

# No More Exclusions

*A new grassroots coalition movement in Education*



**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP**

Secretary of State for Education  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Wednesday 2nd September, 2020

Dear Secretary of State for Education,

We, along with No More Exclusions, call on the Government for a moratorium on school exclusions over the next academic year to give children returning to school time to adjust to the 'new normal' and catch up on the education they've missed as a result of the current public health crisis.

As organisations and people with a vested interest in children, young people and education, we are very concerned about how the return to school, after months of lockdown and ever-changing messaging on daily living, will impact children.

We appreciate the challenges for government and schools in ensuring schools reopen safely to enable children to resume their learning. These are indeed unprecedented times which, as we have seen over the last six months, call for unprecedented measures. We strongly urge the government to recognise and embrace the need for a different approach to school exclusions, especially given the exceptional circumstances.

The government is well aware of the impact of the pandemic on children and young people's mental health, well-being, education and ultimately their future. Returning to school will help mitigate some of the foreseeable impact but will inevitably present new and difficult challenges, uncertainty and confusion, especially as schools continue to grapple with how to manage reopening effectively and safely.

The evidence is clear that children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds bear the brunt of national decisions on managing the pandemic. They have been failed because they do not have access to technology to participate in virtual education, despite government pledges that all children would have access to a computer. They have been failed because schools have been inconsistent in delivering education during lockdown. They have been failed by the impact on the economy. They have been failed because local authorities' duties to vulnerable children and young people were diluted; the SEND duties being one example, the disproportionate rate of Black children experiencing school exclusion for decades being another. Many will continue to be failed by the system, the exams results fiasco is testament to how disadvantaged and marginalised children and young people are systematically failed.

We believe the range of new measures introduced in schools will feed into punitive behaviour policies which will ultimately lead to an increase in exclusions. It will be those in state-funded schools who will be most affected by these changes, in the same way they were with exam results. It is illogical to say it is a moral imperative that children return to school while putting them at greater risk of being excluded from school because of new rules and regulations.

Children and young people, particularly within the groups statistically at greatest risk of fixed term and permanent exclusion, will once again be failed by the system if the government does not act now. We do not believe that relying on schools to do the right thing by complying with the 'last resort' principle in exclusion decisions is sufficient. Many in education know this is not the reality, particularly for schools with zero tolerance behaviour policies.

We are constantly told we are living in unprecedented times. The pandemic has caused us all to think and act differently. We have had to adjust to fast changing guidance and regulations which impact our lives significantly with daily, sometimes hourly, changes that are often confusing and bewildering. It's difficult enough for adults to understand what is expected of them at any given time, let alone young people and children, yet they are subjected to the same restrictions and sanctions as adults.

Schools across the country have rightly raised serious and valid concerns about how they will resume educating pupils come the start of term. How will they implement social distancing for large numbers of children (often in already overcrowded spaces)? Should children wear face coverings in communal spaces? How will they manage social bubbles in unstructured periods? How will they keep children apart? This is all supposedly underpinned by a need to keep children and schools staff safe. These are all issues that will feed into behaviour policies and ultimately be used to sanction pupils through isolation and/or exclusion.

We are deeply concerned that head teachers and staff will be less than tolerant towards breaches of behaviour policies, possibly through their own fears or more likely lack of understanding about what they can and cannot do at any given time. Uncertainty will lead to inconsistency and inconsistency leads to the inertia that ensures the systemic failure of the young people in our care. We need a clear government mandate that schools cannot exclude children and instead support children to avoid exclusion. This way children will not be affected adversely by either inconsistency or uncertainty on the part of schools and will get the support they need to make the best of education. Don't wait for the backlash before being forced to U-turn, do what you know to be right from the outset.

We therefore strongly urge the government to suspend the exclusions guidance using emergency powers as was the case in other areas of education. Alternatively, we call on the government to make it unlawful for headteachers to exclude children for breaches of rules introduced around the pandemic.

