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Governors
for Schools
Conference
2021.

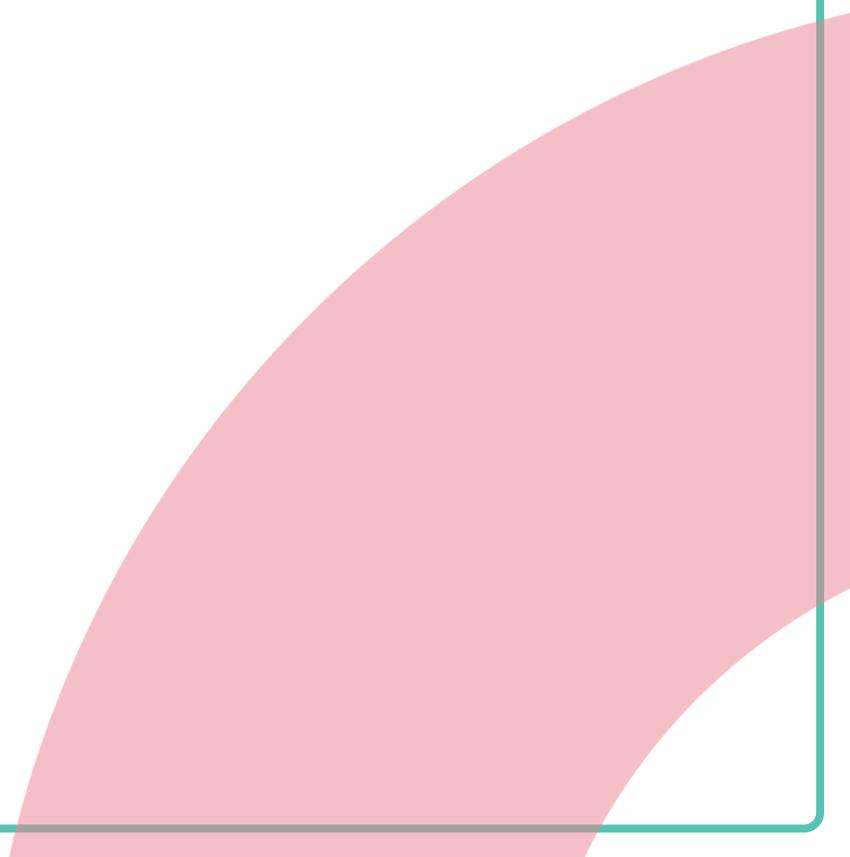
ImpactEd

Lockdown lessons: pupil learning and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic

Governors for Schools: 24th September 2021



Background and context



The study

Key concerns:

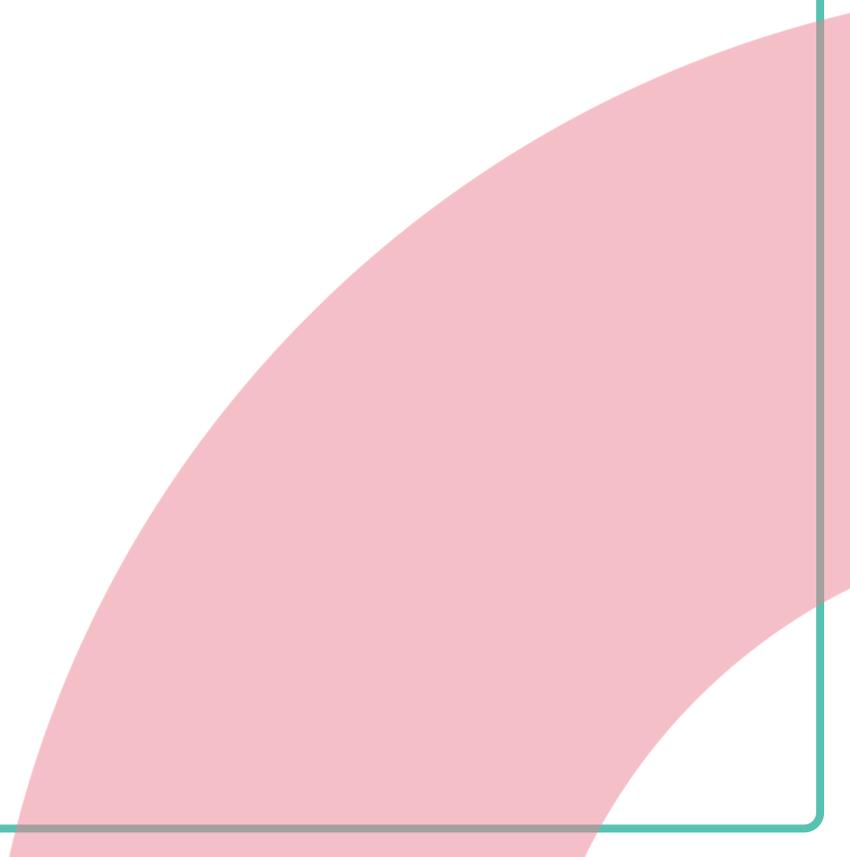
- ▶ Impact on learning and wellbeing overall
- ▶ Impact on exacerbating existing gaps
- ▶ National trends, as well as *individual school findings*



Some unique factors:

- ▶ Pupil-level data: not teachers or families
- ▶ Longitudinal: can track impact over time
- ▶ Rich data: ImpactEd platform links survey data, assessment and demographics
- ▶ Schools were able to view results on a school and individual level

