

PA51 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

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

1. Reasons

Teens with ASD before covid knew no different, they had always been to school everyday of their lives Pre covid. They were in a set routine that was consistent everyday. Even if they didn't like school they didn't think they had a choice. Then in lockdown suddenly they didn't have to go to school, they could stay at home where they felt safe, weren't overwhelmed by sensory overload. Didn't have to see and talk to lots of people all day. Then it all changed again but this time they knew there was a choice. If they didn't have to go then why did they have to go now.

2. Risks and consequences

The longer they are out of education the harder it will be to get back into it. They fall further behind and it becomes a bigger deal to go back. Well being declines as they spend more and more time alone with nothing to do. Or they go out and about, walk the streets, mix with others who aren't in school and engage in risk taking behaviour, drugs, alcohol etc.

3. Impact

As a parent of a high functioning teen with ASD who started to refuse school after lockdown, I have considered taking him out of school completely to take the pressure off us all as a family. The constant phone calls from school, the daily coaxing, bribing, arguing to try and get them to go in whilst trying to hold down a demanding full time job. There needs to be better schools that are equipped with alternative provisions and curriculums. I keep getting told by school staff that's schools not for everyone and its not for my child. However it is the law so why is there not suitable provision for all children to learn in their own way so they can achieve their full potential? These are children that are more than capable of achieving highly in areas they excel in, schools need to provide for this.

4. Effectiveness of policies

Support from schools is minimal. Once there are behavioural issues, no matter what the cause, the path is punishment, Constantly until the child refuses to go to school due the constant negativity they receive. In my opinion this is planned out by the school as their life is easier when the child isn't in school.

5. Other

Schools need to do better at helping support children with behavioural or anxiety issues before they start refusing. It's too late once they refuse. As a parent I could see it coming, I told school months before he started refusing that was where it was heading. They just follow their punishment guidelines, not looking for triggers, causes, ways to adapt. Too rigid. Beat with a stick until they conform. If they don't they are on a PSP on a route to being excluded.

