

Sir,

As Rachel Sylvester mentioned in her column ([“How to help schools recover from lockdown”](#), 4 Jan) the government must act now so that when schools do reopen, they remain open. However, the lateral flow tests they are relying on to ensure this are far from fit for the job.

This is not just the view of the Royal Statistical Society’s experts; many others have concerns that a negative result from the chosen INNOVA test is too inaccurate to maintain school safety and will only provide false reassurance. While no one wants to see children’s education disrupted, using this test and not isolating close contacts will only increase disease spread and so cause further disruption. The government must urgently re-evaluate this new strategy and look for an alternative so we can be sure that when pupils go back to school, they can do so safely.

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Published in the Times on 6 January 2021:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/times-letters-school-lockdown-and-vaccination-of-pupils-kh7qpqn6d> (paywalled)