

## The Covid-19 pandemic's long-lasting academic aftermath

Recent research has revealed the enduring impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on today's American and British schools. The corpus focuses on students' current backwardness and struggles: while the July 2024 article from *The New York Times* (Doc.1) highlights the difficulties of very young American pupils, the BBC article published in March 2024 (Doc.2) analyses the issue of secondary school absenteeism in Worcestershire, UK, and the scholarly article from Phys.org dated April 2024 (Doc.3) underlines the potential damage to GCSE results until the 2030s. Finally, the bar graph from NWEA Research (Doc.4) shows below average performance at US schools in 2022-23. The corpus raises the following question : to what extent has the pandemic impeded the academic development of young individuals in both the short and the long term ?

**The pandemic has exerted a multifaceted influence on children and teenagers. Document 1** emphasizes how younger children, particularly those in preschool and early elementary years, exhibit developmental delays. Older students, as shown in **Document 2**, have struggled with school attendance post-pandemic, sometimes leading to increased absenteeism, especially among students from disadvantaged backgrounds. **Document 3** further underscores that both cognitive and socio-emotional skills have been negatively impacted. Additionally, **Document 4** provides statistical evidence in America that older students have been disproportionately affected – students aged 11 to 14 have lost almost 20% of their proficiency in mathematics and reading compared to pre-pandemic levels.

**Multiple interconnected factors account for these changes. Document 1** outlines how parental stress, increased screen time and limited social interactions contributed to the underdevelopment of key skills in younger children. **Document 3** expands on these issues by highlighting the importance of socio-emotional skills – which have been challenged by the pandemic – in academic success. Meanwhile, **Document 2** discusses the psychological aspect, revealing that the loss of school routines during the pandemic has led to increased disengagement among teenagers even after the pandemic-related measures were lifted.

**The situation prompts reflection on the future opportunities and prospects of the young generation.** The impact on GCSE results and the effects on income mobility are expected to be long-lasting, as **Document 3** puts forward. However, despite significant setbacks, there is room for optimism, if fair help is provided as **Document 1** concludes. **Document 4** shows young students (aged 8 to 10) were not impacted or have recovered but **Document 1** raises concerns about even younger children. **Document 3** also highlights measures that could help students. Additionally, **Document 2** indicates that some schools have started implementing programs to help students gradually reintegrate into structured education, although progress remains slow. While the challenges remain substantial, strategic educational reforms and investments can help the current generation overcome these obstacles.

447 – 7 mots (sources et dates comptabilisées comme un seul mot chacune) = 440 mots