

SCHOOLS WORKFORCE BULLETIN

As we come to the end of the Academic Year, many of you will have worked for nearly 18 months without a meaningful break and GMB would like to take this opportunity to Thank You all for your hard work in helping to not only keep our children educated but assisting in ensuring all key workers could keep doing their essential jobs throughout this pandemic.

Unfortunately, the Governments latest announcement on lifting COVID restrictions in England from 19th July is ambiguous and has created confusion and anxiety for many and yet again DfE guidance is wanting!

For schools, from 19th July bubbles will no longer be required, NHS Test and Trace will take over responsibility for finding close contacts of positive students and from August 16th children aged under 18 will no longer need to self-isolate if they are identified as a close contact and can continue to attend school, they will be advised to take a PCR test, but this won't be a requirement.

GMB think that Gavin Williamsons plan to end bubbles, self-isolation, social distancing and face coverings in communal areas from Monday 19th July is risky to say the least especially as many schools will be running summer schools and cases are rising exponentially in 12 to 19 year olds.

GMB will continue to monitor the situation closely over the next 5 weeks and we will ensure we update every school member in good time for your return to the workplace at the start of the new academic year. Once again, the main question for you should be **“Is my school safe?”** and GMB will provide you and your reps with the tools you need to make sure that your Head Teacher is making your schools as safe as possible before your return. The main focus will be risk assessments.

Risk Assessments will need to be reviewed and updated to consider the changing landscape and once more it is imperative your reps and staff are consulted before they are adopted by your school, GMB will publish and issue this advice and guidance to you week commencing 23rd August in good time for your return. In the interim we hope you enjoy your well-deserved break and will be in touch soon.