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NASUWT

The Teachers' Union

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Rt Hon Gavin Williamson, MP
Secretary of State
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
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Dear Gavin

NHS Test and Trace App in Schools

The NASUWT is receiving numerous reports from around England that schools are instructing teachers to disable the NHS Test and Trace App whilst in School. The Union also has documentary evidence that in at least one case, in the Wirral, that this instruction is based on advice from local public health authorities. We assume that this action is not limited to this one local public health team, given the range and number of concerns raised.

The Government's guidance on the use of the app in schools and when it should be disabled is absolutely clear yet it is clear that this is being disregarded and blanket disabling instructions given. Furthermore, the NASUWT is also aware of instances where teachers have been told to disregard app notifications to self-isolate. The NASUWT is extremely concerned that these instructions will lead to increased transmission of the virus and to more staff and pupils being required to self-isolate.

The guidance states that '*The NHS COVID-19 app (the app) is a key part of the country's ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) response*'. The fact that schools and authorities are giving instructions to disable it are undermining the apps effectiveness and putting the safety of large numbers of staff and pupils at risk, as well as the ongoing efforts to control the virus generally.

The NASUWT therefore insists that the Government issues an immediate instruction to all schools and Public health teams stating that there must be no instructions given to disable the app whilst in school unless one of the three criteria are met, and public health teams must not under any circumstances give such advice to schools.

I look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours sincerely



Dr Patrick Roach
General Secretary