Methodology



A few pointers

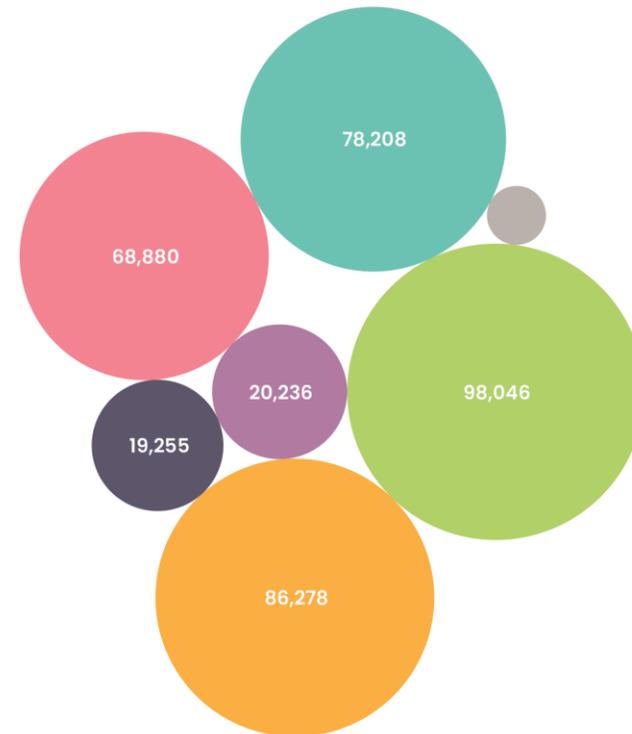
- ▶ This is the largest study of its kind in the United Kingdom (as far as we know), reaching over 60,000 pupils. That doesn't mean it is without limitations!
- ▶ The focus is on some of the key skills that have been particularly important during lockdown:
 - ▶ Wellbeing
 - ▶ Anxiety
 - ▶ Grit
 - ▶ Metacognition
 - ▶ ImpactEd's Covid-learning index (learning habits and learning resilience)

The study

62, 254 pupils responding as follows:

Scale of the data

-  **98,046** wellbeing assessments
-  **86,278** metacognition assessments
-  **78,208** learning during Covid-19 assessments
-  **68,880** anxiety assessments
-  **20,236** grit assessments
-  **19,225** home learning assessments



Some key
findings

Executive summary

1

Overall, pupil wellbeing remained stable during the last lockdown

- ▶ Pupil wellbeing has been relatively stable on average, with small declines observed post-summer
- ▶ Returning to school has not significantly increased wellbeing
- ▶ The 'average' data conceals large differences – particularly for girls

2

During 2020, challenges with remote learning were felt much more strongly by pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

- ▶ Disadvantaged pupils tended to start at a lower level and have dropped further over time too
- ▶ This is true for both learning and wellbeing indicators
- ▶ Device access appears to be not as big a driver as device availability and a suitable learning environment

3

Schools identified a real risk of 'lost' children: those pupils who had struggled the most during lockdown were not always those previously identified as vulnerable

- ▶ Schools were often surprised by who struggled most
- ▶ This has reiterated their need for high-quality diagnostic assessment of pupil's needs to identify those who require support

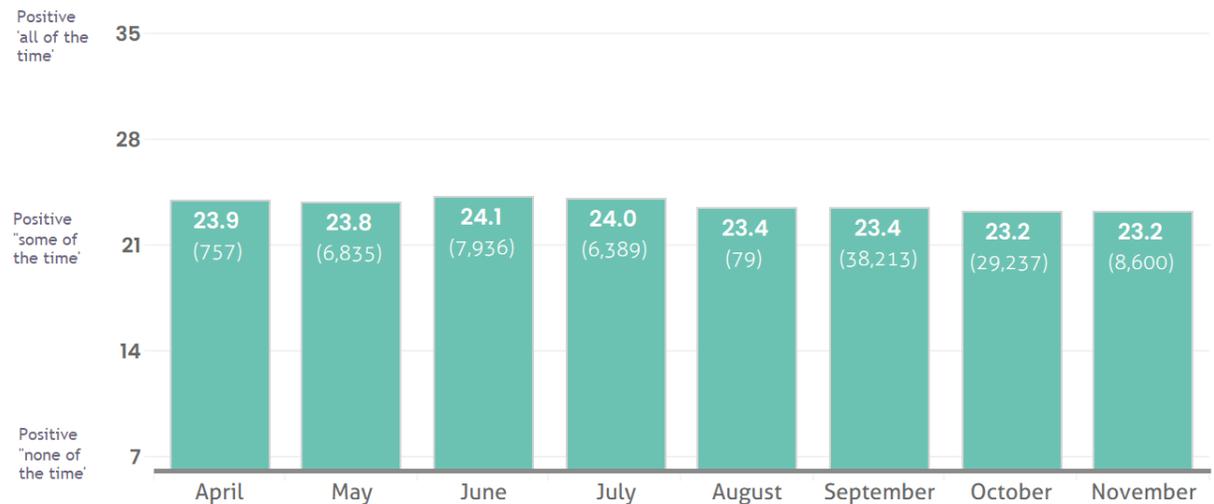
Key findings

1.1) Overall, pupil wellbeing remained stable during the last lockdown

- ▶ The pupil wellbeing score in May was 23.8, June was 24.1 and July was 24. This compares to a pre-lockdown score of 23.6.
- ▶ A drop over the summer period not made up as pupils returned to school

1.1 Total well-being score throughout 2020 (out of 35)

SWEMWEBS. 7-point scale. 35 = Positive 'all of the time' across all seven areas. 7 = Positive 'none of the time'.

