



Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Nadhim Zahawi MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment)

Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
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Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP  
Secretary of State for Education

Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London, SW1P 3BT

12 January 2021

Dear Matt, Nadhim and Gavin

### **Priority COVID-19 vaccination for education staff**

We are writing to you to ask that you urgently consider raising the priority level for all staff in early years, school, college, adult education, and independent training provider settings to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

The government has set the priority list for phase one of the vaccination programme based on Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice focused on reducing risk of preventable mortality. JCVI said that more occupations could be prioritised in phase two as it moves to a transmission reduction programme.

The case for prioritising early years, school, college, adult education, and independent training provider staff is as follows:

- Fully reopening education settings is a national priority - the moment it is safe to do so.
- Learning often takes place indoors and in close contact with large numbers of students in multiple groups, putting staff at high risk of both catching and transmitting the virus.
- Vaccination prioritisation, combined with mass testing, would be a sure way to reduce transmissions, remove any further disruption to the education of our



young people and to support the resumption of economic activity by reducing the burden of home schooling on working parents.

We would suggest that education staff are sub-categorised for priority so that those working in early years, specialist settings and those whose role involves elements of health care and very close contact, are first to receive the vaccine. This sub-group should be closely followed by wider teaching and support staff in all schools and colleges.

All our organisations agree that this proposal is the right course of action for students, education staff and the wider communities in which they study and work to reduce transmission of the virus and maximise the quality of the education that students receive. We invite you to work with us on this issue and will offer all appropriate support to you in delivery of the vaccination programme to all education staff.

Yours sincerely,

David Hughes, Chief Executive Officer,  
Association of Colleges

Geoff Barton, General  
Secretary, Association of School  
and College Leaders

Jane Hickie, Chief Executive Officer,  
Association of Employment and  
Learning Providers

Neil Leitch, Chief Executive  
Officer, Early Years Alliance.

Kevin Courtney and Dr Mary Boustead,  
Joint General Secretaries, National Education  
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Stuart Fegan, National Officer,  
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*Alex Payne*

Alex Payne, Chief Executive Officer, Landex

*S.A. Pember*

Dr. Sue Pember, Policy Director, HOLEX

*Bill*

Bill Watkin, Chief Executive Officer, Sixth Form Colleges Association

*Clare Howard*

Clare Howard, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Specialist Colleges

*J Grady*

Dr. Jo Grady, General Secretary, UCU

*J. Richards*

Jon Richards, Head of Education and Local Government, UNISON

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Siobhan Endean, National Officer for Equalities, UNITE