

8 Reasons to Feel Reassured

1. We are returning to what we know

Schools are places of routine and structure - even if these routines have had to change, the predictability of the school day will be hugely reassuring for many.

2. Teachers are trained to respond to what's in front of them

There is no such thing as 'normal' when it comes to learning. All learners are individual and teachers respond to where the young person is, not where anyone says they *should* be.

3. 'Learning' (in this context) is a verb, not a noun

This means that we can't lose learning like it's a tangible thing. Some learning just hasn't taken place yet. Young people will take the lead from us, so if we don't talk of 'catching up', they won't feel they need to.

4. Equally, learning is a process, not a product

We can't buy 'learning' and we can't give 'learning'. Learners have to be ready to learn and this relies on relationships and wellbeing.

5. Teachers are 'alloparents'¹

Some children will be naturally worried about returning to school, but when staff build trust first and foremost, learning will naturally follow.

6. Intrinsic motivation comes into play

In New Zealand, during the Christchurch earthquakes, young people missed huge amounts of school, however results did not suffer². Young people knew what they needed to do to succeed.

7. It's back to school, not back to learning

As adults, we can look back and see that school was one place where we learned, but not the only place. Some children will have learned huge amounts during this time, just in unexpected ways.

8. We don't know what we don't know

We can only speculate what the impact of the pandemic will be on young people. Yes, unfortunately for some it will have taken a great toll, but for others they will have built their character in ways we didn't know possible – resilience, creativity, self-sufficiency are all words we have heard a lot from parents and young people in the last year.

Dragonfly: Impact Education



¹ See the work of Professor Peter Fonagy on the biological links between trust and learning.

² See the work of Professor John Hattie on the Christchurch earthquakes.