

Rushed school covid plans could see untrained staff pressured to perform medical procedures



School staff who are not medically trained should not be pressured into performing these tests, on other staff or pupils – it's dangerous

School staff who are not medically trained should not be pressured into performing these tests, on other staff or pupils – it's dangerous



GMB, the union for School Support Staff, says a rushed schools testing programme could see untrained staff pressured into performing procedures which could give incorrect results.

The union is supportive of a testing programme, but this has to be delivered with a rigorous programme of support.

The Education Secretary today announced plans to deliver testing kits to secondary schools in England from January – but without the staff, the training or the medical supervision to carry them out effectively.

Research into the use of Lateral Flow tests by Oxford University and Public Health England determined chances of a false negative result were more than 20% – 1 in 5 – when performed by a scientist, and doubled to 42.5% when those tested administered the test themselves.



school pencil teacher education

Karen Leonard, GMB National Officer, said:

“We have serious concerns about the rushed nature of these plans.

“Testing kits are being rushed to schools without the medical oversight, staff or training to conduct the tests effectively, accurately and safely.

“School staff should not be pressured into performing these tests on pupils – it’s dangerous frankly.

“The mass testing, particularly given the high number of false negatives, cannot be a substitute for other vital control measures like social distance, bubbles, isolation, masks and ventilation, all of which must stay in place to protect pupils and staff, especially as a vaccine begins to be rolled out.



“Let's not throw away our hard-won gains at this late stage, when a well-considered and properly implemented programme delivered by fully-trained competent staff can deliver the assurance we all want.”

Press office

079859 1525698

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

