

Conversation with David Price OBE

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For teachers:

- Teachers have done a phenomenal job. If you are struggling and the novelty is wearing off, have an honest conversation with your students. Student directed learning is going to be more relevant to them anyway. They will remember more if they have been part of that conversation. Here is an opportunity to no longer be the expert.
- Some have equated the shift to online as *online schooling* & taken the same structures & divisions & stuck a Zoom camera on it. Kids are going to get fed up with this approach. This was to be expected & there will be an evolution.
- We need to be honest with kids in the middle of the pandemic & let kids talk to their parents & teachers about relevant topics: how is this going to affect the world economically? What does this mean in terms of globalisation?
- If we simply go back to face to face schooling as it was, with 10 subjects divided into one-hour chunks, we will miss a huge opportunity. We need to take this opportunity to reimagine what the world will be like.
- Instead of people churning out lectures online & giving more content & worksheets, lets develop a set of projects that could be done in the home that will tackle some of the big issues.
- Let's look at how kids could do some purposeful learning connected to the real issues, that acknowledge that kids more than ever will need a sense of agency. The knowledge-rich curriculum & separate discipline-based learning is fine, but in itself is of limited value.
- There is a huge support community of teachers online. If you are struggling, you have to engage with it. You have to jump in the water. Someone will help you.
- Ask the right questions: how do I change what I am doing so that it can engage the students more? When it comes to technology, the students that you are teaching can teach you. Don't try to be the expert. Recognise that you can learn from other professionals and your students and families.
- Where might an individual begin? Take the first little step - talk to your students, ask the students what they want. Get them to take responsibility. Get them to peer teach.

For the wider community

- Need to look at the bigger picture - what does this mean for the whole school system? Where are we going to be at the end of this & where do we want to be?

- When the pandemic ends, even if a child did nothing for a year, their lives are not going to be ruined. Their academic career will go on & they will end up in the same place at the end of school or college. Let's relax.
- For a long time we have been saying that parents are the primary educators – and they really are now. How do we involve and support parents?
- Parents are starting to realise that the previous school systems do not seem to work well for them, their child or the rhythm of their family. Let's work with the circadian rhythm of the family.
- We are seeing our pillars, our institutions struggle. The way we have organised our society is showing that it is unable to react at the speed & at scale sufficient to address the problems we have. Industry is able to pivot far faster than government.
- We are seeing ingenuity outside of schools – so, let's learn from it. An example would be the creation of virtual pubs and virtual dinners. These activities are fulfilling social needs. If we are doing these things socially, why wouldn't we want to do that for educational experiences? Why not have teachers have a virtual get together with the families – talk about how they work this out together.
- Look outside of school & see the inventiveness. Ask ourselves, how can this work in an educational context?

Where might this all lead?

- It is our Dunkirk moment - when we need the wider community to play their part. We are seeing a return to the commons. An explosion of ingenuity across the world. Mutual aid groups.
- Communities are starting to look after one another. This has to give a lesson about the direction of learning. Service-based learning should be introduced. Ask questions: what is this learning going to do for my community? My family? My region?
- We should redirect staff to help in community projects – helping with meals, whatever is needed. We are actually starting to care for each other.
- The role of school in terms of their local communities has never been greater.
- The notion of a learning ecosystem where the school is part of a much bigger network that's responsible for the development of that child is very clear. We are seeing that now. We can't go back to the schools that are locked behind big fences. We can't be so afraid of the world. Schools should be the revivers of community.

We are all in this together!