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UNISON support for workers in schools and nurseries

UNISON has consistently opposed the expansion of pupil numbers in primary schools and nurseries in England on 1 June. We believe that it increases the risks to pupils, staff, parents and the wider community. Many councils including Rochdale Council have agreed with us and are delaying the expanded return to work. Unfortunately the government has pressed ahead with its plans and some schools are set to open more widely from Monday 1 June. Schools within Rochdale are due to open from 15th June 2020.

With the NEU, GMB and Unite we have jointly produced a guide for members in primary schools: <https://neu.org.uk/media/10536/view>

If you have serious specific concerns that returning to work will endanger your health or if your school's plans are not adequate UNISON have produced a guide including model letters to your employer that explains what to do next: <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2020/05/UNISON-Education-%E2%80%93-93-school-members-email-28-May-1.pdf>

UNISON has particular concerns about the re-opening of nurseries because the government acknowledges that it is impossible to impose strict social distancing with young children and staff in nurseries are required to provide intimate care to children.

We are also concerned that some nurseries lack the expertise and resources to apply the measures required by government to safely re-open. Nurseries are required to undertake a series of risk assessments and checks and should only re-open if all safety tests are completed ahead of 1 June. Nurseries will need to put in place a range of measures, including additional cleaning procedures and distancing measures before re-opening.

We will support any member who feels they are being sent into an unsafe work environment and are working hard locally to prevent that from happening.

There will be regular updates on UNISON's facebook page for school workers: <https://www.facebook.com/UNISONinSchools/>

Term Time Only Campaign

If you have received a case form to complete and return, please do so asap.

www.joinunison.org

Call UNISON
0800 171 2193

Two simple ways to join UNISON today:

Claim back £6 per week if you are working from home.

If you are working from home you can claim tax back for the additional costs involved in using your home as an office. This applies if you're doing clerical work – generally defined as working on a laptop and making phone calls.

If your claim is for up to £6 per week or £26 per month you will not need to keep receipts to prove what you spent. (£6 per week is the figure from 6th April. If you were working from home from March until 6th April then the figure is £4 per week)

HMRC expects that £6 per week would be sufficient for most cases, particularly where the additional costs are only for heating and lighting the work area.

You can check if you can make a claim by completing details requested via www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home

Care Workers Vs Covid-19

As care workers, we are calling for urgent action now to protect vital care workers, the elderly and those most at risk to the spread of COVID-19. That's why we are calling on our employers, local councils and other commissioners of social care to:

Protect Our Health – Priority testing for care workers to limit the spread of disease to vulnerable patients and service users. Guarantee all essential training and personal protection equipment (PPE) to all frontline workers (e.g. goggles, masks, hand sanitisers, thermometers) in line with Public Health England guidance.

Protect Our Pay – Full normal pay for all those required by government guidance to self-isolate or who become ill because of COVID-19, in order to prevent unnecessary spread of infection. This includes all staff on zero-hour contracts, bank/relief contracts or multiple contracts.

Protect Our Employment – Ensure no-one is dismissed or laid-off for staying at home to care for themselves or their family. Absence due to COVID-19 should be excluded from absence management triggers.

Protect Our Families – Carers leave on full-pay for workers caring for a dependent who has COVID-19 or for whom childcare is unavailable.

If you want to support the campaign please [Join Our Facebook Group](#)

If you are a social care worker based in North West England, please [join our Facebook group](#) and connect with care workers across the North West who are winning improvements on sick pay, PPE and more!

[Join UNISON](#) - we're stronger together and through forming workplace unions we can ensure that we have all the resources we need to stop the spread.

[Support care workers to stop the spread by signing our petition.](#)

Show your support by printing our campaign pledge card taking a picture to share on social media. Tag us into your post. Care worker pledge card is [here](#), council pledge card is [here](#), supportive organisation pledge card is [here](#) and supportive (non-care worker) individual pledge card is [here](#).

Keep up to date with the campaign on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Invite your colleagues/friends/family to like and follow our pages.

Please remember to inform UNISON if any of your personal details have changed i.e. Name, Address, Contact Details, Employer, Workplace or Job Role.

We are not linked to your employer or payroll — so they will not inform us of any Changes in your circumstances.

Please either log on to <https://my.unison.org.uk/> or contact us on 01706 925951/52