



Hillscourt Education Centre
Rose Hill
Rednal
Birmingham
B45 8RS

General Secretary
Dr Patrick Roach

Telephone: 03330 145550

E-mail: advice@mail.nasuwt.org.uk website: www.nasuwt.org.uk

Deputy Scott Wickenden
Minister for Children and Education
States of Jersey

By email: S.Wickenden@gov.je

Dear Deputy Wickenden

COVID-19 Mitigations in Schools

The NASUWT is extremely concerned by the current surge of COVID-19 cases on Jersey which appears to be being fuelled largely by cases in schools. This surge is having a significant impact on schools' ability to operate as well as directly on the teachers in schools.

Despite the surge in cases Jersey has some of the weakest mitigations in relation to preventing the spread of the virus in schools. Face coverings, though recommended, are seldom worn by pupils in communal areas. Carbon dioxide detectors have not been rolled out in the same way as other jurisdictions. There are precious few other precautions.

Worse still, what little mitigations exist are being weakened, rather than strengthened. The recent removal of the need for contacts in schools to have a PCR test is a prime example, and one that has shocked and dismayed NASUWT members.

The NASUWT is also deeply concerned that non-essential activities are continuing with staff expected to attend. There can be no justification for these to continue.

In addition, figures from the Office of National Statistics in the UK show that education staff are more likely to test positive for Covid than staff in other sectors. It is highly likely this is replicated in Jersey.

NASUWT members are reporting that the lack of robust protections in their workplaces leaves them at risk of contracting the virus and spreading it to their families. Schools are the only places now where large groups of unvaccinated or partially vaccinated people congregate. No evidence based justification has been

provided for not applying precautions to education setting that apply in other similar locations.

Teachers are also experiencing significant increases in workload due to staff absences and being required to undertake excessive cover. This, combined with fear of contracting the virus, is having a significant impact on the mental health and wellbeing of staff, and there is a clear risk that the COVID-19 pandemic will be followed by a work-related stress epidemic in schools, and one that will be made all the worse if significant numbers of staff are unable to travel off-island at Christmas due to infections contracted in school.

Many other countries in Europe that have kept in place mitigation measures in schools, whilst rolling out a vaccination programme, have not experienced the surge in cases that we have seen in Jersey.

The NASUWT therefore strongly urges the Government of Jersey to:

- stop whole-school assemblies and in-person staff/parents meetings
- reintroduce mandatory face coverings in all school areas
- reintroduce PCR testing for all close contacts of confirmed cases
- postpone/cancel any non-essential activities.

It is important that Government issues these instructions in the interests of ensuring that all schools remain open safely and in order to protect public health.

I look forward to your urgent response.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary