

Teaching in the time of COVID-19

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Overview

1. Partial closures and reopenings of schools
2. Professional life before vs since COVID-19
3. Implications

*Asbury, K. & Kim, L. E. *"Lazy, lazy teachers": Teachers' perceptions of how their profession is valued by society, policymakers, and the media during COVID-19.* <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/65k8g>

Kim, L. E., & Asbury, K. (2020) *The impact of COVID-19 on education: Research evidence from interviews with primary and secondary teachers in England.* CIE0365. London: TSO. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/9038/pdf/>

Kim, L. E. & Asbury, K. (2020) "Like a rug had been pulled from under you": The impact of COVID-19 on teachers in England during the first six weeks of the UK lockdown. *British Journal of Educational Psychology.* <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12381>

*Kim, L. E. Leary, R., & Asbury, K. *"We need clear directions, if we're going to move forward. It's as simple as that": Teachers' narratives during partial school reopenings in the COVID-19 pandemic.* <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/m8scj>

Partial closures and reopenings of schools

About

- Collaboration with [Dr Kathryn Asbury](#) (Department of Education, University of York)
- Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council Impact Acceleration Grant
- Study design:
 - Longitudinal (four time points) virtual interviews
 - Approx 45 minutes per interview, per time point
- Participants:
 - 24 mainstream state school teachers around England
 - Gender: Female (75%); Male (25%)
 - Age: $M=39.08$ ($SD=10.12$)
 - 11 primary and 13 secondary teachers
 - 9 Senior Leadership Team (e.g., executive headteacher, assistant headteacher) and 15 classroom teachers
 - Convenience sampling
- Measures:
 - Life stories (low point, high point, turning point)
 - Nature of work
 - Mental health and wellbeing



Timeline

20 March: Last day of school for most pupils

Time 1: 27 April - 1 May

1 June: Reception, Year 1s and Year 6s return to school

Time 2: 8-12, 18 June

15 June: Year 10s and Year 12s return to school

Time 3: 13-17 July

7 September: Schools open to all years for new academic year

Time 4: 2-6 Nov (TBC)

Themes

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Uncertainty	Uncertainty
Finding a way	Practical concerns
Worry for the vulnerable	Worry for pupils
Importance of relationships	Importance of relationships
Teacher identity	Teacher identity
Reflections	Reflections

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Theme 1: Uncertainty

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Uncertainty	Uncertainty

- **Initial shock**

“like a rug had been pulled from under you” (T1; Participant 19)

“I guess it felt a bit like, you know, you’re shown the diagram of how the parachute works and then you’re pushed out of the plane.” (T1; Participant 24)

- **Lack of clarity in government guidance**

“...we need clear directions if we’re going to move forward. It’s as simple as that.” (T2; Participant 23)

Theme 2: Navigation

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Finding a way	Practical concerns

- **Balancing teaching and homeschooling**

“we've got our own children at home, who, you know, you want to help, and they're getting all their work set for them. And, you know, obviously, the teacher in me is going "they need to do the work ..." and the Mum in me is going, "they're getting completely stressed out." We need to go for a walk and jump in puddles for a bit.” (T1; Participant 15)

- **Adapting to remote teaching**

“what we did to begin with isn't working, so we adapt and change, and I think that's a positive model moving [forward]” (T1; Participant 20).

- **Making schools COVID-19 secure**

“like doing a giant Sudoku going, yeah, we can't do that because that doesn't do that rule, and we can't do that... [with the] whole school it's even worse, because you've got isolated toilets and isolated handwashing facilities... in an 1899 building, it's just unworkable...” (T2; Participant 9)

Theme 3: Worry for pupils

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Worry for the vulnerable	Worry for pupils

- **Access to technology**

“if somebody in authority asked them the question, “do you have internet access?” they, of course, they would say yes. But in reality what they have is a phone, that's Mum's phone that she can get the internet on ... And Mum is terrified of wasting the data because she's got no money to buy some more.” (T1; Participant 4)

- **Home environment, widening gap**

“we went to a set of flats and I think there may be four or five siblings in a flat where we know there's only two bedrooms... So I had no idea this was what [they] go home to.” (T2; Participant 14).

