

30. April 2015, 06:13 Übertritt auf weiterführende Schulen

Grundschüler leiden unter hohem Stress

- Bayerns Viertklässler leiden vor der Vergabe der Übertrittszeugnisse für die weiterführenden Schulen unter hohem Stress, besagt eine Studie der Universität Würzburg.
- Demnach ist bei 16 Prozent der Schüler die Belastung so hoch, "dass im Grunde eine Gefährdung des Kinderwohls nicht mehr weit entfernt ist".
- Bayerns Kultusminister Ludwig Spaenle (CSU) verteidigt das Verfahren, wonach die Noten maßgeblich über die weitere Schullaufbahn entscheiden.

Von Roland Preuß

Grundschüler sind oft starkem Stress ausgesetzt, wenn sie für den Übertritt auf Gymnasium oder Realschule einen bestimmten Notenschnitt erreichen müssen. Dies ist das Ergebnis einer Studie der Universität Würzburg, über die die *Süddeutschen Zeitung* (Donnerstagsausgabe) vorab berichtet. Demnach fühlen sich auch Eltern von Viertklässlern in Bayern, das Notenschnitte vorschreibt, deutlich mehr belastet als hessische Eltern, wo die Lehrer Empfehlungen für die weiterführende Schulart aussprechen. Die Wissenschaftler plädieren für neue Regeln beim Übertritt.

Die Studie kommt zu einem eindeutigen Ergebnis: Fast jeder zweite bayerische Dritt- und Viertklässler zeige erhöhte Stresswerte, die zum Teil "alarmierend" seien, sagt Heinz Reinders, Professor für Empirische Bildungsforschung an der Universität Würzburg und Co-Autor der Studie. In Hessen dagegen gibt nur gut ein Viertel der Eltern an, dass der Übergang ihr Kind sehr belaste. Ähnlich sieht es bei den Eltern selbst aus: Mehr als die Hälfte (54,6 Prozent) der bayerischen Eltern von Viertklässlern empfinden das Übertrittsverfahren als belastend, in Hessen ist es nur knapp ein Drittel. Besonders Eltern ohne Abitur oder Studium stresst die Situation oft, sie fühlen sich offenbar überfordert, während Akademikereltern ihr Kind leichter unterstützen können.

Bestimmte Schüler sind laut Reinders besonders gefährdet: die mit einem Notenschnitt von 2,66 zwischen Real- und Mittelschule stehen, also zwischen dem gängigen Weg zum Mittleren Abschluss, der fast alle Ausbildungsberufe eröffnet, und dem gängigen Weg zum Hauptschulabschluss, der oft nicht für eine Lehrstelle reicht. Ein weiteres Risiko sind Eltern, die einen besseren Bildungsabschluss erwarten, als die Kinder realistischere leisten können. "Immerhin bei 16 Prozent der bayerischen Viertklässler ist die Stressbelastung so hoch, dass im Grunde eine Gefährdung des Kinderwohls nicht mehr weit entfernt ist", sagt Reinders.

Der Bildungsforscher fordert, verbindliche Notenschnitte durch Beratungen und Empfehlungen zu ersetzen. Bayerns Kultusminister Ludwig Spaenle (CSU) dagegen verteidigt das Verfahren. Sie seien die "sozial gerechteste Form der Entscheidung", sagte er der SZ.

Am kommenden Montag erhalten Bayerns Grundschüler ihre Übertrittszeugnisse. Deren Notenschnitt entscheidet grundsätzlich darüber, auf welcher Schulart ein Schüler weitermachen darf. Ähnliche Regeln gibt es laut Reinders in Brandenburg, Thüringen und Sachsen.

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30. April 2015 Übertrittszeugnis

Wie Schulempfehlung und soziale Selektion zusammenhängen

Am 4. Mai bekommen die Viertklässler an Bayerns Grundschulen ihre Übertrittszeugnisse ([hier finden Sie die wichtigsten Fragen und Antworten zum Übertritt](#)). Ein Notendurchschnitt von 2,33 (oder besser) aus den Zensuren in Mathematik, Deutsch und Heimat- und Sachunterricht berechtigt ohne weitere Aufnahmetests zum Gang auf das vom Gros der Eltern bevorzugte Gymnasium.

Über diese verbindliche Schulartempfehlung streiten Bildungsexperten seit vielen Jahren. In mehreren Bundesländern zählt beim Übertritt auf die weiterführenden Schulen ausschließlich der Wille der Eltern. Forscher Klaus Klemm erklärt im Interview, warum er eigentlich gegen die aktuelle bayerische Praxis ist, das Vorgehen aber trotzdem für alternativlos hält.

