

Centre for Social Justice &
Wellbeing in Education



Searching questions about schooling

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Covid has magnified social inequalities



How?

Centre for Social Justice and Wellbeing in Education (CSJWE) research and expertise suggests:

The digital divide

Access to computers, internet and home learning. A complex picture of opportunities and barriers

Disability – for example the hard won rights of disabled children in relation to digital technologies

The dilution of support for vulnerable children and young people

Children's need for secure ongoing relationships and attachments especially for our most disadvantaged children.

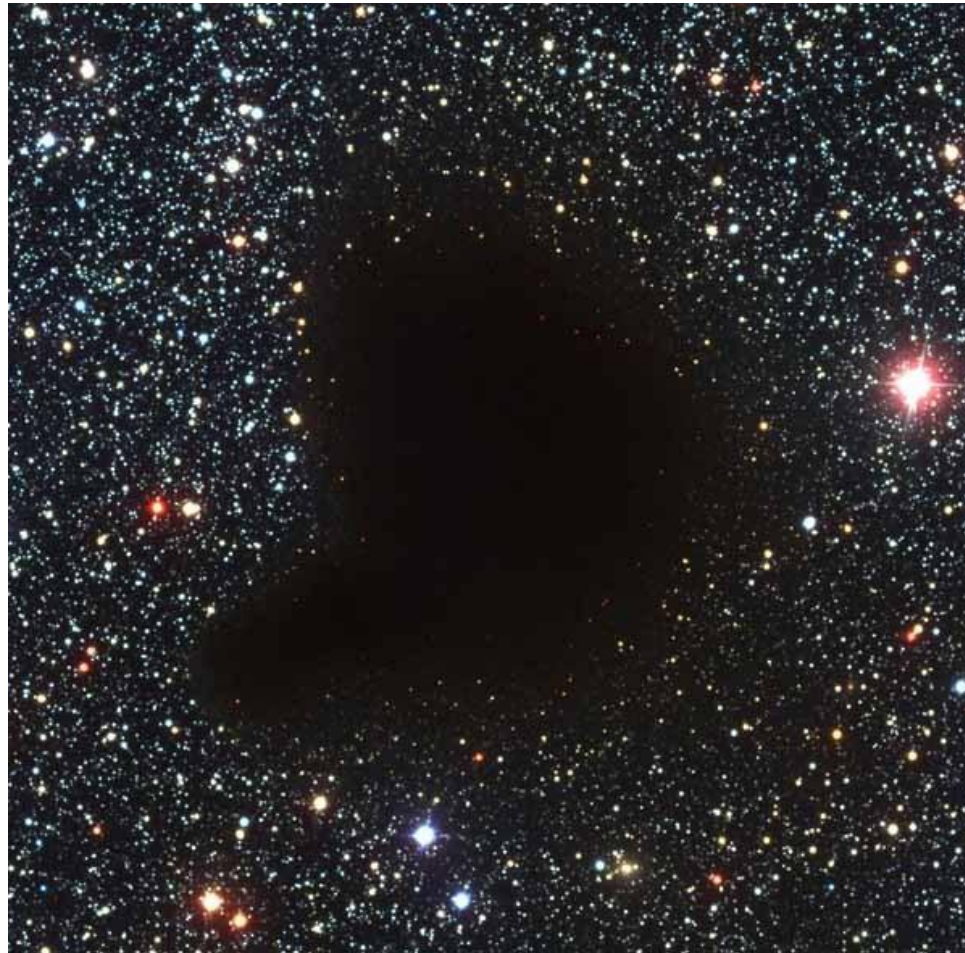
The crisis has eroded ongoing initiatives: Restorative Practice. Nurture Groups

Flaws in current forms of assessment

The mutant algorithm and injustices of an exam based, norm-referenced system.

Social inequalities damage everybody

Covid has exposed a void of educational purpose



School deprivation. Who loses what?

The pandemic has laid bare our unquestioned assumptions about what school is for.

Public discussion has intensified a polarity between the ‘lost learning’ of children and young people and threats to their wellbeing. ‘Institutional Schizophrenia’- a dualism based upon competing educational purposes.

What is ‘Lost learning’?

Qualifications – narrowly defined. Measurable knowledge. Measurement drives educational purposes and values.

Hannah (aged 10) : I’ll be a nothing....I’m hopeless at times tables so I’m frightened I’ll do the SATs and I’ll be a nothing...you have to get a level like a level 4 or a level 5 and if you’re no good at spellings and times tables you don’t get those levels and so you’re a nothing.

Wellbeing and mental health. Emphasis on social benefits of schooling, relationships and attachments

Children have missed their relationships with peers and teachers: being cared for, cared about and listened to.

Covid has given us glimpses of possibilities



What are they?

Online educational possibilities

A range of technologies. The matching of pedagogies and technologies to educational purposes

Better, and more inclusive, parent/school communication

Parents and staff have been able to collaborate at a deeper and more detailed level

Flexible, fair and formative assessment

A range of assessment types

A new respect for the social and relational aspects of school

A recognition of children's value for friends, wider peer network and ongoing support from teachers

A value for the unsung emotional labour implicit in teaching

Covid has created a space for re-
imagining schools and schooling



The re-imagined school:

Resolves the duality of pastoral and academic educational purposes

Promotes mutual care. Care as both a means and an end of education

Care is inclusive of 'everything we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web' (Fisher and Tronto, 1990, p 41)

Implies courageous education (e.g. MBC)

Distinguishes between the ego-logical and eco-logical. Being in the world without being in the centre of the world

Conclusion: from egocentricity to ecocentricity

