

Greens call for 'reset' of Covid preventative measures to help stem spread of infection



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Greens say the threats posed by the new Omicron variant should serve as a wakeup call to 'reset' preventative measures that will help reduce the spread of Covid this winter. These should include:

- Mask wearing and social distancing extended to all indoor public spaces
- Work from home where possible
- Financial support provided to those in self-isolation
- Fully funded ventilation systems for all schools
- Booster jabs offered immediately to all school staff
- A greater contribution by the UK to fighting the virus globally through vaccination sharing
- UK support for a TRIPS waver – a temporary suspension of the intellectual property rights used by pharmaceutical corporations to protect their technologies

Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer, said:

“Infection rates remain stubbornly high across the UK and now there is uncertainty about the threats posed by the new Omicron variant. It’s time for a reset on preventative measures to help stem the spread of all variants this winter. A failure to take swift preventative measures could result in health services becoming overwhelmed and much more stringent measures down the line.”

“The government has finally seen sense on mandatory mask wearing in shops and public transport, but this must go further and include all indoor public spaces. We also need to see the message on the importance of social distancing reinforced, people encouraged to work from home where they can, and financial support provided to those who are self-isolating.

“The emergence of new variants is also a sharp reminder that we can only put this virus behind us by vaccinating the world. Global justice requires rich nations sharing vaccine supplies with low-income countries and backing moves to prevent pharmaceutical corporations using intellectual property rights to block millions having access to vaccines [1].”

Greens are also calling for a particular focus on stronger preventative measures in educational establishments. Vix Lowthion, Green Party spokesperson on education, said:

“Research suggests that high Covid-19 infection rates are being driven by infection in school-aged children [2]. Greens have long called for improved ventilation in schools and colleges, and we now urgently need to see fully funded ventilation systems for all schools. We also need to ensure that all adults working in schools, colleges and Early Years are classed as frontline workers and are offered booster jabs with immediate effect.

“Covid-19 continues to cause chaos in schools with too many children and educators either suffering with the virus or in isolation. We owe it to our teachers, students and society at large, to take a precautionary response and increase protections in all educational establishments.”

Notes

[1] [WTO TRIPS Waiver for COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[2] [Covid: Infection among pupils leads to record high rate – TES](#)

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