

Mother threatened with jail and hefty fines for protecting her son from rampant COVID-19 infections in UK schools

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Sarah Paxman, the mother of a severely vulnerable 8-year-old son, Stanley, faces a hefty fine of £2,500 and jail sentence for keeping her child learning safe at home during the pandemic.

Sarah was “invited” to a meeting at her son’s primary school Thursday under police caution for refusing to send Stanley, who has a number of rare conditions, into school while no serious mitigation measures are in place against COVID-19.

The “invite” was issued by Surrey County Council and NE Education Welfare. Afterwards, she was issued with a “notice of intended prosecution.” The letter states that unless Stanley “returns to full-time education and sustains this, it is the intention of Surrey Council Council to summons you to appear before the Magistrates Court for failing to ensure your child’s regular school attendance under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.”

It continues, “You, ‘the parent’, maybe liable upon conviction in a Magistrates Court to a fine not exceeding £2,500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.” The letter also threatens to seek the recovery of court costs.

On the same day, April May (aka Booth) from Portsmouth received the same threat of fines and imprisonment for keeping her 12-year-old autistic son Casper out of school. April’s son is registered at Portsmouth Academy, the school attended by Jorja Halliday, aged 15, who was killed by COVID-19 in October.

Lisa Diaz, a mother of two from Wigan and a leading member of the SafeEdForAll (Safe Education For All) campaign group, also faces fines and the Family Court for her brave stand against unsafe schools.

Lisa told the *World Socialist Web Site*, “This is an attack on women, on those with disabilities and any kind of vulnerabilities. We do work with men who are receiving the same threats but it’s primarily woman, as the main carers, who are threatened. It is also often an attack on working-class people whose children are often the least protected.

“This is completely dystopian. We are not sliding into authoritarianism; we are already there. Politicians are getting away with doing what they want with no repercussions, while vulnerable mums are threatened with jail for protecting their children. Some parents may think that it won’t affect them because their children are in school, but it is coming for them. It is coming for working people.

“The wave of threats against parents now is like Omicron.

We’re facing a surge in these draconian measures. I never thought I would see this in England in 2021. The right to protest is being ripped up, the Human Rights Act is being ripped up. This is so cynical and worrying. But we won’t back down. They will need a bloody big prison dorm to accommodate us all”.

The WSWWS calls on all its readers to protest these blatant acts of intimidation.

Sarah received her threatening letter on December 8, the same day that Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty held a press conference on the rapid spread of the new Omicron variant. Despite acknowledging the dangers, Johnson said that while people should work from home “where possible”, they could still attend Christmas parties. He stressed that schools must remain open, and children must attend.

Sarah suffers from Long COVID that has severely impacted her neurological system. Stanley is autistic and attends a specialist school. A bright and happy child, he also suffers from several rare conditions. For this reason, Sarah has kept her son off school since March 2020.

Sarah read a statement of defiance, based on science, to the school meeting which included three people: a deputy head teacher at the school and two others from Surrey County Council, one being an exclusion officer. Sarah attended with a supportive friend.

However, at the conclusion of the meeting, having been told more “evidence” would be gathered, Sarah was handed the letter informing her she faced jail and fines.

Sarah told the WSWWS after the meeting, “I’m fuming. It’s disgusting to insist children are sent into schools where this virus is spreading like the plague. But I tell you now—if they want a fight, they’ve picked on the wrong woman”.

We reproduce Sarah’s statement to the meeting in full:

“Firstly, I would like to say I want my Stanley at school and I cannot stress to you just how much. But I also want him safe at school.

“I feel extremely upset that I have had to choose between his education and his health. Schools are not safe and they have not been since the beginning of the pandemic. The current measures in place are not sufficient to stop Covid-19 spreading. All the cleaning and handwashing in the world barely touches the virus. The reason being that it is airborne. The virus particles fill up a

room in a similar way to visible cigarette smoke. This has been recognised and documented by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It has been known since very early on.

