

To whom it may concern,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am writing to you as a parent and teacher of a NSW [REDACTED] School aged child. I currently work as a teacher in the [REDACTED] system and my son is of high school age. I signed the ePetition to Parliament asking for stronger ventilation mitigations to be provided in schools that received over 8,800 signatures from concerned citizens of NSW. I am also a member of COVID SAFE SCHOOLS, an association of parents, teachers and community members advocating for protections against COVID-19 transmission in schools and other educational settings.

I am writing to you, as a part of the national COVID inquiry, to ask that you please do more to protect our children. All children in the public, systemic and independent education sectors deserve better mitigations.

Research from the UK reports that 7-8% of children who contract covid-19 are diagnosed with long covid. Their symptoms include fatigue, loss of concentration and signs of heart and lung disease. The NHS has announced [here](#) they are building 15 new paediatric hubs to help care for the estimated 340,000 people that may need support for the condition including 68,000 who will need rehab or other specialist treatment. These are alarming figures, and we should be doing everything we can to prevent this from happening to our children in Australia.

Instead, NSW Health have refused to mandate mask wearing for children under 12s who cannot currently be protected by vaccination. The Air-Audit conducted was a paper audit of formula projections, which have been disproven by field-testing in classrooms with Co2 monitors.

[Here](#) is the stats on NSW school closures in Term 4:

- 25 closures week one (online learning)
 - 26 closures week two (online learning)
 - 47 closures week three (K, Y1, Y12)
 - 86 closures week four (All years)
- A total of 184 school closures in four weeks.

Children aged 0-9 make up the majority of cases in NSW and the figures are climbing.

As we approach a new academic year in 2024, all indication a difficult winter, lies ahead of us, as the Northern hemisphere shows the wave of the JN1 SARS virus. The risk to school aged children of contracting covid-19 in the classroom during this period is high. Vaccination rates in the classroom are 1:26. There is limited mask wearing and natural ventilation -- opening windows -- is insufficient, without real-time Co2 monitoring.

We do not yet know the long-term effects of covid, and our future generations are at risk.

Mitigation measures are affordable, available and evidence based. They include:

- * Mask mandate for all Primary and High School aged children
 - * Real-time Co2 monitoring in teaching spaces
 - * HEPA filtration to reduce airborne transmission in teaching, bathroom & communal spaces
 - * A centralised flexible learning program for children who cannot attend face-to-face learning.
- I have restricted my comments to the education sector but public health is another domain that requires the same initiatives to be adopted.

I implore you to act immediately to protect our children.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]