



CENTRE FOR  
LITERACY AND  
SOCIAL JUSTICE

“

It is not walking on the words,  
it is grasping the soul of them.

”

**Freire**  
(1985)



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- 15:00-15:05 **Welcome** by Prof. Fary Cachelin, Executive Dean, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies
- 15.05 – 15.15 **Welcome** by Profs. Teresa Cremin & Natalia Kucirkova, Centre Co-Directors
- 15.15 – 15.35 **Re-imagining Literacy Education post-COVID**, Prof. Gemma Moss, Director International Literacy Centre, IoE, University College London
- 15.40 – 16.00 **When I Can Read My Title Clear: Literacy and activism**, Jonathan Douglas, CBE. Chief Executive, National Literacy Trust.
- 16.00 – 16.10 Virtual Tea Break
- 16.10 – 16.45 **Literacy and Social Justice: The space is ours Panel Discussion**  
Chaired by Teresa Cremin  
*Panellists:* Gemma Moss; Jonathan Douglas  
Rumena Aktar (Librarian, Firs Primary Academy)  
Megan Dixon (Co-Principal, Director of Aspirer Research School, Sandbach Academy)  
Marilyn Mottram (Former HMI & Deputy National Lead for English)  
Sonia Thompson (Head Teacher & Director of St Matthew's Research School)
- 16.45 – 17.00 Close





CENTRE FOR  
LITERACY AND  
SOCIAL JUSTICE



Violence  
Discrimination  
Stigma  
Abuse Inequality  
**Poverty**  
Environment Refugees  
Racism  
Displacement  
Mistreatment



# Re-imagining literacy education post-COVID

Professor Gemma Moss



# Keynote overview

1. Why the Centre is timely
2. What COVID has revealed about child poverty in the UK
3. Rethinking the dominant metaphors that hold schools to account



# Why the Centre is timely:

## Literacy research with a social justice agenda

- valuing children's diverse practices in volitional reading and writing
- creating space for research, practice and advocacy to address social justice concerns
- Building systemic, collaborative capacity – within and between teachers, schools and homes

# What COVID has revealed about child poverty in the UK

1. The realities of child poverty in the UK
  - new insights generated from schools supporting families during lockdowns
2. Rewriting assessments of need
  - who is responsible for children being poor?
3. Reviewing the role of the school
  - “a duty of care” and “a duty to teach”





## A duty of care and a duty to teach: educational priorities in response to the COVID-19 crisis

This study explores the challenges the COVID-19 crisis sets primary school teachers.

These challenges will be considered in the light of the diverse roles primary schools find themselves playing in their local communities, and in recognition that roles will vary depending upon levels of social disadvantage.

This research has been funded by UKRI in partnership with the ESRC as part of their call to address the health, social, economic and environmental impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The project runs for four months, from 19 May to 8 September 2020.

Background

Aim

Methodology

Team

Blogs and articles

Reports and publications

### Briefing notes



The project team found that primary school testing and inspections will do more harm than good. These briefing notes suggest better ways to rebuild.

- Primary Assessment and COVID
- Learning after lockdown
- Resetting educational priorities in challenging times

### Advice for parents



- FAQs on COVID-19 and primary education

### Contact us



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Department of Learning and Leadership  
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20 Bedford Way  
London WC1H 0AL

***A duty of care and a duty to teach:  
educational priorities in response to  
the Covid19 crisis.***

Researchers: PI: Professor Gemma Moss.

Co-Is: Alice Bradbury, Sam Duncan, Sinead Harmey and Rachael Levy.

Funder: UKRI/ESRC Rapid Response to COVID call

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/departments-and-centres/centres/international-literacy-centre/duty-care-and-duty-teach-educational-priorities-response-covid-19-crisis>