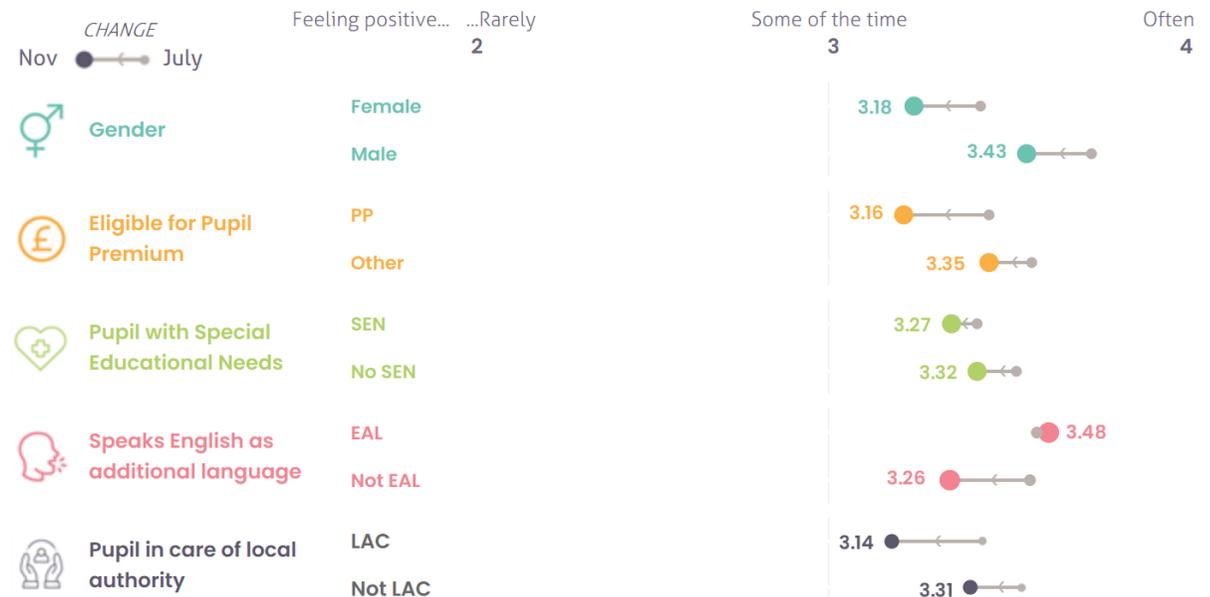


Key findings

2.1) Disadvantaged pupils were more negatively affected

- ▶ Disadvantaged pupils tended to start at a lower level and have dropped further over time too
- ▶ Smaller levels of variation over time for SEN and EAL
- ▶ A pronounced gender gap

// WELLBEING //



Key findings

2.2) The disadvantage gap is reflected across all measures used

► Notable predictors: Pupils who exercised regularly more likely to say they established an effective learning routine (58.3%) compared to those who did not (32.8%). 32% of PP pupils did not exercise regularly during the last lockdown (v. 24%).

// PUPIL PREMIUM GAP //

-  Covid Learning Index
-  Metacognition
-  Wellbeing
-  Anxiety
-  Home Environment
-  Grit

