Dear [xxxxxxx],

We are writing to you regarding your planning for the wider reopening of school during the summer term. We appreciate the difficulties involved in planning for reopening in such uncertain circumstances and wish to work together constructively for a safe reopening.

While we are all keen to get back in the classroom as soon as possible, we want to ensure this is done in a way that does not compromise the safety of colleagues who either have underlying health conditions that would make them vulnerable to Covid-19, or who live with or care for relatives that are vulnerable.

The National Education Union (NEU) has stated that “staff who are vulnerable, or who live with or care for household members who are themselves vulnerable, should not be required to return to the workplace and allowed to work from home.”

The NEU’s position is also that due to evidence of racial disparities in the impact of Covid-19, Black employees, who are concerned about their higher risk, should be treated in the same way as employees who are clinically vulnerable. The DfE has confirmed in writing to the NEU that “schools should be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of Black staff, parents and pupils.”

We believe that colleagues in these categories – extremely vulnerable, clinically vulnerable, and Black employees who are concerned about their higher risk – should be given the option to continue working from home and that this should be taken into account as part of planning and risk assessments with regard to a wider re-opening. We believe this is a necessary and reasonable approach that balances the obvious need to resume face-to-face contact with pupils with protecting vulnerable colleagues and family members, and is also an approach that has been adopted by many other schools locally and nationally.

We also wish to affirm that colleagues in these categories have the full support of those of us who are in a position to return to school without facing disproportionate risk. We would not see this approach as unfair on those who do return to school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

[INSERT NAMES OF MEMBERS]

cc. NEU Branch/District Secretary