Now is the time for the government to show that education really does matter and that children and young people should be in school learning and enjoying the experience. The moral imperative should not only be that children return to school but also that they stay in school to catch up on time lost over the last six months.

This is why we call for a suspension on exclusions.

We look forward to seeing the immediate change to exclusions guidance to outlaw exclusions during our suggested moratorium and details of the measures and resources to be put in place to support children to stay in schools. As a collective, we would also welcome the opportunity to inform these developments further. In anticipation,

No More Exclusions, along with a coalition of over 200 people including Youth representatives and organisations, Parents/Carers and Family, Educators, Academics, Race Equality, Anti-Oppression,

Social Justice and Abolitionist Organisations, Groups and Activists, Writers, Legal Professionals, Healthcare workers, Politicians and members of the general public. All names of signatories to date are listed at the end of this letter.

Please reply to:

## No More Exclusions

E mail: <mailto:nomoreexclusions2020@gmail.com>

Twitter: [@NExclusions](https://twitter.com/NExclusions)

Instagram: [No.More.Exclusions](https://www.instagram.com/No.More.Exclusions)

Website: [www.nomoreexclusions.com](http://www.nomoreexclusions.com)

Correspondence Address: No More Exclusions C/o Race Equality Foundation, Unit 17 Deane House Studios, 27 Greenwood Place, London, NW5 1LB

Signatories of this open letter as of 12pm on Wednesday 2nd September 2020:

### Youth:

Ahmed Yassin	Claremont Youth Project
Aislinn Evans	youth worker
Ayah Ali	Sixth form student
Bilal	Student
Elaine Donnellon	Community worker Stop The Bleed Camden
Luke Billingham	Hackney Quest
Mohammad Asghar	Student
Oroma Wogboroma	Researcher on children and young people
Raoul Dero	Youth advocate...
Tatum Donnellon	Community youth volunteer
Zeinab Adam	Student

### Parents/Carers/Family:

Cheri Mackay	Mother
Ade Banjoko	Director Parents Action and Resource Centre
Angela Palmer	Parent
Caroline Hillier	Parent
Caryl Guar	Parent of SEN child
Cassie Beaumont	Autistic parent of autistic child
Cerianne Reeder	Parent
Claire Moss	Parent
D Butt	parent
Dahlia Knight	Grandparent
Emma Bill	Parent
Itahisa Alvarez Gordon	Mother and TA
Joyce Hylton	Parent
Julia Jones	Parent
Lisa Jay	Parent

Lynn Gibson	Parent / Labour Party / Unite
Mary Carson	Parent
Michael Ellinson	Parent
Mohammed Nafeel	Father
Mr Qamar Uldin	Parent
NICHOLINE CREARY	Parent
Rachel Rodgers	Parent
Ranna McArdle	Grandparent
Rebecca Wood	Parent
Samantha kilshaw	Parent
Sidnie	Parent
Sophie hill	Mother
Venessa Bobb	Founder A2ndvoice
Wayne Shallis	Parent
Kylie	Parent

**Education Professionals - Includes teaching staff, school staff, governors, educational psychologists and educational practitioners:**

A Khemchand	PE Teacher
Abigail Miranda	educational psychologist
Alasdair Smith	Teacher
Angela Henry	Teacher
Anji McAnuff	Teacher
Anna Case	Teacher / St Mary's Menston
Anthony Egbinola	Teacher
Audrey Litchmore	Shooters hill 6th Form College
Ayaan Bulale	Open School East
B.Hillman	Teacher
Bianca Williams	Teacher
Chrissa Wadlow	Sunshine Support
Cleo Lewis	Assistant Head Teacher
Dalian Adofo	Educational Consultant
Debbie Mather	Teacher, mother to asd chold
Delroy	Lead Practitioner St Martin in the Fields academy
Denise Henry	Teacher and union activist
Eleanor Linsley	Teacher & NEU School Rep
Esther Wakelin-Stotten	Teacher
Fay Allen	NEU/ TEACHER/ BRIXTON
Gillian Hart	Retired teacher
Hadda Levy	Teacher
Hannah Baynton	Trainee Educational Psychologist
Ivy Scott	Teacher