Worse'
2

'Neutral'
3

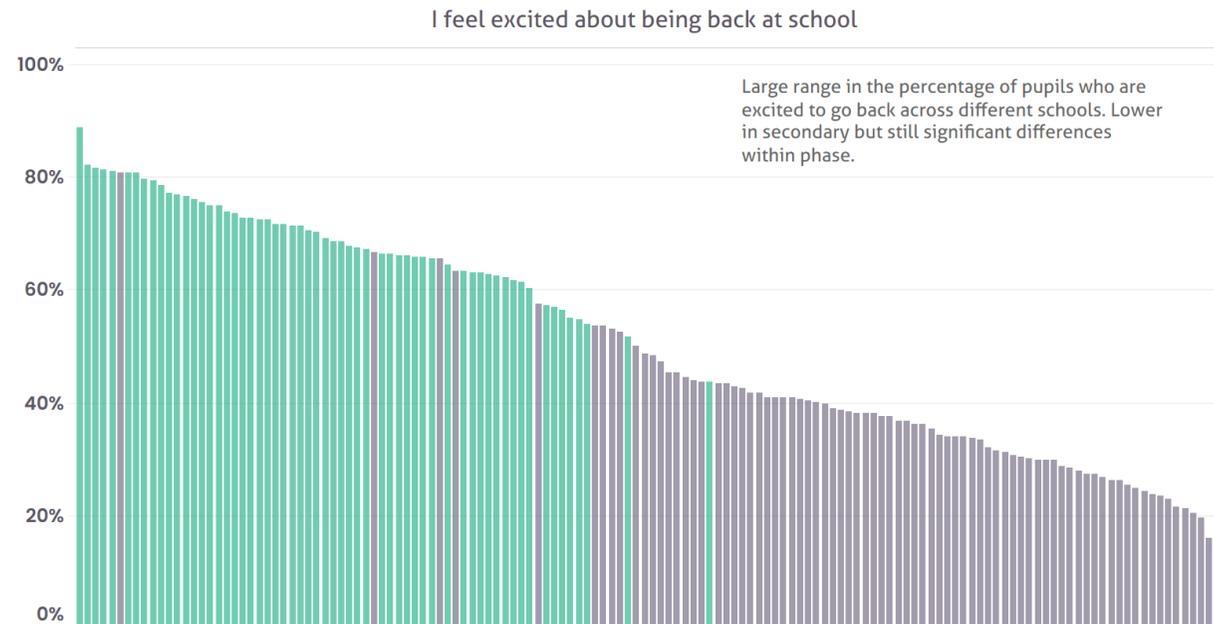
'Better'
4



Key findings

3.1) A need for high quality diagnostic assessment and evaluation

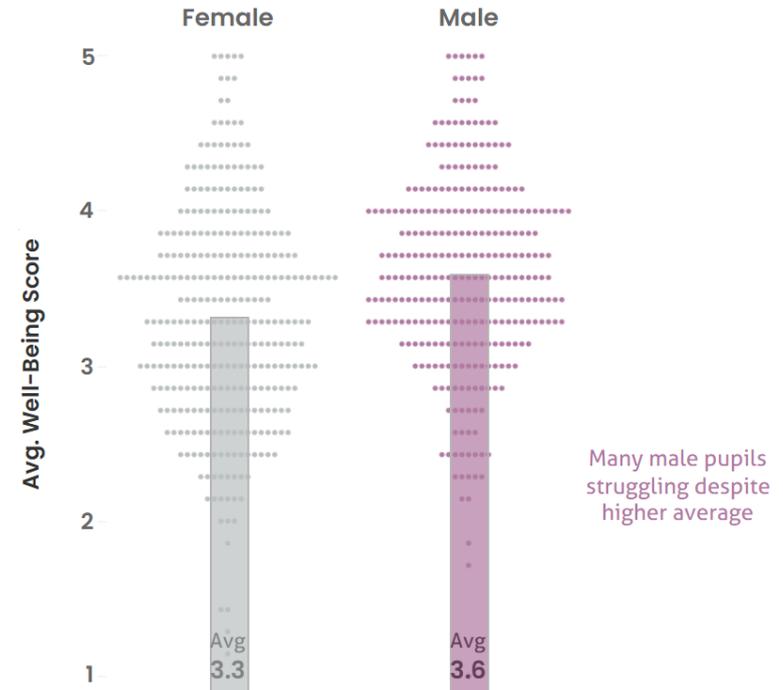
- ▶ Although macro trends are clear (e.g. difference in responses by primary / secondary) there is still significant overlap in data
- ▶ A need for focused and targeted intervention emerged from qualitative data



Preview of findings

3.2) A need for high quality diagnostic assessment and evaluation

- ▶ Teachers who had access to individual wellbeing and learning data on their pupils found it identified children who they may not have immediately thought of as vulnerable: some pupils can easily “slip through the net”
- ▶ Trend data shouldn’t mislead schools – there is significant variation by individual and they should be thinking about how to address this



Recommendations for schools

1

During the first period of remote teaching, pupil wellbeing was stable

Wellbeing strategies should focus on the positives of individual experiences as well as the challenges. Where support is needed, pupils may benefit more from a **targeted approach to wellbeing** rather than universal interventions

2

During 2020, challenges with remote learning were felt much more strongly by pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

Post-lockdown **support should be carefully evaluated** to ensure that pupils who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are benefiting. If interventions are not having the desired effect, they should be stopped

3

Schools identified a real risk of 'lost' children: those pupils who had struggled the most during lockdown were not always those previously identified as vulnerable

Schools aiming to understand pupil learning and wellbeing needs should look for manageable ways **to gather data from pupils themselves as well as from teacher observation**. Where possible, they should use validated measures to reliably identify pupils who struggled during lockdown and to assess the impact of support

Where to next?

Access the findings and further support by visiting impacted.org.uk/contact and completing the short form

Use that link to sign up to receive info on our next piece of national research, our **Impact in Practice** series.

Contact me directly to find out more on joe.mcgin@impacted.org.uk

ImpactEd

Any questions?



Recalibrating Assessment Post Covid-19

Dr Chris Wood

Head of Research, Publications and Enrichment - Regent College London

Presentation to the Governors for Schools (GfS) Conference

24 September 2021

Introduction:

- Head of Research, Publications and Enrichment
- Regent College London – Private HE Provider
- chris.wood@rcl.ac.uk
- Formerly:
 - Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI)
 - Local Authority School Improvement Adviser
 - Secondary School Senior Leader
 - English Teacher
 - Basic Skills Assessor
 - Exam marker

In December 2020 we published a report:

- The **impact** of Covid-19 on exams in the UK and globally
- The **lessons learnt** for future reforms to assessment
- **Implications** in the UK for higher education admissions practices
- [Report](#)

