

**COVID-19 and Schools Update**

**14 December 2021**

**Introduction**

1. The NASUWT - The Teachers' Union, in addition to the support we are providing to our members across the UK, is committed to ensuring that parliamentarians remain informed of developing challenges in schools and colleges as the country responds to the COVID-19 crisis.

**Omicron and reopening of schools and colleges in January 2022**

2. As a result of the surge in cases of the Coronavirus linked to the new Omicron variant, school and college employers are required to take steps to demonstrate that they have in place appropriate measures to safeguard the health and safety of staff and pupils.
3. All school and college employers have been reminded of the need to update risk assessments in consultation with staff and trade unions. Employers must take all reasonably practicable steps to demonstrate that they have in place appropriate measures to safeguard the health and safety of staff and pupils.
4. The NASUWT maintains that it is a matter of priority to ensure that members can continue to work safely. The national Union is continuing to make strong representations to governments and employers for further measures to be implemented to protect the safety of staff when schools reopen in the new year.

5. Ready for the start of the spring term, all school and college employers should be able to confirm to staff:
  - a. the preventative measures in place to limit the transmission of the new Omicron variant;
  - b. that revised and updated risk assessments are in place and that these have been the subject of consultation with staff and the NASUWT. (NB. Risk assessments prepared for use during the autumn term are not sufficient for the purpose of meeting the employer's statutory duties and legal obligations in regard to health and safety at work.);
  - c. that updated individual risk assessments will be provided for staff/pupils with vulnerable clinical conditions;
  - d. that staff who can work from home will be able to do so. Where any aspect of a teacher's work can be undertaken offsite (e.g. attendance at meetings), there should be no expectation for teachers to remain onsite;
  - e. the additional measures in place to encourage the effective use of lateral flow device (LFD) tests on reopening;
  - f. that all measures are in place to ensure full compliance with the relevant Government guidance, including full compliance with rules on self-isolation.

For further information, please contact:

Dr Patrick Roach

General Secretary

[nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk)

[www.nasuwt.org.uk](http://www.nasuwt.org.uk)