

COVID Learning Loss

You thought things were going to be bad?
Well, ...it's going to be much worse than that!

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What has been lost?

Schools/teachers do **a lot** of good things for our children

They raise skills – and increase what our children can “do”

Skills are important – because they “cause” higher incomes

Skills are not the same as test scores

And other things are important - besides skills

“ Skills beget skills”

So missing school not only lowers skills

It also lowers the rate of subsequent skill formation

So what do we know?

More hours of schooling p.a. seems to matter (for tests)

“ Summer slide”

Variation in (US) “ snow days”, across time and counties

Strikes

Financial “ rate of return” to “ investing” in extra schooling

Good news for Netherlands

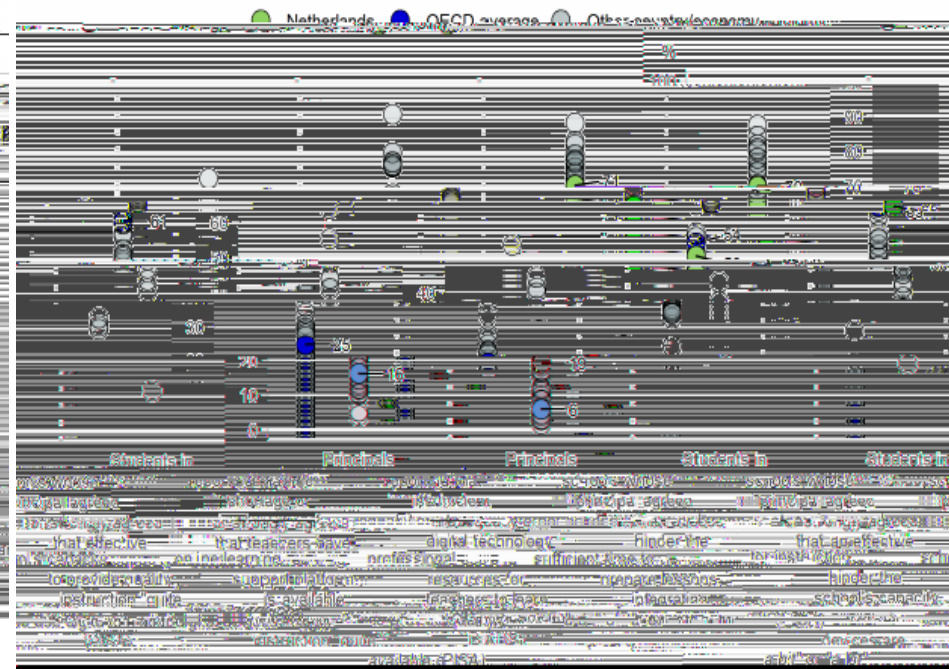
NL seemed in good shape for online learning (pre-COVID)

Almost all (age 13) pupils have a PC and a quiet place to study

NL is about half the OECD average SES gap

Heads think little internet access problem (98% in NL), good tech

Teachers better prepared than most other countries



More good news

And NL has comprehensive test score (LVS) records

Two tests in 3 subjects each year (plus many "3-minute-tests")

Pre/post 1st lockdown data compared to same tests of previous cohorts

Only about 8 weeks (20% of a year) of NL **lost schooling**

So ... how much lost **learning** in NL?

That is, how effective was NL home-based schooling?

Bad news

[Engzell et al](#) (see also IZA WPs [13641](#) [13965](#) [14009](#) ...)

Difference pre/post vs Same difference for previous cohorts

Average 20% lost learning - same as the loss in schooling

Implies little or no learning from home-based schooling

Learning catch-up policy in NL

Even though NL was well-prepared, it knows that it has a big problem

What is NL doing to catch-up?

How about average English child?

We'll never know how well English children fared

English test scores now incomparable with previous cohorts

Compare COVID cohort **schooling** with earlier cohorts

What's the relationship between schooling and learning?

How much lower are earnings, if you have $\frac{1}{2}$ year less schooling?

Estimates of the financial "return to education"

Harmon/Walker, American Economic Review, 1995

Compares earnings of pre and post RoSLA cohorts

Estimate of the effect of extra schooling – for those that didn't want it

Halving "causal" effect suggests "wage rate" fall by about 4-5 %

Say £40,000 over an average working life

£360 billion across 9m pupils

Underestimates the loss?

"skills beget skills" ?

lost learning makes subsequent learning harder

Losing it at 14 is worse than at 15

Learning catch-up in England

What we know so far

£1b educational catch-up initiatives fund (now £1.7b)

One-off, catch-up premium for 2020/21 for year 1-8 pupils

£80 per student (1.5% extra) "to make up for lost teaching time"
(about £450m)

Non-mainstream schools get £240 per student (about £7m).

£350 million for the NaP7AB1 0 uaProgramm6 Tc(ne)]TÆTØM

What would catch-up cost ?

What little we know about effectiveness of small group catch-up tutoring is (fairly) reassuring

Experimental evaluations of catch-up schemes by [EEF](#)

“Effect sizes” are about 0.2 = adds 3 months progress

One 12-week “treatment” costs £350

Effect sizes might “fade” (e.g. STAR class size experiment)

But tests just evaluate the effect on the content of the treatment

Implementation

What's the best way of implementing catch-up?