J Fubey	Teacher
Jack Park	Primary Teacher, Dovedale Primary School, Liverpool
J Alexander	Teacher
Jessica Hirani	Secondary school teacher
Joshua Moses	Education Advocate
Karen Parny	Teacher
Kelly Pawlyn	Governor Camden School for Girls
Kelly Pawlyn	Governor Camden School for Girls
Kevin Murphy	Safeguarding lead
Khadijah	Teacher
Kwame Ocloo	Executive Director- Youth Learning Network Ltd
Laury Ntoko	Director of MFL/ Harris Academy South Norwood
Melissa Hind	Teacher
Mical Nelken	Teacher of English and EAL Coordinator, La Sainte Union Catholic School, Camden London
Naomi Tobias	Teacher
Natasha Johnson	Director Go Digit All
Nazmia Jamal	Teacher
Raheem Mu Khepera MBE	Prime Unltd
Ro Henry-Grant	Teacher
Sally Jones	SEND Practitioner
Sarah Cox	Retired teacher
Sarah Louise Horobin	Maths Teacher, DCG
Sharon McKenzie	Croydon supplementary School
Sherene Meir	Adult Educator, Gateshead Council
Shirley Green	Teacher (Primary)
Simon Murch	Teacher, National Education Union
Tania Tirraoro	Special Needs Jungle Ltd
Thomas Keep	T.A
Tom Foxall	Teacher
Tom Oberst	Teacher
Tony Hamlet	Teaching assistant
Vivienne Royal	TLG South Birmingham
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Ziggy Moore	Moore Education
Dr Heather Geddes	Teacher and Educational Psychotherapist - now retired (Associated with the Caspari Foundation)
Janet Matthews	Weardale Branch Chair, North West Durham CLP and retired teacher

#### **Academia Professionals:**

Dr Adam Elliott-Cooper	Research Associate in Sociology, University of Greenwich
Dr Karen Graham	Senior Lecturer in Education, Manchester Metropolitan University Royal Holloway, University of London (UCU Branch Committee/Personal Capacity)
Dr Sofia Mason	Assistant Professor in Sociology of Education
Dr Sol Gamsu	Lecturer, University of Liverpool
Dr. Kirsty Morrin	Professor of Sociology
Gargi Bhattacharyya	Senior Lecturer in Social Work
Greg Ryan	Lecturer University of Exeter
Helen Knowler	Lecturer University of Exeter
Helen Knowler	Retired University Technician
Jeff Knowler	University of Manchester
Karis Campion	Education Researcher, UCL
Laura Quick	Education Researcher, UCL
Laura Quick	University of Exeter
Malcolm Richards	UCL
Maymana Arefin	University of Manchester
Remi Joseph-Salisbury	Birmingham City University - Foundation Year Lecturer & UCU Branch Secretary
Rhiannon Lockley	PhD candidate, University of Exeter
Riadh Ghemmour	Birmingham City University
Rob Smith	PhD Student
Sean Wyer	UCL
Tom Cowan	

### **Race Equality - including for Young People and in Education**

Ife Thompson	Founder BLAM UK
Jabeer Butt	Chief Executive, Race Equality Foundation
Jamie Schearer-Udeh	Anti-Racism Consultant
Josina Calliste	Land in Our Names
Kunle Olulode	Director Voice4Change England
Zita Holbourne	BAME Lawyers for Justice
Black Educators Alliance	Black Educators Alliance (BEA)
Black Educators Alliance	Black Educators Alliance (BEA)
Daniel Johnson	Halftth Exclusions.
Kadeem Marshall-Oxley	No More Exclusions
Nirad Abrol	No More Exclusions
Roxy Legane	Director, Kids of Colour
Zahra Bei	No More Exclusions Co-Founder
nas nova	Tribe Named Athari

