

# 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

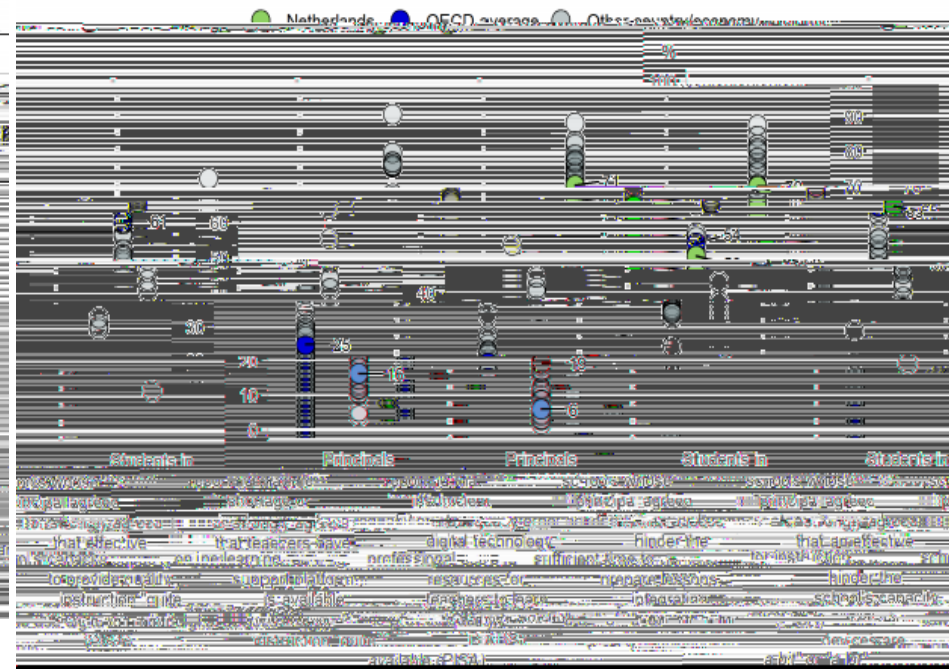
NL seemed in good shape for online learning (pre-COVID)

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 ½ 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?