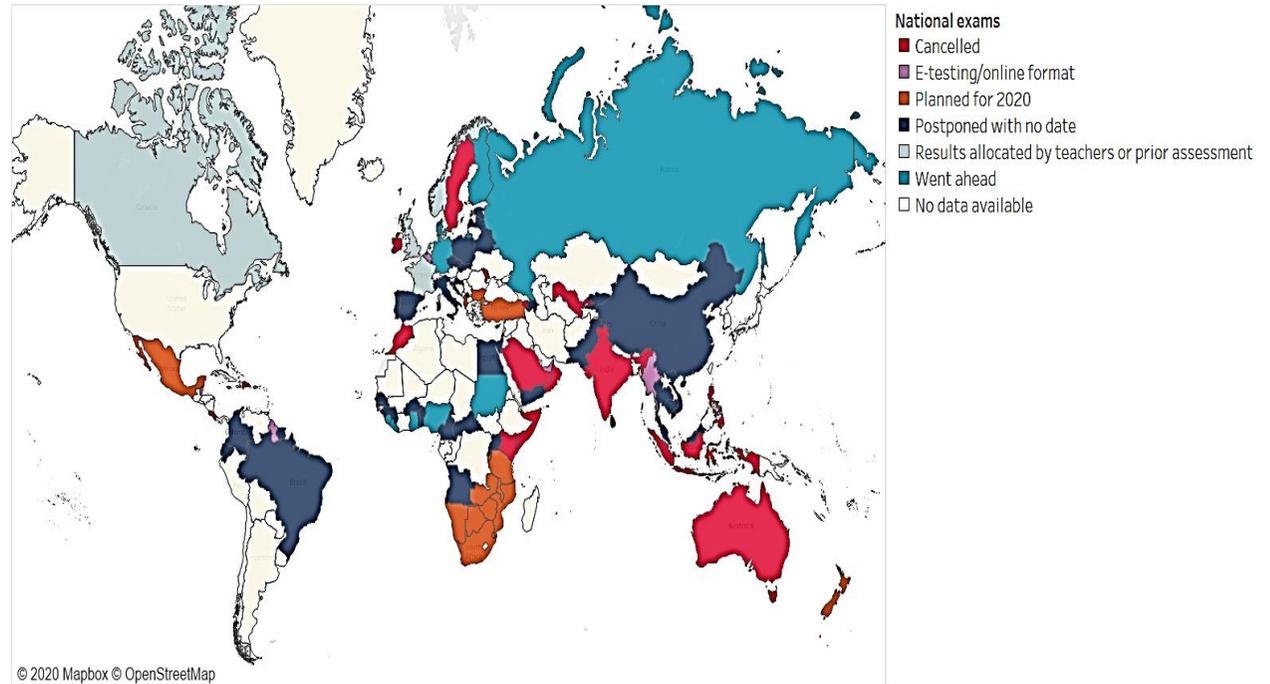


We recommended that key decision-makers:

1. Reintroduce **modular examinations** or **externally moderated teacher assessment** to safeguard GCSEs and A-Levels for 2021 and beyond.
2. Consult on the longer-term future of GCSEs and A-Levels to ensure that **assessment systems** in England **better meet the needs of students, universities and employers in a digital age.**
3. Commission an international review of **alternative and technology-enabled assessment systems** to ensure educational reforms are informed by global best practices.
4. Pilot (and implement) secure and reliable **digital alternatives to 'pen and paper' testing and marking.**

The impact of Covid on exams was global...

- Governments were forced to **rapidly adapt assessment and examination systems...**
- **...most urgently for students preparing for end of phase examinations** (especially those linked to HE entry).



[Source: Centre for Economic Development](#)

Solutions included school-based tests, homework and teacher assessment...

- In **France**, the Baccalauréat was cancelled for the only time since its introduction in 1808, with results based on average in-year tests and homework marks.
- In **Italy**, written exams were cancelled with teacher assessment accounting for 60% of the final marks rather than the usual 40% (oral exams continued).

- In the **Netherlands**, results were based on in-school exams (usually accounting for 50%).
- Whilst exams were cancelled in **Norway** teacher assessment only counts for 80% of final marks so the impact was much more limited.

[Source: Ofqual](#)

...or exams were delayed, adapted or re-written

- In **Spain**, university entry exams were delayed and adapted to reflect the loss in learning.
 - In the **Caribbean**, exams were postponed with final results based on newly designed multiple choice papers and teacher assessment.
 - In **China**, the Gaokao university entry exam was put back by one month to July
- In **Germany**, all 16 federal states agreed that exams would go ahead with social distancing.
 - Similar arrangements were put in place in **Hong Kong**.
 - In the **USA**, the College Board rewrote new exams for all subjects which could be taken across a range of digital devices.

Covid exposed weaknesses in terminal exams...

- **A-Levels** are one of the world's longest surviving school examinations.
- Considered by many as the '**Golden Standard**', the A-Level system has also been criticised as '**too narrow**'.
- A **modular approach** to A-Levels was introduced in 2000.
- Concerns have persisted **over grade inflation**.
- Reforms in 2015-17 saw a return to a 'traditional' linear, two-year format with exams at the end of Y13.

- But the pandemic highlighted the **weaknesses of terminal exams**, and
- Strengthened the case for modular assessment and qualifications that incorporate both coursework and summative testing
- Surely, the problems in 2020 wouldn't be repeated in 2021?
- Surely, there was time to put in place new assessment systems that would better meet everyone's needs?

The current system has high profile critics...

‘The acquisition of core knowledge is important. But dry rote learning for exams is not the way forward and **GCSEs have had their day**. Young people need the opportunity to develop that knowledge and the skills that they need for future employment through a broad and relevant curriculum that links explicitly to the real world and is **assessed holistically**’...