“getting bigger and bigger and bigger, and it's of kids and families that recognise the value of education, and kids and families that don't.” (T2; Participant 21)

- **Effects on all pupils, learning loss**

“It was a book that she would have read really easily early on in the year, and she really struggled with it ... even those children that have home lives that you would assume to be better, they're falling behind. (T2; Participant 11)

Theme 4: Importance of relationships

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Importance of relationships	Importance of relationships



- **Connection with pupils**

“it just felt like I’d been ripped apart from my career almost because I couldn’t see the kids. I couldn’t say goodbye to them” (T1; Participant 16)

“staff and students invest in each other really” (T1; Participant 6)

- **Connection with colleagues**

“makes you feel a little bit more connected and gives you a bit more direction” (T2; Participant 22)

- **Connection with parents**

“I think it’s just making sure I know for myself I’ve done my best to communicate with parents.” (T1; Participant 12)



Theme 5: Teacher identity

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Teacher identity	Teacher identity

- **Routine, structure, planning**

“I think if you ask any teacher they like their routines and structures.” (T1; Participant 5)

- **Fairness**

“our school is ... it’s in the bottom 10% of all schools, you know, in terms of Progress 8 so I think students that would get a 9 in their exam ... I don’t think they will ...” (T1; Participant 18)

- **Caring for pupils**

“One little boy... after that first day he went home and told his mum it’s the best day he’d ever had in school. That’s a credit to the school, but that’s a credit to the teachers as well... you’re very proud of what you’ve put in place, but also very proud of the ethos and nature of the school.” (T2; Participant 1)

Theme 6: Reflection

Time 1 (April)	Time 2 (June)
Reflections	Reflections




- **Work–life balance**

“fear of of lockdown has meant that you stew over things a bit more” (T2; Participant 7)

- **Teaching practices**

“I think as teachers we're probably going to come out better because of it, because we're going to have a bit more of an understanding and different ways that we can support children.”
(T2; Participant 10)



Life before vs since COVID-19

About



- Collaboration with [ImpactEd](#)
- Study design: self-reported quantitative survey
- Participants:
 - 358 mainstream teachers from around England
 - Gender: Female (69%); Male (30.7%); Other (0.3%)
 - Age: $M=38.12$ ($SD=10.87$)
 - primary (3.6%), secondary (95.5%), primary & secondary (0.8%) teachers
 - Senior Leadership Team (e.g., headteacher, assistant headteacher; 32%), classroom teachers (57%), teaching assistants and trainee teachers (5%), other (6%)
 - Convenience sampling
- Timeline:
 - Time 1: 8 June - 21 July
 - Time 2: October (TBC)
 - 85 teachers participated twice (i.e., in June and July)

Key Findings

- Comparing professional life since COVID-19 versus that of before, teachers:
 - Found the job less stressful
 - Were less satisfied with their job
 - Believed were doing less well in their job
- In July, compared to June, teachers:
 - Found the job less stressful
 - Had greater self-efficacy in student engagement and ICT
 - Reported no changes in:
 - job satisfaction
 - job performance
- Predicting teachers' intention to quit:
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Years of teaching experience
 - Job stress before COVID-19
 - Job stress since COVID-19
 - Job satisfaction before COVID-19
 - Job satisfaction since COVID-19
 - Job performance before COVID-19
 - Job performance since COVID-19

Implications

1. Communicate with schools prior to national announcements
2. Consult with nationally representative members of the education community
3. Create a more reliable system for distributing Free School Meals and laptops
4. Prioritise pupils' social emotional health over academic achievement
5. Value the teaching profession

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Implications

1. Communicate with schools prior to national announcements

“I would really like the DfE to talk directly to head teachers and to not advertise and not publish policy through social media... Just actually, from a purely professional perspective. That's part of saying, "We hear you. We know you're important. You're part of this effort. We're going to tell you this first.”

2. Consult with nationally representative members of the education community

“they've got a collective body of people that they like ... who advise them in ways that they like, and they carry on taking that and anybody else who disagrees is ... of no value or importance.”



Implications cont.

3. Create a more reliable system for distributing Free School Meals and laptops

“We’ve also been taking food share parcels, around to families in, in our area as well... The free school meals, we’ve literally, for some parents we’ve had to print off [the vouchers] ourselves, and and hand, hand them to them, just because the [voucher portal] system was either over flooded or it didn’t work properly or they haven’t got any internet”

4. Prioritise pupils’ social emotional health over academic achievement

“that they don’t push assessment too much, and they don’t, you know, that they take into account the fact that the children have missed however many months of schooling... and that they kind of realise that the emotional health of the children is more important at this stage.”

5. Value the teaching profession

“I don’t think people really appreciate the fact that we’ve [schools have] been open every single day, bank holidays included. And so I feel that that is something that’s very much lacking and nationally, I feel that we’ve had a bit of a tough deal in that situation.”

Thank you!

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