### **Anti-Oppression, Social Justice and Abolition Organisations and Activists**

Jodie Beck	Co founder, Our Empty Chair
Kelsey Mohamed	Cradle Community
Mo Mansfield	Abolitionist Futures
Lani Parker	Sisters of Frida Director
Minda Burgos-Lukes	Social Justice & Anti-Oppression Organiser & Consultant
Sarah Mann	Director, Friends, Families and Travellers
Dom Hunter	The Class Work Project
Freedom Zampaladus	The Urban Equestrian Academy
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Kahiye Alim	Director Council of Somali Organisations
Robina Qureshi	Positive Action in Housing

### **Trade Unionists**

Andrea Gilbert	BAME Officer TEFL Workers Union
Anita Conradi	Local Officer Wandsworth NEU
Anna Wolmuth	Islington NEU branch
Daniel Kebede	Senior Vice President - National Education Union
Duncan Morrison	Branch Secretary, Lewisham NEU
Ellen Graubart	Unite Community
Ewa Jasiewicz	Union Organiser
James Kerr	Lewisham NEU President
Lucy Cox	National Education Union
Marian Mayer	Bournemouth University Co-chair UCU
Paul Phillips	NEU rep
Tyrone Falls	Bristol NEU (International Solidarity Officer)
Vik Chechi-Ribeiro	NEU MANCHESTER vice president
Yvonne Hardman	LGBT+ Organising Forum Member National Education Union

### **Healthcare Professionals**

Alia Butt	Psychotherapist NHS
Lyn Boyd	Mental Health North East
Martin Murray	Paramedic
Nigel Frost	Mental health / support worker
Rachel Ambrose	Registered Mental Health Nurse (CAMHS)
Saffya Fatima	Counsellor and Psychotherapist
Shelby-Jayne Bolton	NHS support worker
Yemi Lipede	Psychotherapist

### **Legal Professionals:**

Alex Temple	Education Solicitor
Michael Etienne	Barrister

### **Writers and Media**

Chris Alston	Author
Ilyas Nagdee	Writer and activist
Terry Ellis	Author   Forward Trust Ambassador
Syed Joshim Ali	Guardian

### **Politicians**

Anamul Islam	Councillor, Forest Gate North
Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP	Member of Parliament for Streatham
John McDonnell	Member of Parliament

### **General Public Members**

Ada Peter Nwike	TiA Group
Alaa'a Ashkar	Relations Communicator
Alexander Richards	Director
Andrea Saunders	
Angeline Hargreaves	
Anna Torvaldsen	
Bee Lindeboom	
Ben Ovio	ENDIP International Development LTD.
Bridget Dunne	
Carel Buxton	
Carlos Soto	Barnet Momentum (in personal capacity)
Carolyn Storer	
Cath Attlee	
Cathy Kelly	
Chris Bagley	
Claire Clews	
Claudine Duherry	Service manager
Daniel Lewis	Financial Controller
Dave Gurman	
Erin Cunningham	
Evon Renny	
Fahima ahad	
Farhaana Arefin	
Gillie Evans	
Humza Hanif	Student
Ivana mackinnon	
J colling	Supporter
Jade Forbes	
Jamal Natour	M.D. Fumasoftware LTD.
Jeff Knowler	Self employed
Kay Stephens	



Leila Cass-Darweish	
Llewellyn Radley	
Madhia Farooq	
Maire Verrall	
Margaret De Leon	Supporter
Marlon kameka	
Matthew Jones	
Michelle Mann	Catering assistant
Moirá Gomes	Retired
Nichola Morris	Local Government Officer
Patrick Brady	Concerned citizen
Robert Larkins	Citizen
Saleh Mamon	Researcher
Sameer taneja	Technical advisor
Sumayyah E. Ibrahim	
Tina McKay	
Usama Javed	
Zaleera Wallace	HAIRDRESSER
Andrew	Director