

# “I’ve been waiting for parents to strike since the summer of 2020”: Growing support in Germany for October 1 school strike

Our reporters  
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Support for the October 1 school strike in the United Kingdom is growing around the world. In many countries, parents, students, teachers and other workers are expressing solidarity with Lisa Diaz’s call. On Wednesday, WSWs published an article with statements of solidarity from Germany. Since then, more statements have reached us.

**Marie-Luise**, a mother from Brandenburg, writes: “I support the school strike on October 1 because the protection of our health is non-negotiable. Schools were, are and will remain places of infection. Nobody can tell me what consequences a SARS-CoV-2 infection, even a mild one, will have for my children. That’s why my unvaccinated children will not visit any place where masks are not worn nor where parents don’t reliably test at home.”

**Heidi**, a mother of two children (3 and 14) from Berlin, writes: “I support the strike because children have a right to their physical integrity. COVID carries the risk of late effects, which to date no one can seriously rule out. Infection is not an option. There are insufficient air filters, mandatory masks are being removed for 1st-6th graders. And all this, although it is not long until the vaccination of 6-years-olds and above. That is unethical, lacks solidarity and is an indictment of Germany.”

Another mother from North Rhine-Westphalia sent this message: “I am also unfortunately one of the parents who have a chronically ill child. We have a medical certificate and yet the school refuses to give us [educational] material. I am looking for help myself. But I really hope that the teachers will finally stand up and fight for their own protection and that of the children. Many parents are already fighting. So far, no

one was interested, I guess when teachers take a stand it’s something else, the system relies on their labour. I really hope something will change then! If you can’t even protect your chronically ill children, that’s really bad!”

**Thilo Schmidt**, a father and technical support worker from Baden-Württemberg is also calling for people to support the action on October 1. “I support the strike because it is important to protect the health of children by all available means. Infections are proven to take place at school, and it has long been disproven that school is a safe haven. School closures have proven to be one of the most effective means. However, to make them less frequent, one should use air filters, AHA+L. One should also suspend compulsory attendance so that people can protect themselves as they see fit. Ultimately, parents, not any authorities, bear responsibility for their children and all the resulting consequences.”

**Philipp**, a quality control engineer from the Lake Constance district, and father of two, explained that he was “pissed off at this crisis management... I support this [the school strike on October 1] because I think it is disgusting that just because children and young people are not considered part of the labour force and big business has no problem with it, they are being burned up and deaths, serious illness and long-term damage are being accepted.

“Over the last 1.5 years, there’s been time to establish digital infrastructure, hygiene concepts and install air filters. Instead, the rules and hurdles necessary for this are made so complex and difficult that hardly any of these necessary changes have been implemented so far. I even believe that those

responsible for this misery should be held accountable in court. For me, this is at least intentional bodily harm.”

**Brigitte** from Hesse, a lawyer and single mother of two elementary school children, says: “Currently, I have the great fortune to have both children exempted from compulsory attendance. However, it is impossible to say how long the attendance requirement will remain lifted. Therefore, I support other children and families who, during a pandemic (with a disease that damages the brain and blood vessels), are forced, under threat of sanctions up to and including having custody revoked, to take an unnecessary and, unlike the rest of the population, greatly increased risk of infection in unsafe schools.

“Everyone should be allowed to decide for themselves the risk they are willing to take in a pandemic. Vaccine refusniks are given the right to individual self-determination at the expense of the community. Children, on the other hand, are not given the same rights and are virtually forced into the path of infection. This is unethical and morally incomprehensible. Especially not before everyone (and that includes children) can even be offered vaccination.”

**Flodine**, a business graduate and mother of a nursery-age child from Brandenburg, also welcomes the strike call. She sent us the following statement: “I have been waiting for a strike by parents since summer 2020. It can’t be that our children are kept back since the beginning of the pandemic and show solidarity to protect their elders and adults, but conversely children and young people receive no protection from society, educational institutions and the state.

“COVID-19 is equally serious among children and adolescents. The virus has not yet been researched enough, and as long as the dangers for children and young people cannot be ruled out, preventive action must be taken. It is already known what direct consequences or long-term damage can occur in children.

“I will not allow my child to be infected. I call on politicians and society to finally fulfil their obligations and protect our children. This can be done by multiple means such as air filters and mandatory mask-wearing in educational institutions, suspending mandatory attendance, by mandatory regular PCR tests of teachers

and educators—whether vaccinated or not—as well as by mandatory regular PCR lollipop tests of children—whether by collectively or individually—and by implementing the possibility of online schooling, distance learning and other alternatives.

“It is necessary to use several possibilities at the same time to protect our children. Serious science should finally be listened to, and the results of various studies should be heeded. I am not willing to sacrifice my child’s health for the power, interests and denial of science of politicians as well as for the greed and profits of big business. The constitution and the protection of life and health are equally valid for children and adolescents. Until children are fully vaccinated, all measures to protect our children remain highly important and must be implemented.”



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