseases.

Yours sincerely



General Secretary  
ASCL

National Officer  
GMB

General  
Secretary  
NAHT

General  
Secretary  
NASUWT

Joint General  
Secretary NEU









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