

Lockdown 3

Schools Shut after Unions say its not safe to work

With cases of COVID-19 spiralling, our hospitals overflowing with patients, and the daily death rate increasing – UNISON, alongside the National Education Union, advised members that it was unsafe to return back to the classroom after Xmas. Both UNISON and the NEU launched a petition and supplied our members with letters to give to their employers.

The Prime Minister argued that schools were safe on the Sunday before the start of term – only to change his mind the day after, announcing that all schools would shut because they were ‘vectors of transmission’. At the same time there was a new national lockdown.

This indecision meant some School staff and families were unnecessarily put at risk for nothing.

UNISON has been challenging other employers that were slow in reacting to the new in risk posed by the pandemic.

Wherever you work ensure you keep you, your colleagues and your family as safe as possible.

If you think it is unsafe then inform your employer why. If you are instructed to work unsafely please get in touch with your union as soon as possible. Contact details are on the Branch website www.sandwellunison.co.uk.

Everyone has the legal right not to work in unsafe conditions, but to apply that right properly please get in touch with us first.

AGM to go Virtual

In line with national guidance your Branch AGM will be online. Invites have been posted to your home address. If you want to attend, please return your slip and we will send you the login details. GoTo is free to download. If you need any assistance, please let us know before the meeting.

**Sandwell General UNISON Branch
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 4th March
5:45pm
via GoTo Meetings
All Members Welcome**

Will Key Workers Be Thanked in 2021?

The doorstep clapping of key workers will be one of those images from 2020 that will be long remembered. Suddenly the nation appreciated all key workers such as shop workers, Carers, Bin workers and many others who kept our vital public services running. Some of you risked your lives to keep services running. You were heroes then and during the third lockdown you will continue to be heroes.

After a decade of austerity and pay freezes, the Tories have found the magic money trees to prop up the economy.

How will they thank us for doing the same during 2021?

Well so far, the Tory Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, has announced a pay freeze for many public sector workers. Only the NHS and those earning under £24,000 are exempt – and then any award is likely to be miserly. Is this the thanks you deserve?

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