

“The Nuremburg trials showed ‘we were just following orders’ is not a defence”

## UK parents threatened with fines, jail for refusing to send children into unsafe classrooms

Julie Hyland  
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Within days of schools reopening in England, cases of COVID-19 are rising exponentially, and deaths along with them. But still the Conservative government and local authorities—many Labour Party-run—continue to insist that schools are safe, and parents who reject the lie and refuse to send their children into COVID infected classrooms are faced with threats of fines and imprisonment.

In the week to September 8, 272,334 people tested positive and 6,748 were admitted to hospital—a daily average of 863. Over 130 people were killed by the virus each day on average, 932 in total. Case rates are highest among those aged 0-19, especially in the 10-19 age group, 43,166 of whom tested positive in the last week.

In Scotland, where schools opened on August 11, cases doubled by the end of the month. Children account for almost 40 percent of the new cases, 2,729 out of the 6,836 recorded on Thursday. On Wednesday, Dingwall Academy, one of the largest secondary schools in the Scottish Highlands, was forced to shut due to a “significant number” of COVID cases and the “high number of staff having to self-isolate.”

The rest of the UK is following the same path as the ruling elite, and all the official parties, prioritise profits over lives.

In Wales, Dr David Hepburn, Intensive Care consultant at the Grange University Hospital in Cwmbran, tweeted that his Intensive Therapy Unit was “now over 50 percent of our capacity with COVID patients” and that patients “are also younger this time around”.

In Northern Ireland, the Ulster Teachers’ Union said schools are “on the verge of collapse under the strain of COVID-19,” as a further 3,500 children tested positive in the last week. General Secretary Jacquie White said rising “transmission rates, changes in guidance, as well as the lack

of support and availability of tests is causing [schools] to be overwhelmed.”

But the union, like education unions across the UK, refuses to call any action to protect its members and those they teach. Instead, White appealed to the government and Education Department—which are enforcing herd immunity—to work “along with the teaching unions and... come up with solutions that will both make the situation manageable for teachers and keep children in schools.”

Deaths among children from COVID-19 are still, thankfully, proportionally low, although exact numbers are hard to quantify as the media parrot the official lie that children are at virtually no risk. This week another child reportedly died, bringing the estimated number of child deaths to 80. There have been 8,842 children admitted to hospital for COVID in the 299 days to September 9, and the numbers are rising daily.

As COVID-19 is allowed to run rampant, enabling new variants to develop, these numbers will tragically rise, as seen in the US. Democratic Party President Joe Biden has doubled down on school reopenings even as 250,000 child coronavirus cases were reported in a week, with 30,000 children hospitalised in just one month.

The supposed “resilience” of children to the virus also conceals the debilitating impact of Long COVID (which affects one in seven COVID infected children), and that high transmission rates among children present a life-threatening danger to teaching staff, family members and the community more generally.

With good cause, a poll by Ipsos MORI shows a large majority of parents—70 percent—are concerned by the risk of COVID-19 infection of their children at school, despite the disinformation campaign.

Nonetheless, most are forced to run the risk of sending their children to school or else lose their jobs, while local authorities, who are imposing government policy, seek to make examples of those who refuse.

One of those targeted is Lisa Diaz, a parent and leading member of the SafeEdForAll (Safe Education For All) campaign group. Within days of schools reopening this month in England, Diaz, who has a genetic blood disorder and has been forced to keep her two children—aged 11 and eight—out of school, received a letter from her daughter’s primary threatening sanctions.

She told the *World Socialist Web Site*, “On day two of the schools reopening [Tuesday September 7] a generic letter was sent from Woodfield school, saying that attendance is mandatory and send your child in or face fines and prosecution. The next day, I received another letter from Wigan LA [local authority] repeating that attendance is mandatory and the risk to children is ‘very low.’ On Thursday, there was another letter stating that a positive COVID case had been confirmed in my daughter’s primary school. But I’m supposed to send her in!” Another case was confirmed on Friday.

Lisa posted a video on Twitter—viewed over 43,000 times—in which she responded to the threats, citing world-renowned scientists on the dangers of COVID to children. She stated that she was “fed up and bored being lied to,” told that COVID is benign, “absolutely fine” and everyone “can get it.” “It isn’t fine, and we should be doing everything we can to protect them so enough of the gaslighting. I’m absolutely sick of it.”

Lisa said the video was “then retweeted and endorsed by Dr. Eric Feigl-Ding, leading epidemiologist and Senior Fellow at the Federation of American Scientists in Washington DC. He retweeted it because the claims are a lie. One in seven children get Long COVID and suffer symptoms 15 weeks later. The latest figures are that in Scotland, one in 50 children will be hospitalised through COVID. That cannot be described as a ‘very low risk.’

“Then, just three days into the school reopening, there was a COVID positive case in primary year two and the school is just advising pupils with symptoms to get a test. There’s no mandatory isolation, the ‘bubbles’ are not shut. It’s just laughable. COVID is in school, and they are saying you have to send your children in.”

She told the WWS that, in contrast to her son’s school, Woodfield have “never provided any work for my daughter for the duration of the pandemic. Not one lesson.

“I don’t care what they put in the little book as the reason for absence so long as they don’t threaten me with fines and prosecution. I want my children in school, but it’s just got to be safe. Not at this moment in time.

“It looks like Wigan LA want to make an example of me but I’m completely resolute. If they’re that stupid to take me to court, I will go to every news outlet in the country and make a big show of it.

“Schools can authorise absences or choose to bully parents. I’m not having people telling me it’s fine for children to catch COVID. I’m not having people telling me that classrooms are safe because they’re lies. I know children already learning at home when schools reopened because they’ve got COVID and they have not even been reopened a week.

“Wigan is Labour-run. I’ve got in writing from Lisa Nandy [Labour’s Shadow Foreign Secretary and Wigan MP] and Kate Green [the party’s Shadow Education Secretary] that the Labour Party is ‘firmly’ against punitive measures in the pandemic against parents like myself. But their council is doing that. Official Labour policy is not to fine parents but they’re doing it anyway.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* and Socialist Equality Parties internationally are fighting for the strategy to eradicate COVID-19 through the building of rank-and-file committees, independent of the unions and big business parties. This is in opposition to both the policies of herd immunity and “mitigation,” relying primarily on vaccination, which it describes as “‘herd immunity’ with palliative care.”

Asked what she thought of claims that eradication is not possible, Lisa said, “That’s a lie. The only way out of this pandemic is Zero COVID. It’s the only policy. I would prefer one big lockdown, to get rid of it altogether, rather than this constant stream of death. Eradication is a viable policy. Look at Taiwan, Thailand, China and New Zealand. It’s not some wild fantasy. It’s not a pipedream. It’s the only way to deal with it.”

“I don’t care if they say attendance in unsafe schools is mandatory. It’s wrong. There are a lot of things that were mandatory and were wrong. There is a human law in all this. The Nuremburg trials showed that ‘we were just following orders’ was not a good line of defence. The policies that the government is pursuing and headteachers and local authorities are blindly and religiously sticking to is murderous. They’re going to have blood on their hands.”



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