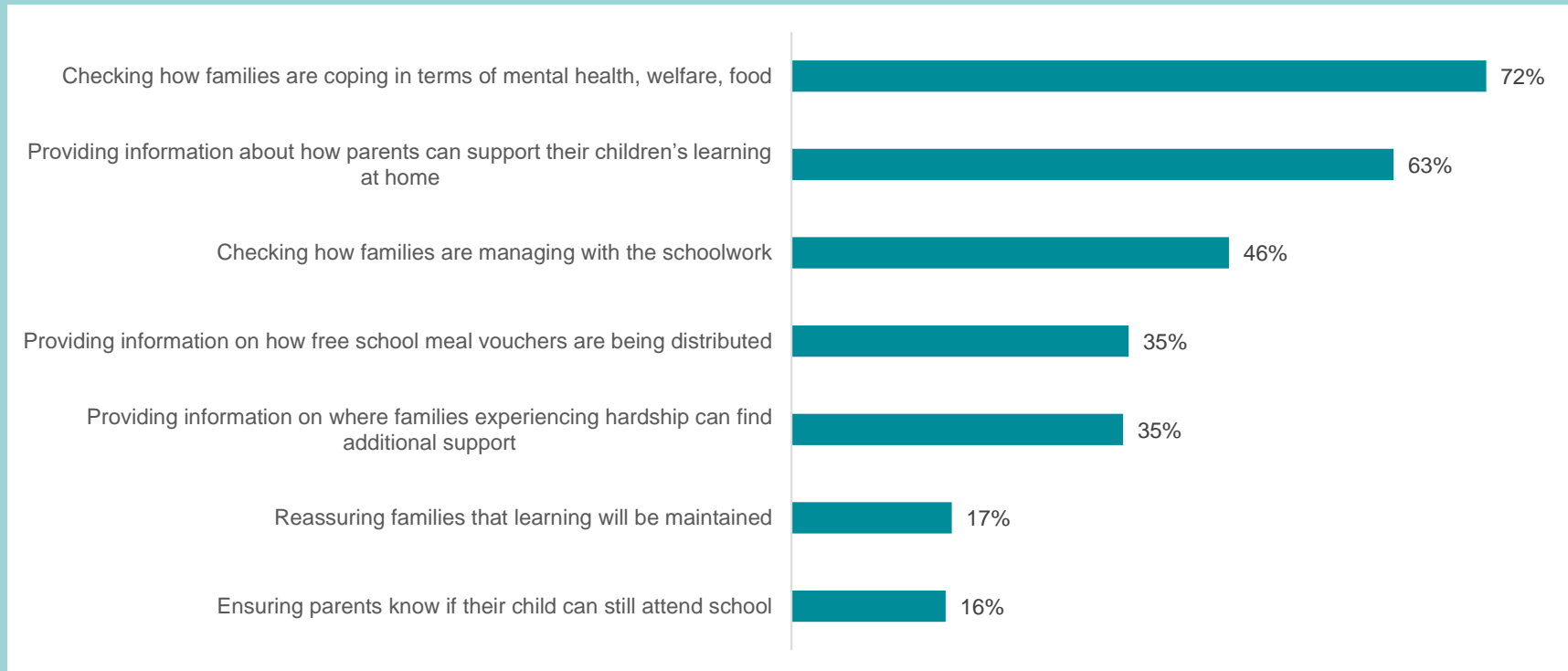
## Our questions:

- How did teachers weigh a duty of care and a duty to teach during the pandemic?
  - in their interactions with families during lockdown 1 and at reopening
- Did actions taken lead to changing views?
  - on how to best support their communities?
  - on the purposes and values of education and the ways things currently run?

# Methods

1. Teacher Tapp Survey - May
2. UCL survey and follow up interviews
  - with teachers/ heads/ system leaders
3. Systematic review
  - of the literature on learning disruption
4. Documentary collection:
  - policy guidance/ media coverage / research

# Children and families' wellbeing matters and helped guide schools actions



Question: Thinking about YOUR school community, which of these had highest priority in communicating with families during lockdown? Please tick just THREE responses.

## A duty of care places a greater burden on schools serving the most disadvantaged

Statement	Q1 (affluent)	Q2	Q3	Q4 (deprived)
Checking how families are coping	68%	72%	72%	78%
Info on FSM vouchers	18%	24%	41%	51%
Support for families experiencing hardship	22%	31%	40%	42%
How to support children's learning at home	75%	68%	60%	52%

Question: Thinking about YOUR school community, which of these had highest priority in communicating with families during lockdown? Please tick just THREE responses.

## Poverty limits what families can do -

Statement	Q1 (affluent)	Q2	Q3	Q4 (deprived)
I am reassured most families have the resources to support pupils' learning at home	46%	24%	12%	6%
I am more aware of the impact of poverty on pupils' lives	16%	22%	39%	48%
I am more aware of how difficult it is for my pupils to learn at home	45%	52%	65%	64%

Question: How has lockdown changed your perceptions of your school's community?

