

Emergency school closures 'must be done with workers not to them'



GMB, the union for school support staff, has called on the Department for Education to engage closely with all education unions over the weeks and months ahead.

Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, said this afternoon that schools in England will close from next week, except for vulnerable children and children of those defined as key workers.

“ If these changes are rushed through without close ongoing consultation there is a risk of serious unintended consequences for children and school workers.



The union has issued six key priorities for keeping pupils and staff safe, including: support for parents who acquire new childcare commitments; full consultation and guidance with all trade unions in schools, including those representing support staff; full provision of personal protective equipment (PPE); and clarity over the status of contractors and other temporary workers.

[Sign the petition](#)

Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary, said:

"We understand the need to close schools, with the exception of vulnerable children and children of those defined as key workers, but more detail is urgently needed.

"If these changes are rushed through without close ongoing consultation there is a risk of serious unintended consequences for children and school workers.

"It is vital that Ministers and officials work closely with staff representatives to make sure they have the protection and support they need.

"We call on the Department for Education to fully engage with all school unions in the weeks and months ahead – it is vital that these changes are done with school workers, and not to them."

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