‘what we need is a true baccalaureate at 18. Just as the International Baccalaureate does in more than 149 countries, this should recognise **academic** and **technical** skills together with the young person’s **personal** development.’

Education Select Committee Chair, Rob Halfon, 2019

...arguing it is not fit for purpose

- **Lord Baker** has argued that the curriculum does not correspond to the needs of either students or employers in the digital age.
- **PISA** notes that tests at the age of 16 in 8 academic subjects are rare.
- Most tests at 15-16 years incorporate coursework, teacher assessments and some assessment of vocational study.

- An alternative to A-Levels has been introduced but is in its early days.
- Launched in Sep 2020, **T Levels** are 2-year courses which follow GCSEs and are equivalent to 3 A-Levels...
- ...developed in collaboration with employers and offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during a substantial industry placement.
- **But will these go the way of other 'vocational' initiatives?**

Coursework and tech are not a panacea, BUT...

- ...during the pandemic externally moderated assessments could have provided a more reliable view of achievement...
- ...ongoing assignments including research, data collection, wider reading and presentations would align better with requirements of for university and employment.
- However, the need for teacher assessed grades often increased workload and pressure...and led to accusations of grade inflation

- Education has been slow to take up technology-enabled assessment solutions, and...
- There are concerns over security and 'cheating', **BUT**...
- Covid has highlighted its potentially transformational role enabling remote assessment and rapid, reliable external marking and moderation of coursework.
- The technology exists and is improving quickly...but will we utilise it?

Do examinations examine the right things?

- The **Rethinking Assessment Group** argue that public examinations fail to examine the right things...
- ...**wider capabilities** and **dispositions** such as creativity and collaborative problem solving...
- ...key aspects of the development of **character, resilience** and **social and emotional learning**...
- ... **practical** and **applied learning**.

[RAG Blogs](#)



Globally, assessment is changing direction...

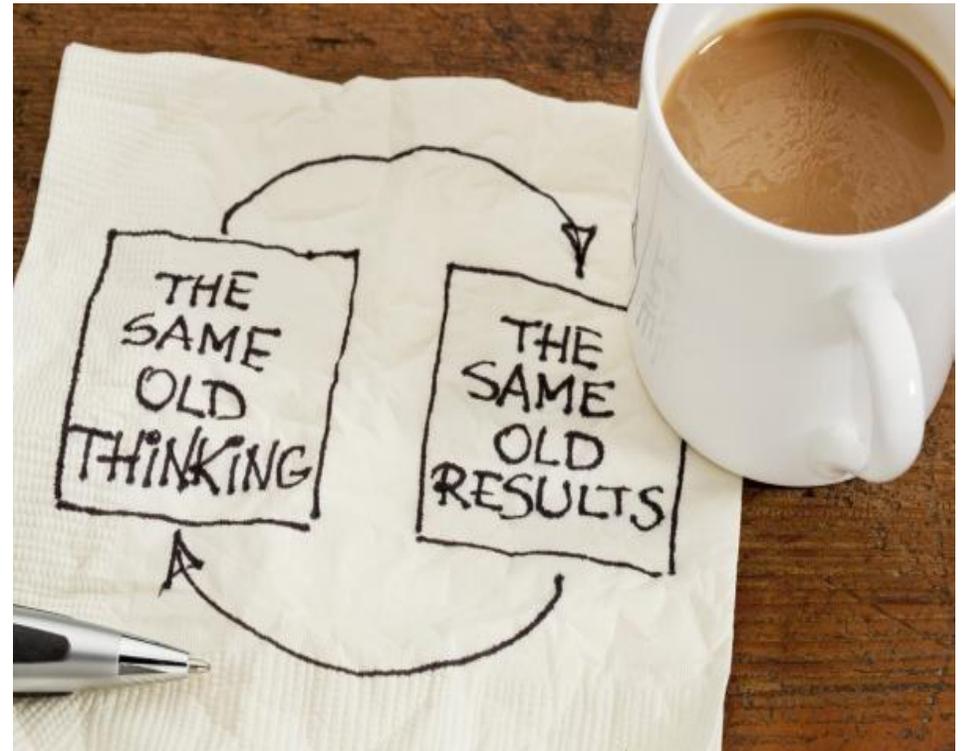


Shallow, narrow, solo	Nature of learning	Deep, wide collaborative
Dominated by head-work	Range of strengths	Head, heart and hand
Number of grade	Style of credential	Evidenced narrative
Single body	Source of credential	Broad consortium
Predominantly summative	Focus of assessment	Predominantly formative
High-stakes, standardised	Integration	Ongoing, authentic
National, state norms	Personalisation	Individual progression
Employers, HE, FE	Ownership	For learners and others
Largely for accountability	Strategic intent	Mainly for improvement
Formulaic, mechanistic	Approach	Carefully evidencing capability

[It's time to rethink assessment - Bill Lucas \(adapted\)](#)

...so what might the future hold...

- **Digital badges** - micro-credentialing
- **Digital portfolios** - web pages curate wide-ranging student achievements
- **Character scorecards**
- Online validated **critical and creative thinking tests**
- **Extended project** qualifications
- PISA is moving away from just assessing perform in single subjects to assessing a variety of **learning skills and dispositions**.
- Or...