# In lockdown 1, how did learning adapt?

Only 13% were 'Ensuring we cover our school's planned curriculum' v 44% 'Revisiting prior learning areas'

Statement	Q1 (affluent)	Q2	Q3	Q4 (deprived)
Giving children activities that they will enjoy	75%	73%	67%	67%
Ensuring children without online access still have opportunities to learn	47%	52%	54%	63%
Capitalising on opportunities for child to learn differently	24%	21%	21%	12%
Differentiating activities to meet children's needs	12%	19%	15%	18%

Question: In creating teaching resources during lockdown, your \*TOP 3\* priorities?



## Comparing KS1 and KS 2 priorities for literacy learning

Statement	EYFS/ KS1	KS2
Reading comprehension tasks	50%	78%
Reading for pleasure	75%	78%
Shared reading with a family member	59%	30%
Phonics, SPAG or handwriting activities	77%	60%
Open-ended writing activities	60%	73%
Tasks to stimulate speaking and listening at home	42%	23%

Question: In creating teaching resources during lockdown, your \*TOP 3\* priorities?

## The current logics and dominant metaphors that hold schools to account:

1. Curriculum delivery as the object of measurement
2. To benefit, all children must keep to the same pace and sequence - deficits escalate and jeopardy follows
3. Those who fall behind are to blame:
  - ‘The aim of education is to deliver a high-quality curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more.
  - Everything we know about what a quality curriculum looks like still applies. The remote curriculum needs to be aligned to the classroom curriculum as much as possible. ..
  - it needs to be carefully sequenced and ensure that pupils obtain the building blocks they need to move on to the next step’ Ofsted, 2021



## Framing catch-up through post COVID gap talk:

“The disruption may exacerbate existing inequalities in academic attainment ...

If pupils are unable to recover their rates of learning and secure the foundation skills needed for accessing the school curriculum, then the consequences for their long-term educational outcomes are potentially very serious.

In order to provide more differentiated forms of support ..., schools need knowledge of who is likely to be at risk of experiencing the greatest disruption to their learning. ...

[This] will immediately benefit schools in deciding how to allocate catch-up support.” ESRC-funded project



## Why this is not the only answer, and the conversation goes on:

- It places most pressure to catch up fast on those who have been most affected by COVID
- It insists there is only one way to pace and sequence learning, in the steps our tests set out
- It ignores the research literature on learning disruption: that what counts are care, curriculum and community, redesigned as context-specific responses, re-worked over the longer term (Harmey and Moss, 2020)



## To sum up:

- *The COVID crisis has revealed how far poverty shapes opportunity. We can't wave a magic wand and pretend it never happened. We can plan for a fairer and more resilient education system going forward. The current approach to testing and accountability in England penalises rather than supports schools working with our most disadvantaged communities. It's time to do things differently. (Gemma Moss)*



## Or as others have put it:

- *“Recovery” (as in recovery curriculum) implies there has been an injury or accident to recover from. “Catch up” implies we are behind and so should be worried. It is our choice whether pupils feel they are coming back to a joyous, engaging, community post lockdown or a place of panic, relentless focus on what has been missed and a drive to get through the next hurdles of exams and tests. The atmosphere we create is in our hands. (Big Education, Learning from Lockdown)*



## Responding to COVID-19, Briefing Note 2: Learning after lockdown

## Responding to COVID-19, Briefing Note 1: Primary Assessment in



### Introduction: Primary assessment in turbulent times

This briefing note considers the place for statutory testing in primary schools during 2020-21, in the light of the COVID crisis'. The English system of primary statutory assessment, culminating in SATs tests in Year 6, was suspended during the 2020 lockdown.

Our of c attention here.

- Whether a quick reintroduction of statutory tests will help or hinder pupils in making progress in the coming year
- Whether statutory tests can accurately be used as school accountability measures, in



### Introduction: 'Recovery', 'catch-up', or business as usual?

This briefing note sets out key findings from our research\* based on tracking primary schools' responses to the crisis from lockdown onwards. The briefing is intended to help guide primary schools in supporting pupil learning going forward.

Teachers' experiences of the COVID crisis have been hugely varied and influenced by the local circumstances that each school has faced. Schools and parents have had to grapple with difficult questions about how to keep everyone safe as well as keeping children engaged with education during turbulent times. This has meant schools developing new



## Responding to COVID-19, Briefing Note 3: Resetting educational priorities in challenging times



### Introduction: Rebuilding, reconnecting and reimagining a more resilient education system

This briefing note is intended to prompt discussion on how to repair the fragilities in the education system that COVID has revealed. Over the length of our research project we have seen a gulf open up between government policy announcements and primary schools' experiences of the crisis on the ground.

This briefing note considers three critical issues:

- How the education system recognises the needs of our most disadvantaged communities and funds the schools that work with them