Interview von Matthias Kohlmaier

SZ: Herr Klemm, Sie plädieren für eine bindende Schulempfehlung beim Übertritt von der Grundschule auf die weiterführenden Schulen. Warum?

Klaus Klemm: Ich würde es etwas differenzierter formulieren. Die bindende Schulempfehlung wird in der öffentlichen Debatte meist als sozial-selektive Maßnahme wahrgenommen - gegen diese Einschätzung wehre ich mich. Im Gegenteil: Je mehr der Übergang von der Grundschule an die weiterführenden Schulen an Noten gekoppelt ist, desto weniger sozial-selektiv ist es. Je bildungsnäher eine Familie ist, desto größer die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass sich Eltern über die Empfehlung des Grundschullehrers hinwegsetzen. Das Ärztteehepaar wird seine Kinder also mit größerer Wahrscheinlichkeit aufs Gymnasium schicken, auch wenn die Grundschule sie dafür nicht für geeignet hält. Wenn aber ein Kind aus dem Arbeitermilieu oder mit Migrationshintergrund gesagt bekommt: "Das reicht nicht fürs Gymnasium!", werden sich die Eltern kaum über dieses Urteil hinwegsetzen.

Warum ist das so?

Bildungsferne Familien neigen eher dazu, die Autorität des Lehrers und der Schule als gegeben hinzunehmen und sich nicht dagegen aufzulehnen. Unverbindliche Schulempfehlung und freier Elternwille bei der Wahl der weiterführenden Schule tragen so dazu bei, dass die soziale Schere weiter auseinandergeht. Im politischen Diskurs heißt es zwar oft, die bindende Schulempfehlung schade Schülern aus niedrigen sozialen Schichten, ich halte meine Interpretation aber für weitaus einleuchtender.

Heinz Reinders von der Universität Würzburg hat in einer Studie herausgefunden, dass die Ungewissheit über die Schulzuweisung bei Kindern massiven Stress auslösen kann. Ein weiteres Argument gegen die bindende Empfehlung.

Von Anfang der Grundschule an stehen die Kinder unter Druck, das stimmt. Ihr müsst gut sein, damit ihr aufs Gymnasium könnt, heißt es immer wieder. Wir sprechen hier tatsächlich von der Mehrheit der Eltern, die diesen Weg unbedingt gehen wollen und dabei den Stress der Kinder in Kauf nehmen. Früher war Nachhilfeunterricht ein Instrument, das eingesetzt wurde, wenn das Sitzenbleiben drohte. Heute bekommen viele Grundschul Kinder trotz guten Notenschnitts bereits Nachhilfe.

Sind Schulleistungen in Form von Noten überhaupt ein sinnvolles Mittel, um die Eignung eines Viertklässlers für die weiterführende Schule zu prüfen?

Schulnoten sind ein sehr wenig belastbares und subjektives Instrument. Es passiert häufig, dass ein Lehrer eine bestimmte Leistung als gymnasialtauglich empfindet, während ein Kollege das ganz anders sieht. Es gibt Experimente zum Thema, bei denen Lehrern vor der Bewertung von Aufsätzen von Viertklässlern gesagt wurde, die Väter der Schüler seien zum Beispiel Ärzte oder Bauarbeiter. Die Arztkinder bekamen bessere Noten.

Wie ließe sich der Übertritt objektiver gestalten?

Wenn es nach mir ginge, gäbe es das Problem gar nicht. Schüler würden nach der vierten Klasse weiterhin gemeinsam unterrichtet und je nach Begabung durch individuelle Betreuung gefördert. So war die Gesamtschule ursprünglich geplant. Leider wurde sie dann als weitere Schulform neben den bestehenden Schulen eingeführt. Das Sortieren nach der vierten Klasse ist in jedem Fall zu früh. Mein Kollege Jürgen Baumert hat für eine Studie Viertklässler mit ähnlichen Voraussetzungen über Jahre begleitet und festgestellt: Die, die aufs Gymnasium kamen, hatten sich bis zur neunten Klasse deutlich besser entwickelt als die, die auf Real- oder Hauptschule gewechselt waren. Trotz ähnlicher Voraussetzungen hängt die Entwicklung eines Kindes stark von einem fördernden und fordernden Umfeld ab. Dennoch bin ich mir im Klaren, dass die Idee der Gesamtschule in Deutschland in absehbarer Zeit nicht umgesetzt werden wird.

Warum?

