

Senedd Cymru  
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Ymchwiliad i effaith argyfwng Covid-19 ar blant  
a phobl ifanc yng Nghymru

COV 138  
Ymateb gan: Unigolyn

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Welsh Parliament  
Children, Young People and Education Committee

Inquiry into the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on  
children and young people in Wales

COV 138  
Response from: Individual

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Here is my feedback as a parent of a six-year old in Welsh medium education in Cardiff:

It is vital that children return to full time education in September.

So called “blended learning” has consisted in practice of roughly 1 hour of exercises per day which require significant parental involvement and go unmarked. My child has had no live lessons and no teacher feedback for nearly half the school year.

This is in-line with union advice but obviously detrimental to learning and is failing our children. It is particularly problematic for Welsh language schools where many parents don't speak the language and so struggle to interpret the work set, let alone review children's answers.

Fully 1/4 of my child's class had not even downloaded the platform to receive school work.

My child's school seems typical for Wales but in England schools seem to typically provide support, zoom lessons and so on.

As more and more parents return to work, supporting online learning will become impossible for more and more families. Even ignoring the importance of our children's education, School's role as childcare is vital to Wales's economy restarting.

Children are also missing out on vital socialisation with peers.

For children in Wales not to fall further behind, classes must return to normal in September (as has already been promised for children in England).

Evidence suggests that schools contribute little to spreading the virus but there is clear evidence of harm to vulnerable children (and in fact all children other than those where parents are able to craft their own home-schooling curriculum) from the decision not to reinstate full time schooling.

I strongly advocate that we restore 100% full time schooling as the central plan for September.

If a second wave requires lockdown (localised or otherwise), a temporary return to so called “blended learning” could be considered - although I would advocate closing everything else before closing schools again as in practice this amounts to children learning next to nothing. It cannot be anything other than an unwanted worst case scenario contingency plan.