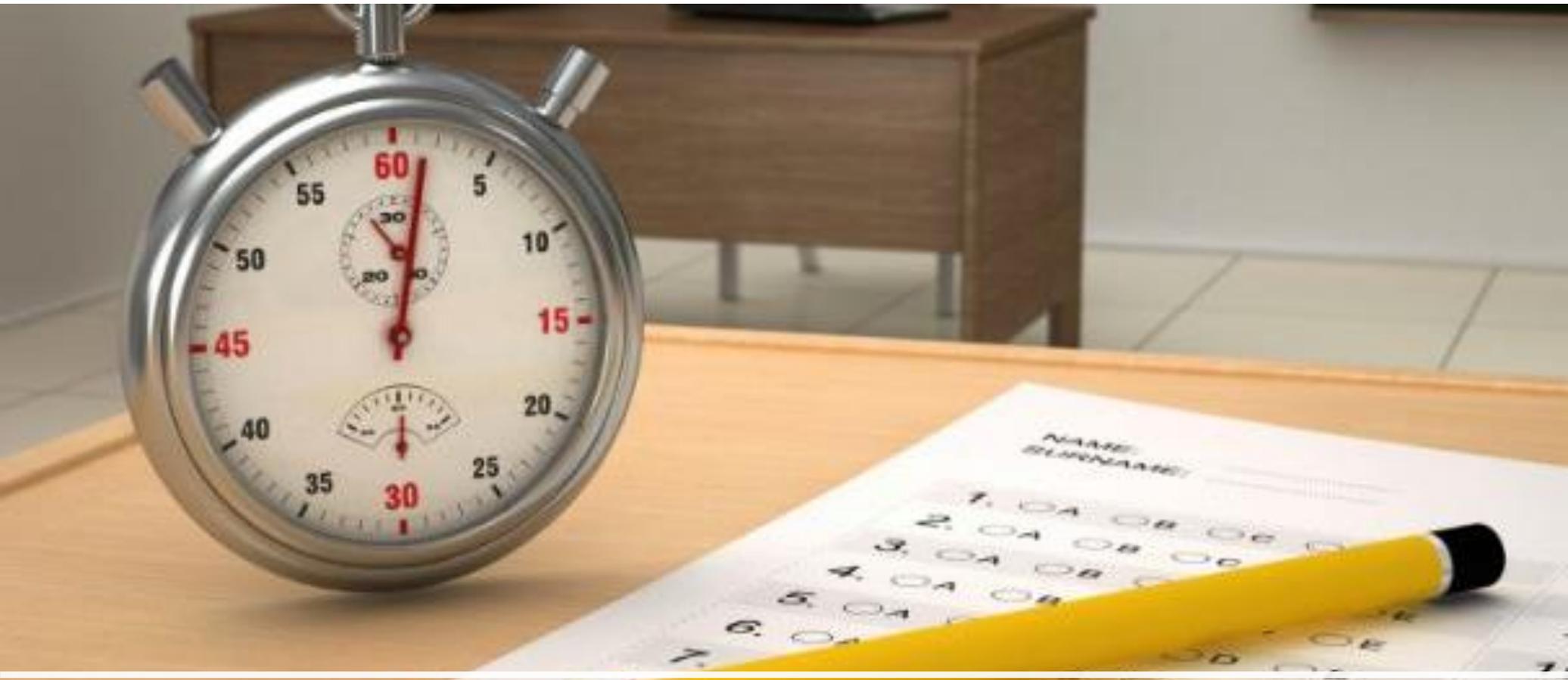
... and where will assessment go from here?

The assessment conversation has moved on three years in the space of one year because the situation has **forced people to reconsider exams...** people have **realised that they can actually do without them.**

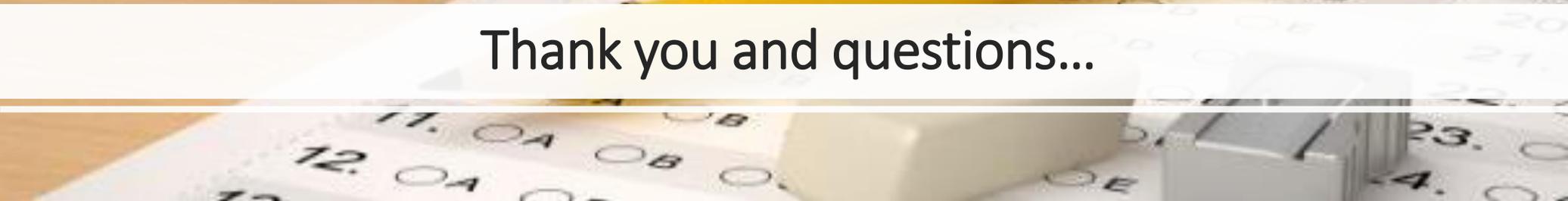
While I think **exams will come roaring back with a vengeance**, because they are an expected part of education, I also think a lot of people will conclude, actually **we can do better, we can take different approaches and they can benefit everyone.**

Andy McGregor – Director of EdTech at JISC

[Source: Rethinking Assessment May 2021](#)



Thank you and questions...



