

Senedd Cymru  
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Welsh Parliament  
Children, Young People and Education Committee

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

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

COV 145  
Ymateb gan: Unigolyn

COV 145  
Response from: Individual

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My daughter is in year 9 and is an only child. Her friends and social interactions are crucial to her ability to thrive. School provides the biggest opportunity for this to happen. Prior to the closure of schools, she was a typical happy teenager. She enjoyed seeing her friends in school, she was working hard and doing really well academically. Out of school she was busy with her passion for dance (XXX XXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXX XXXX XXXX XX XXX XXXXX XXXXX XXX) which again provided great opportunities for social interactions and shared experiences. At home she was often in her room but not unsociable and not often moody. Never solitary.

Since schools closed [on the 20th March](#), her life has effectively shut down. Schools closed so dance closed too. Overnight she lost access to all the crucial social connections that make her who she is. She was facing weeks and months stuck with 2 adults for company. Much as we love her and she us, we do not think on her wavelength and she needs the company of those who do.

School work became 2 to 3 hours a day on the laptop each morning. I have not seen her have ANY live online lessons. She has kept up as best she can but has not pushed herself as she would in school. I worry that she will have missed 65 school days out of a possible 67 school days by the end of this term, and right at the end of key stage 3. That's a mountain to climb in terms of catching up.

She has become a moody and solitary teenager who barely has the inclination for a conversation with me some days. She has lost her motivation for dance too. She does some things but not much. Food has been a battle because whilst she is slim, she eats when she is bored. It's a struggle fighting with her over things like food because my heart bleeds for her and those like her, but I can't allow a physical consequence of lockdown as well as the mental and social ones she is already facing. She goes out for walks alone with our dog and then I fear for her safety when she walks 3 miles plus because she wants to get out of the house. Then ensues another battle over her safety.

She is surviving not thriving and the continuation of social distancing in schools is catastrophic to her wellbeing as well as her education. Part time schooling with online learning is damaging her life chances irreparably, especially as Welsh schools already lag behind the English schools in terms of achievement. The long term effects on her mental and social health are an enormous worry. I want my happy daughter back.