

Almost 60% of staff report covid outbreaks in their school



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Almost 60% of staff say covid outbreaks have taken place in their school since the start of the pandemic, according to a [mass survey by GMB Union](#).

More than 57% of the 7,100 school staff who responded to the poll said there had been confirmed cases at their school.



Meanwhile more than 67% said there was no testing available for staff or pupils who were displaying symptoms and more than 60% said they had been asked to work across bubbles.

Responding to the survey – which was sent to teaching assistants, administrators, catering workers and other members of school support staff across the country – workers said they felt ‘scared’ and ‘anxious’.



Responses from the survey include:

“I am high risk with diabetes and high blood pressure and I feel worried sick to be in a room with thirty children and three other adults. I do not feel that my health problems are being considered by the Government at all.”

“When there is a covid outbreak, it is kept under wraps and we only find out through staff gossiping about it. Staff have been told to keep quiet about outbreaks they know of and only a few children are kept away when there is an outbreak rather than a whole bubble.”

“We are not safe, somebody needs to get a grip, can we stop pretending that schools are a safe place to be.”

“I’m scared for my life at work.”



Karen Leonard, GMB National Officer, said:

“Our members in schools are scared. Covid outbreaks are rife and the safety of school staff appears to come second to political point scoring by Ministers.

“We all agree it’s vitally important not to disrupt children’s education – but we shouldn’t have to put the people who work in school’s lives at risk to do so.

“The Government’s Winter Plan has scant detail on the testing in schools urgently need.

“We urge the Department for Education to sit down with the unions to come up with a constructive solution.”

Press office

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