“Only on Tuesday just passed, the 14th of December, Doctor Tedros Adhanom, World Health Organization Director General, said, ‘Vaccines alone will not get any country out of this crisis. Countries can and must prevent the spread of Omicron with measures that work today.’ He went on to say it’s not vaccines instead of ventilation.

“As soon as people of high authority accept this and do something about it the better for all of us.

“Vaccines and ventilation are the two most crucial measures that need to be put in place to help prevent the spread of this deadly virus. I would not send my son into school if the water was unsafe and very likely to make him ill, even mildly ill. So, I refuse to send him in to breathe unsafe air.

“CO2 monitors are very good at monitoring air quality. But they do just that—monitor. They need to be given to all schools with ventilation and HEPA filters installed correctly.

“My son Stanley will not be returning until these measures are put in place. He will also not be returning to school until he has been vaccinated with the recommended doses which the JCVI are yet to advise. Also, he will not return until the recommended time has passed between doses for the vaccination to take effect on his immune system. And I stress that I will categorially not return him until these prevention measures have been adopted.

“Stanley has rare underlying health conditions, which require him to take a medication four times the adult daily dose. He is also required to have two EpiPens at hand at all times—two at school and two at home. This means his conditions can be, and would be, life threatening without an autoinjector pen. He has to have two in case the first one is not enough.

“One of his conditions is called cold urticaria. One of three types—his being the worse type to have. It is systemic. Even breathing in cold air for a short period of time has caused him to go unconscious on a number of occasions. Only Saturday he had a reaction after having a bath.

“And then he also suffers chronic spontaneous urticaria. In April 2019 he had Parvovirus B19 also known as Fifth Disease or slapped cheek syndrome—one of the common childhood diseases. On this occasion he had an anaphylactic shock and I had to administer his adrenaline. Luckily it worked well and brought him around after falling unconscious.

“He has also had Hand, Foot and Mouth three times, two of which required hospitalisation. He also suffers asthma and is on a daily preventative medication. One time, only four hours after seeing the doctor and being told his chest was fine, I rushed him to hospital. On arrival his oxygen levels were 71. He had pneumonia and they were going to air ambulance him to a different hospital if he had not responded to medical intervention.

“Most children by the age of eight have only suffered a few colds and tummy bugs so I will do everything to maximise the chance of him staying healthy. He is currently under Epsom General Hospital and the Evelina London Children’s hospital at

Guys and St Thomas’ Hospitals.

“Placing a child in any school unventilated at present is an almost guaranteed way to contract Covid-19. And with a high viral load too which also matters a lot with this virus. In actual fact, if you wanted an extremely large amount of people to contract it the best thing to be would be to send them into the current school settings. The staff and children go home and infect their families. To be able to come into school with a positive family member at home more or less ensures widespread infection. It’s disgusting. It’s a farce and it’s absolutely abhorrent.

“Anyone could be forgiven for thinking a herd immunity experiment has been and is taking place.

“Furthermore, another thing that is an absolute disgrace is the fact OFSTED [the schools inspectorate] are told not to come into schools as it is too dangerous and risky at present so everything has been cancelled. But it’s fine for the children and the staff. That alone is sickening. It is unbelievable.

“Well, my son will not be attending—not on my watch.

“The new Omicron variant is affecting children more than previous ones, with a 20 percent rise in paediatric hospital admissions. Yesterday saw the biggest number of children admitted so far in a single day.

“That reinforces my decision about Stanley even more so. Many, many people are going to end up on the wrong side of history. You mark my words. Our poor children of this country, especially the vulnerable, have been let down so badly during this pandemic. They have been an afterthought and used to ensure rapid and widespread infection by the virus. The whole thing is a scandal.

“The fact that in September all mitigations were scrapped in school is an outrage. It is brutal. Unforgivable. Not only have many ended up missing education due to catching Covid-19, many thousands are now suffering Long Covid.

“All I am doing is protecting my son. I will always do so as I see fit. If that is a crime then I am happy to be a criminal.

“And there is nothing I won’t do or go through to keep my child safe. He stays home schooling with me until the right mitigations have been put in place, and, as I said previously, has been vaccinated with the right dose or doses to protect him. Nothing will change my mind on this.”



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