

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

5 November 2020

Report by Youth Cabinet

The Impact of Covid-19 on Educational Outcomes for Children and Young People

Young people were asked for their thoughts on the closure of schools due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent return to schools. Their responses are represented below:

What worked well/didn't work so well during lockdown?

- Some things that have worked well during lockdown have been the fact that we can video call to have meetings because I don't have to travel to have meetings;
- Some bad things about lockdown is that we weren't able to see another in person and sometimes the WiFi on the meetings didn't work so it took up time in the meetings.
- I think that, from a youth voice perspective, we were able to adapt and develop our campaigns smoothly during lockdown. From a personal perspective, the clear understanding of basic rules and regulations, shared by WSCC made it more understandable than, potentially, the Government direct guidelines.

Did students have sufficient access to home learning?

- I think that I had pretty good access to school work but I didn't know about my Google Classroom account until about 2 months into lockdown other than that it was OK.
- I think most students at my school had access to home learning, everyone I have spoken to did.
- I found YouTube videos of teachers going through lessons more helpfully than Powerpoints, because having the answers properly explained helped my confidence in understanding the lessons.
- The home learning worked well during lockdown because it was interesting and the work was varied. The only problem was that at the start there was lots of it and it was hard to do it all.
- I did because we have a computer but if students did not have access to the internet, they would not have been able to do it.
- Personally, due to being the GCSE year affected, I feel unable to answer this question.

How has the return to school been – how have students felt/how have they been supported?

- I think my schools have been pretty good in going back and we've kept everything clean and the years separate in bubbles.
- Students have been supported going back to school, teachers at my school have been very helpful on the most part, and I have felt safe at school.
- Teachers being more mindful of how long work can take without support in the classroom, and reassuring students it is OK if you don't understand everything if you are trying.
- The return to school has been good and I have felt supported as the rules were made clear and safety measures put in place.
- The return to school for many has been mixed, due to different schools taking different approaches – for example, at my school, the return feels like normal, with certain contingencies, like wiping down where you have been.

What are students' main concerns/worries moving forward?

- I'm a little worried about there being another lockdown as the cases and deaths are going up.
- The work becoming too overwhelming and too much to catch up on.
- When will things be able to get back to normal? Will the schools have to shut again?
- Moving forward, I worry that social anxiety will rise in people, young people especially, in an age where many prefer to text rather than talk, which could cultivate a generation of nervous people, meaning that communication won't ever be restored to what it once was.

Any suggestions for things that could be done differently to help support students in any future lockdown?

- I think they could handle the way the work is shown online and I wish my school held more online schools lessons.
- Online presentations and practicals demonstrated so we could do them at home.
- I wouldn't know what to improve, as I did not experience the 'student' experience of lockdown, due to waiting for results rather than learning.

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Youth Cabinet

Background Papers – none