Twitter Thread by Matt Bevington



Matt Bevington
@matt_bevington

Part of the problem with the debate around schools is the obscure nature of the accusations against teachers

What exactly are teachers being accused of?

...

Is it that they are refusing to do their job? I.e. lazy

Simply untrue. They will still be teaching remotely, which is often more difficult than in person

If they can't do that because of lack of tech that's partly the govt's fault and it should have been better prepared by now

Is it that there is a low risk of teachers catching the virus? I.e. mountain out of a molehill.

AFAIK virus risk in schools broadly matches the wider population (happy to be corrected), which is rising rapidly

If there's increased risk everywhere, there is in schools too

Plus, no other group is being asked to remain in close contact with large numbers of potentially infectious people, i.e. children in this case, with little to no PPE

In some schools it is banned, in others simply frowned upon

Plus, 1 million people work in schools in England alone: https://t.co/UObIGpqszQ

Add to that almost 9 million pupils: https://t.co/DFV8X3Z7Cv

That's a lot of people (~18% of the population in England) mixing closely, even with mitigations in place, and should concern us all

Do teachers want to actively harm the futures of the children they're supposed to be helping?

This is a malicious accusation against people who dedicate their lives to not just teaching but providing a whole range of pastoral care to children. I give it no value.

Should teachers be expected to take risks the rest of us aren't as part of their job?

Personally, I don't think so

If there were sufficient testing and mandatory use of PPE until widespread vaccination, the level of risk might be different (again govt shld shoulder blame)

Some people seem to expect teachers to take risks they don't have to take themselves

Some may be comfortable working in schools, that's a personal choice

But the right to be safe and secure at work is basic and not too much to ask, not even (in fact, especially) in a pandemic

And you'll notice none of this has anything to do with whether children are at a risk of getting serious disease (as we all know, on the whole they aren't)

But they can catch it, carry it and spread it - that's what matters here

The govt is deflecting blame onto teachers for their own serious shortcomings

Whether school preparedness for online learning, mass testing in schools or vaccine rollout, not to mention slow and poor decision-making which has contributed to such high rates of infection