Der Zug ist schlicht abgefahren. Als die Quote der Schüler, die aufs Gymnasium wollten, zu Beginn der siebziger Jahren noch bei etwa 20 Prozent lag, da hätte man den Umbruch wagen können. Heute drängen etwa 50 Prozent der Kinder aufs Gymnasium. Wer nun am System rühren wollte, hätte sofort mit heftigem Widerstand von deren Eltern zu kämpfen - davor wird sich die Politik hüten.

Bleibt die Frage, welche validen Instrumente man verwenden könnte, um Kinder sinnvoll auf Gymnasium, Real- und Hauptschule zu verteilen.

Wenn es ein solches Instrument gäbe, durch das Schüler wirklich ihren Leistungen und Perspektiven entsprechend auf die Schularten verteilt werden könnten, wären meine Argumente für die Gesamtschule deutlich schwächer.

Sind Sie nun für oder gegen die bindende Empfehlung?

Im Grundsatz bin ich dagegen. Man darf aber nicht mit der Begründung argumentieren, damit würden die Bildungsfernen benachteiligt. Und solange sich kein Weg findet, die Schüler besser zuzuordnen als anhand ihrer Schulnoten, solange halte ich die bindende Schulempfehlung durch die Lehrkräfte trotz aller Schwächen und Gegenargumente für einen geeigneten Weg.

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Diversity in school leadership: the higher up you go, the harder you have to fight

As a black woman and single mother, deputy headteacher Brenda Neburagho has broken a few glass ceilings. Here she talks stereotypes, role models and childcare

Holly Welham

Sunday 26 April 2015 08.00 BST

As a deputy head, Brenda Neburagho is among a disconcertingly small percentage of black teachers to have made it into a leadership role. Only 6.7% of the teaching force is from an ethnic minority group compared to 12.8% of the population as a whole. And the number of headteachers who are BME is even lower - just 2.4%.

Neburagho says she has never had someone be openly racist at work, but at times she has encountered prejudice. "The situations that I come across are much more subtle and this can make it harder to confront."

When she was promoted to a senior role at a previous school, for example, some staff were initially unwilling to accept her leadership position. "They would bypass me and ask other members of the senior team questions concerning my area of responsibility," she says. They'd also question her authority: "If there was a policy being changed, sometimes staff would make comments like, 'Can you go and check that with so and so?' It was really frustrating".

There's also sometimes a stereotypical view of the roles young black people choose within education, Neburagho says; people at senior networking events often presume she's head of year.

Part of Neburagho's role involves training other senior leaders across London, and at a recent conference she found the audience directing questions at other speakers instead of her. It was only when she spent time focusing on her qualifications and experience that people paid attention. "I really had to prove that I was someone who was able to teach them before they respected me," she says. "The other panel member was female and of a similar age to me. The only difference was that she was white and I was black."

But the deputy of head of St Matthew Academy in Blackheath, London, dispels these myths as quickly as possible - for example by mentioning something that's relevant to her role. When they discover that she's a deputy head the response is often, "Oh, well done," which can feel "quite patronising".

One of the hardest situations she's been in was several years ago, when a student at a previous school made a racist comment towards her. The school didn't take what happened seriously, the parents weren't spoken to and the student wasn't sanctioned. It was treated as a trivial incident and the pupil was "essentially allowed to get away with it". This lack of support from the school was one of the reasons she decided to leave. "As an ambitious woman, this was not the type of environment in which I could see my career flourishing," she says.

Neburagho grew up with five siblings in Brockley, London, in a low-income household. "Statistically, I'm someone who you'd say was least likely to make it into senior leadership," she says. "I'm black, a woman from a poor background, and I spent the first five years of my life in foster care."

Thanks to the support of a wonderful primary school teacher who saw her potential and encouragement from her father, she won a scholarship to a private secondary school. She went on to study biology and health science at university, followed by a master's degree in health education and health promotion. She entered education 16 years ago as an IT teacher at a further education college and after a few years retrained as a secondary science teacher.

Although Neburagho experienced a lot of success when applying for jobs lower down the career ladder, it was increasingly difficult the further up she moved. "As I climbed the ladder I realised that I had to prove myself more than the next person."

She says that this hasn't simply been about the colour of her skin - gender has also played a role. One of the most common things she's experienced is being ignored in meetings, and it's something she's seen happen to a lot of other women.

What she would see as being passionate has at times been taken as her being "overly emotional", with comments such as "you shouldn't take this so much to heart" being made.

Neburagho, who became a senior leader five years ago, has never been asked if she has children in an interview, but senior colleagues have sometimes presumed that she couldn't take on certain responsibilities, such as leading school trips, because she's a single mother.

