

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 167
Ymateb gan: Unigolyn

COV 167
Response from: Individual

I am a Senior Physiotherapist working in A&E in the University Hospital of Wales.

I would like to express my objections to the plan of "blended learning", which is part time schooling for my children's education from September.

I was highly supportive of the initial lockdown resulting in the schools closing in reaction to a pandemic that we had no understanding about. We are now however nearly 4 months down the line, where we are in a position to balance a small risk versus the future education and wellbeing of a whole generation of Welsh children.

There is very well presented evidence that demonstrates that the risk for children contracting COVID and becoming seriously unwell is very small (please refer to article: Ludvigsson, JF Systematic review COVID-19 in children shows milder cases and better prognosis than adults, *Acta paediatrica*. 2020;109:1088-1095).

Initially for my children who are both 8 and 5 years of age, the novelty of not having to go to school was very enjoyable. However, 4 months down the line the lack of interaction with their friends physically and emotionally is taking its toll, and this is demonstrated in their behaviour. They are more emotional and extremely frustrated, which affects concentration. Home schooling while parents are trying to work and stressed, does not create a healthy environment for learning.

I am of course a key worker in health, but my husband is an economic key worker. My hours were condensed to work 33 hours within 3 days to allow

my husband to have some ability to work while at home. The nature of his role is commercial banking and once the lockdown occurred he was receiving endless abusive phone calls from business owners who were anxious about their businesses collapsing. He was trying to manage this while the children were in the house.....there was zero ability for him to home school the children whilst dealing with an economic disaster. He then contracted viral pneumonia (clinically Covid) and septicaemia and spent 5 days in the university hospital of Wales. He has no underlying health problems. He is now 3 months since this but is still struggling with post viral fatigue.

I am sure there will be many people with their own stories, but the reality is we are setting our children up to be disadvantaged to those in other countries if we don't act now and give them a normal education full time in school. Has anybody even asked the parents, the teachers or the children what they feel and think?

I plead with you to not deprive our children of their education and normal socialisation.