Recalibrating the classroom

Striving for “Better Than Normal”

Dr Tony Breslin FRSA

Director, Breslin Public Policy Limited

Chair, Bushey Primary Education Federation

Co-founder, Transform Governance

Author

Lessons From Lockdown: the educational legacy of COVID-19 (Routledge, 2021, available now)

Bubble Schools: the long road from lockdown (Routledge, 2022, forthcoming)

Governors for Schools Conference 2021

4.00pm – 5. 00pm

Friday 24th September 2021



@UKpolicywatch #LessonsFromLockdown #BubbleSchools

transform **education**

transform **governance**

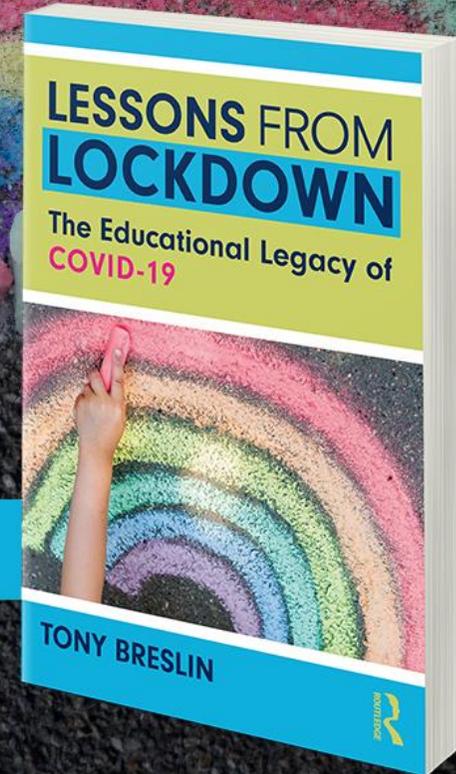
TONY BRESLIN

LESSONS FROM LOCKDOWN

The Educational Legacy of COVID-19

Save 20% Use code: BSM20

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group




**GOVERNORS
FOR SCHOOLS**

Breslin 

Intention: *Lessons From Lockdown and Bubble Schools*

- ✓ To capture the experience of lockdown “in the moment”
- ✓ To give voice to pupils, parents and education professionals, and to governors and trustees
- ✓ To assess the implications for how we have organised schooling in the past and how we might do so in the future: better than normal?
- ✓ To make a series of recommendations
- ✓ To stimulate debate and action



Headlines (1)

- Schools have multiple functions: educational (of course) but also socio-economic and as agents of socialisation, as community hubs and as providers of respite from full-time parenting
- For the most part, COVID has not caused the gaps in attainment, the poverty, and the differential experiences that it has exposed
- Every child, every family, every school and every year group has had a different lockdown
- Across the past year most children, parents and teachers there had periods as “Lockdown *Strugglers*”, “Lockdown *Survivors*” and “Lockdown *Thrivers*”



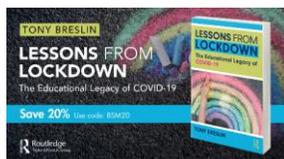
Headlines (2)

- The challenge now facing schools is about much more than *just* curriculum catch-up
- Relationships with those families previously labelled “hard to reach” have typically strengthened during the pandemic, but some previously ‘compliant’ students may pose schools new challenges on their return
- Many approaches and technologies that were novel during the first lockdown have become embedded during subsequent firebreaks and lockdowns, and are likely to remain in a post-COVID world
- Levels of creativity and innovation, system-wide, have been startling and offer the opportunity for a wider system re-set



Recommendations: school and college focused

- Concentrate on diagnosis and *social*, rather than just *curricular*, recovery
- Place SEND strategies at the heart of teaching and learning
- Capture the positives of the lockdown experience, especially the independent learning skills that many children have developed, the new relationships between families and schools, and the new levels of digital literacy across the profession
- Identify the specifics of the lockdown experience in any particular setting
- Do not take the re-integration of pupils into school life as unproblematic
- Use the experience of lockdown to re-set education and schooling objectives: *what matters now (Sept 2021) may not be what mattered then (March 2020)*



Recommendations: national

- Rebalance the attainment-inclusion nexus, system-wide
- Re-commission an agency specifically focused on curriculum and qualifications development
- Launch a major multi-method, longitudinal research exercise to capture the enduring impacts of lockdown on children, families and teachers
- Explore, in particular, the nature of assessment, curriculum and inspection, post-pandemic
- Develop mechanisms for supporting high levels of home learning, blended learning and learning off-site
- Boost provision for adult and community learning to support an expected increase in demand



Questions (1)

- Post lockdown, as a school governor or trustee, take yourself back to March 2020 and ask yourself “What can’t I wait to get back to, and what can’t I wait to leave behind?”
- How should governors and trustees respond to the ‘new visibilities’ revealed by COVID?
- What practices, as a governor or trustee developed during lockdown, are you intent on retaining, post pandemic?
- How, as a member of a governing or trustee board, will you capture the multiple, varied and nuanced experiences of lockdown in your school, academy or trust?



Questions (2)

- Post pandemic, those of us involved in school governance might want to borrow a question from the latest Ofsted inspection framework: what's it like to be a child (or a member of staff, or a school or college leader) in the setting(s) where we are based?
- What kind of provision will we need to offer the children and young people in our schools and colleges so that they are well prepared for an, as yet, unseen world?
- What role might those of us in school governance play in laying the foundations for meeting this challenge?



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Feedback

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www.breslinpublicpolicy.com

Ordering *Lessons From Lockdown*

www.routledge.com (discount code BSB20) and all usual outlets

Bubble Schools available Spring 2022



Breslin
Social
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#GfSConference21



Governors
for Schools
Conference
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Thank you for attending, we hope you enjoyed the session and the conference

Please complete the post-session survey and continue to follow the campaign, as well as share links to videos and resources