"My daughter is 15 now, but when she was younger I would go above and beyond to make whatever arrangements I could because I was afraid it would hold me back," she says.

When it comes to helping more women into leadership, she says providing affordable childcare is crucial. And she'd like to see people's mindsets change, particularly when it comes to single mothers. "There can be the perception, 'How can they do it all?' And there are some people I know who really struggle," she says. "But there are support systems in place. It is possible."

Something she's really pleased about is that she's starting to hear a lot more men say that they need to check childcare responsibilities before taking on an extra task. "It's great that they're saying it openly," she says. "I hope it changes attitudes."

Earlier this month, the National Union of Teachers announced that it was going to write to headteachers in England and Wales asking them to ensure that the people they recruit reflect the communities they serve.

Does she think that this is good idea? "Yes I do. But I'd also like to see more people from black and ethnic minority groups running teacher training programmes." As well as helping people from these groups feel supported right from the beginning of their career, it would hopefully also mean that the needs of these students were better incorporated into courses. This is something, she says, that rarely happens now.

Neburagho believes that more needs to be done to support school students from ethnic minorities. She'd like there to be more space for them to learn about inspiring figures from their communities and for children to have the opportunity to study African languages, such as Yoruba, at school: "Many schools have a high percentage of pupils whose parents speak Yoruba. But rather than helping students excel using this knowledge, it's not on the curriculum."

And having people such as herself in leadership posts is crucial, she says, if we want to raise aspirations. "Students come up to me and say 'Oh, I've told my mum about you', and parents will say things like 'I think it's fantastic that you're in this position', so it obviously means a lot."

Targets for terror: the shocking data on school and university attacks

The horrors of the Peshawar school killings made headlines but, as the graphs below show, from Iraq to India children and teachers live under threat

Sarah Marsh

Thursday 30 April 2015 07:00 BST

The storming of a military school in Peshawar by the Taliban, who killed 132 children and nine teachers, horrified the world. But it wasn't an isolated event; attacks on educational institutions seem to be increasing. Schools and universities everywhere - from Nigeria to Kenya and Afghanistan - have been targeted in recent years.

Last year the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) published a report that documented deliberate attacks on schools, universities, their students and staff in order to provide data that could develop more effective policy in this area. It analysed conflicts in 70 countries between 2009 and 2013 and categorised how far they'd been affected. For example, places categorised as "very heavily affected" had experienced more than 1,000 attacks on schools and universities over the four years. These included arson, missile strikes, looting and armed occupation by army forces or guerrilla groups.

The director of the GCPEA, Diya Nijhowne, said: "Military strategy now all too commonly involves deliberately bombing schools and universities and murdering, maiming, abducting and raping their students and staff."

The GCPEA research is based on extensive data gathered from 2009-12 and key incidents in the first nine months of 2013. Data from a wide range of sources was analysed, including United Nations (UN) monitoring and and media reports. The information was cross-checked for accuracy but the report notes that it was not possible to verify every incident.

Which countries are worse affected?

Afghanistan, Colombia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and Syria were worst affected, according to the GCPEA report. These places had experienced 1,000 or more attacks on schools, universities, staff and students or there had been 1,000 or more attacks on personnel including students, teachers and other educational staff, or facilities had been used for military purposes.

One of the most dangerous countries in which to be a teacher is Colombia. Between 2009 and 2012, 140 teachers were murdered in the country and more than 1,000 received death threats.

Teachers in Colombia are targeted for a number of reasons. "Some teachers in remote areas, where armed non-state groups are strong and schools are the only visible presence of the state, are accused by illegal armed groups of collaborating with the enemy," the report notes. Educators are also targeted for trying to lead community efforts to protect children from sexual violence and child recruitment, as well as other efforts to challenge the armed groups' activities.

Terror attacks on schools are rising

Another report by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, published late last year, analysed terror attacks on schools and colleges around the world from 1970 to 2013. Researchers at the University of Maryland analysed data from the Global Terrorism Database and news media.

The report included attacks against schools, teachers or guards protecting school sites, as well as attacks against university professors and teaching staff, and school buses. It excludes attacks against military schools.

Terrorism in this context was defined as: "The threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation."

Between 1970 and 2013 there were more than 3,400 terrorist attacks targeting educational institutions across 110 countries. There was a sharp increase in attacks in 2004.

The report notes that many attacks on educational targets were less likely to cause deaths. More than 70% of all terrorist attacks on educational targets between 1970 and 2013 (2,365 attacks) caused no deaths. This is because many assaults were on unoccupied school and university buildings and intended to intimidate communities rather than kill or injure.

