Twitter Thread by Deepti Gurdasani



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We've been falsely told 'schools are safe', 'don't drive community transmission', & teachers don't have a higher risk of infection repeatedly by govt & their advisors- to justify some of the most negligent policies in history. ■

> Questions have to be asked about the evidence Jenny Harries gave to the Education Committee today about the risk to teachers.
>
> Was she aware of this data?
>
> If not, why wasn\u2019t she properly briefed?#COVID19 #schools https://t.co/4wa1PyAJld pic.twitter.com/eqFjaA1zYC
>
> — Adam Hamdy (@adamhamdy) January 19, 2021

@educationgovuk data shows *both* primary & secondary school teachers are at double the risk of confirmed infection relative to comparable positivity in the general population. ONS household infection data also clearly show that children are important sources of transmission.

Yet, in the parliamentary select meeting today, witnesses like Jenny Harries repeated the same claims- that have been debunked by the ONS data, and the data released by the @educationgovuk today. How many lives have been lost to these lies? How many more people have long COVID?

@SarahDRasmussen has repeatedly pointed out errors & gaps in the ONS reporting of evidence around risk of infection among teachers- and it's taken *months* to get clarity on this. The released data are a result of months of campaigning by her, the @NEU and others.

Rather than being transparent about the risk of transmission in school settings & mitigating this, the govt (& many of its advisors) has engaged in dismissing & denying evidence that's been clear for a while. Evidence from the govt's own surveys. And global evidence.

Why?

If schools weren't impacting community transmission, as the govt claimed, why did the govt decide to close them? And if they were increasing community transmission, why is the govt plan to open schools *without* putting safety measures in

place?

Rather than making schools safer, the govt has sought to take away protections, by replacing isolation with lateral flow testing, a strategy that's been rejected by the MHRA & not in line with CDC recommendations. A strategy that could increase risk of transmission within schools

These strategies have directly led us to school closures - had we addressed school transmission head on as many other countries did, it's quite possible we wouldn't be here now.

If the govt truly wants to prioritise children's wellbeing & education, they must act urgently to make schools safer. This requires clear evidence based guidance and financial & practical support for schools, teachers & families.

We also need accountability - both from govt & its advisors who have promoted these falsehoods despite not being supported by scientific evidence. At an unacceptable cost. We need an independent investigation with evidence from diverse experts within the scientific community.

Link to data on infection among teachers here:
https://t.co/EcKP8Vq2yo

> .@educationgovuk data released show on average the rate of Covid-19 infection is 1.9 times higher amongst primary & secondary teachers than the general population, & 2 times higher for special school teachers.
>
> Read our full commenthttps://t.co/vNl0zUEiOi#MakeSchoolsSafe pic.twitter.com/FTHdKYZA8a
>
> — National Education Union (@NEUnion) January 19, 2021

And if you want to review the evidence on children, schools, & transmission, here's a thread summarising this:

https://t.co/Bwu6QXm6Q1

> I've been a hearing a lot about how children are more infectious *now* & contribute to transmission because of the B117 variant, but didn't before. This is a myth. Children & schools have always played an important role in transmission. Time to lay this to rest. Thread.
>
> — Deepti Gurdasani (@dgurdasani1) January 5, 2021

Sorry, I've just realised that some of the links to the DfE data in the NEU tweet may be broken, so here's the link, if you are interested. Thanks to @cfinnecy for linking to this:

https://t.co/nFrjbuTiPC