

The impact of School Leadership decisions upon Teacher Identities during COVID-19 [abstract only]

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WES Conference 2021

The impact of School Leadership decisions upon Teacher Identities during COVID-19

Research team: Dr
Katy Marsh-Davies &
Prof Cathy Burnett
Presenting: Katy & Liz



Content

- Introduction
- Approach
- Findings & Theorisation
- Voice from the frontline
- What next?

Identity

- How teachers construct their identities practically and discursively in the context of remote working necessitated by the coronavirus outbreak
- Remote working ‘brings to the forefront important questions about the formation of human characters and identities’ (Tietze & Musson, 2002, p330)
- Identity refers to ‘the individual’s self-understanding as constituted through the regulatory effects of power/knowledge relations’ (Dick & Hyde, 2006 p549)

Approach

- Interviews with UK primary school teachers
- Two points in time
- Opportunity to submit artefacts in between
- Thematic organisation of data, with initial Critical Discourse Analysis

Findings

1. School leadership responses to COVID-19 were pivotal in the experience of teaching during the pandemic
2. Highlighted in the constructions of teaching were:
 - a) relationships
 - b) embodiment
 - c) materiality
3. Media portrayals of teachers during the lockdown impacted their morale.



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helenfrancesb · 30/10/2020

Replying to @Morrisons

Really???? Teachers received 100% of their salary throughout the covid crisis. I am in no way disputing the effort of teachers; however I am appalled at this decision. I will no longer be shopping at Morrisons.

116 1 53



Mrs Gorman EYFS · 30/10/2020

I'm sure they'll be devastated 😂

The myth of an open marriage



...by an author who bitterly regrets hers

Magnificent staff across the nation are desperate to help millions of children get back to the classroom — but militant unions are standing in their way. To them, the Mail implores...

LET OUR TEACHERS BE HEROES



By Jason Groves and Josh White

THE row between teachers and unions over when and how to reopen our schools exploded last night. In an extraordinary intervention, former education secretary David Blunkett accused the unions of 'working against the interests of children' by continuing to huddle

Daily Mail COMMENT
The great consolation of this Covid crisis has been its force to bring together the rich a spirit of compassion and generosity. So what a crushing disappointment that the teaching unions refuse to join the common cause, instead playing petty politics. They are obviously happy to go middle with children's futures. But the Mail firmly believes that teachers are better than that. The profession's best majority know where their duty lies. We urge them to find their voice.

Teachers who are desperate to get back into the classroom. And support education Secretary Gavin Williamson's decision to open schools. We urge them to stop their opposition. Writing for the Daily Mail, we said that the unions should be able to return to a classroom in the interests of their pupils and education. We are not asking for a 'shield' return after the summer holidays. With some junior schools partially open, we are asking for a return to the classroom. We urge them to find their voice.

The traditional school environment and associated regulated, routinised practices were presented as now inappropriate, absurd and often counter-productive. Covid has unsettled the 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977) of teaching and our participants are not keen to return to 'business as usual'

Covid-19 has led to teachers rethinking how they will balance work with other roles going forwards (especially carers but also peri- / menopausal women)

Conclusion

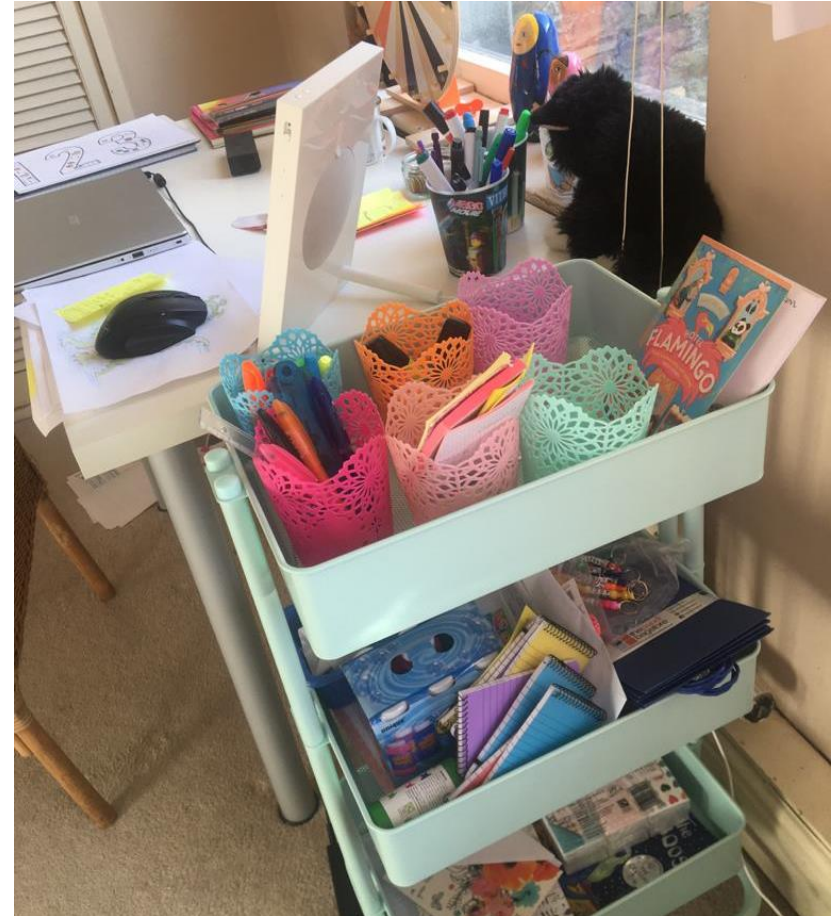
The removal of teaching from the physical school environment allowed teachers to make it 'theirs', it gave them ownership and a chance to reinvent what teaching is, who teachers are, and what they do

We hear reflections on the performativity (Goffman, 1959) of teacher identities and suggestions of the *potentially* emancipatory impacts of COVID-19

Dissemination centres on helping teachers and school leaders to 'learn lessons' from the crisis

Voice from the frontline

Liz – [before Covid] *I didn't bring any work home. It makes me laugh now because if you could see behind I'm literally sat in what was my classroom, so I'm literally surrounded. It's like being in my classroom. It just makes me smile now when I say that I didn't used to bring anything home with me.*



Voice from the frontline

- Bringing the classroom into my home
- Taking ownership of my teaching
- Importance of relationships
- Balancing home life with working online
- Media portrayal of teachers during Covid

What next?

Dissemination of this research:

- Article for WES
- British Academy of Management Conference
- Further Critical Discourse Analysis
- Practitioner Dissemination Event
- The Conversation
- Edited book for Routledge

Teaching & Menopause:

- Schools Week & Nuffield Grant bid

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