

## PA32 Individual

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Absenoldeb Disgyblion

Ymateb gan Unigolyn

Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Pupil absence

Evidence from Individual

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Record your views against the inquiry's terms of reference, which have been grouped into 5 themes.

### 1. Reasons

My son could not cope in a traditional school setting - we were fortunate to gain a place at group tuition following a year out of school in Year 8.

I wonder whether children who have been out of school during the pandemic has highlighted to parents that their children are happier & mentally well when not in a traditional school setting. And indeed whether the children themselves have realised this & are avoiding school?

I firmly believe the provision of 'non-traditional' school settings should be examined further & that this may aid in lowering absenteeism

### 2. Risks and consequences

Short term absenteeism isolates learners & stunts their social skill development. Whilst also causing them to fall behind academically

Long term, due to society's reliance on exam results being required to gain many employment opportunities, learners may be denied employment.

Sadly, society, employers & the Government/Assembly still seem to value educational gain above all other successes.

I would argue that attendance at 'traditional' educational settings may not be essential for a child to develop & provide value to society in the future - other alternatives should be readily available.

### 3. Impact

I have not researched into the take up of home learning or de-registration

My gut feeling is that the time away from traditional education will have highlighted to many the positives of home schooling

### 4. Effectiveness of policies

My experience in seeking support for education other than at school (EOTAS) was challenging

I had no idea what options were available for my son. School did their best to support his return to full time traditional education but my son planned suicide (age 11) to avoid having to return. This is what is happening for those children who cannot thrive in a school with a 1000 learners!! A chance mention by an educational psychologist (who we had to fight to assess my son) informed me about the group tuition option. We then had to wait a year for a place as due to its very limited numbers (not a criticism as it was

exactly what my son required) we had to wait for other learners to leave before he could start. I emailed my AM, my MP, the Education Minister in WAG & anyone else I could think of for my son to get help. For children who don't 'fit the mould' parents have to be warriors. I am fortunate that I am educated & able to access information which other parents may not have the skills to.

Saying all this, once we were in the EOTAS system the support was fantastic. Always there when needed, non judgmental & caring.

My son is now 17 & thriving with no specific 'special' input in xxxxxxxxxxxx - that support would be there if he needed it, but he has matured & developed thanks to his time in group tuition.

I have so much sympathy for those parents in the situation we were in having now experienced a pandemic also!!!

## 5. Other

Absenteeism is not simply due to the pandemic - the pandemic 'allowed' learners to thrive in an environment other than school & parents & children themselves FEEL this & do not want to go back!