The country with the most terrorist attacks on educational institutions was Pakistan, where 753 were targeted. Of these incidents, 96% (724) took place between 2004 and 2013. However, unlike the attack in Peshawar, most were not lethal. Russia, Iraq, and Nigeria experienced more fatal attacks on educational targets than Pakistan.

In Nigeria the radical group Boko Haram has been deliberately attacking educational institutions since 2008. The table below shows the tactics of terrorist attacks in Nigeria from 1988-2013.

The study also shows that such attacks are not restricted to the developing world. There were a number of incidents in the 70s in America involving a range of groups, such as radical students and opponents of the Vietnam war.

Why are schools targeted?

The reported motives for attacks are varied, according to the GCPEA report. They include everything from destroying symbols of government control to blocking girls' education. In some incidents there are multiple reasons for the attack.

Erin Miller, programme manager at the Global Terrorism Database, said: "The question about why terrorists attack educational institutions is difficult because there are likely many reasons and they're not all the same for every perpetrator." She adds that motives may include the intention to shock or gain attention and educational institutions being seen as "soft" targets because they are often without a great deal of security.

What can be done?

“There needs to be better monitoring and reporting of attacks on education,” says Nijhowne. She adds that there also needs to be accountability for attacks, with perpetrators brought to justice.

World at School - an international movement that co-ordinates the efforts of teachers, businesses, faith groups and many others to ensure education is a global priority - is campaigning for the UN security council take urgent action to protect children in schools.

It also wants all governments to support a new declaration on safe schools led by the Norwegian government. This would outlaw attacks on schools, colleges and universities as crimes against humanity. Finally, the movement wants funding for schools in conflict situations increased; currently only 1% of humanitarian aid is spent on education.

Should Googling in exams be allowed?

A vital skill or further dumbing down? Lola Okolosie and Chris McGovern debate whether Google searches should be permitted during GCSE and A-level exams

Lola Okolosie and Chris McGovern

Thursday 30 April 2015 17:52 BST

Lola Okolosie: ‘Why exclude Googling? It’s a cornerstone of life’

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the OCR exam board, has raised a few educational eyebrows by suggesting that pupils should be able to use Google during GCSE and A-level exams.

It’s the sort of idea that gets Govian mouths frothing. Righteous indignation will no doubt ensue. The old grudge that current exams are easier and, its corollary, that our lazy young threaten the nation’s future prosperity, will be trotted out.

It’s perhaps best to concede that this is something that would work better in some subjects – history and geography come to mind – than others, and only then for particular questions. Colleagues in the languages department might well despair at the thought of exam scripts peppered with inexplicable phraseology gathered from Google Translate.

Googling is a verb in common use precisely because almost all of us armed with a computer and internet connection do it. From checking out key historical facts when you’ve lost your bearings in Wolf Hall to finding out how to bake the best brownie, we are all guilty. Why then pretend this isn’t a fact of 21st-century life, an important part of how grownups in the world of work conduct their research? The role of a teacher is varied. We are here to inspire, encourage, excite and prepare pupils for the wider world. It is bizarre to omit this cornerstone of modern life from our pupils’ most important educational experiences.

As Dawe sees it: “Everyone uses Google if there is a question. It is more about understanding what results you’re seeing rather than keeping all of that knowledge in your head, because that’s not how the modern world works.” His distinction is important because this isn’t about letting pupils cheat their way to success but rather how they can best apply critical understanding, doing so in a manner that complements the world we all now operate within. Without a solid knowledge foundation, pupils won’t be able to conduct a quick and fruitful Google search anyway. We’ve all been there – if you don’t know what you’re looking for, chances are you’ve lost valuable lifetime trawling through much of the detritus that is on the web.

The idea of Google searches in exams should therefore not be read as yet another instance of our debilitating dependency on modern technology to make life undemanding. Just as rote learning is one important feature of a good education, so are skills that will develop lateral thinking. We don’t have to take an either-or approach, especially when we know that the two go well together.

Lola Okolosie is a teacher and writer

Chris McGovern: ‘It’s about knowledge, not internet searches’

Thanks to examination “experts”, we have seen huge grade inflation since the mid-1980s. The accompanying self-congratulation by teachers’ leaders and politicians has now diminished. More educationalists in England, at least, now recognise that so-called “skills” are not enough. Young people need to display substantial subject knowledge as part of the examination process.

We have been promised that the new generation of GCSEs and A-levels will be more rigorous in terms of such knowledge. Time will tell if this promise can be kept but, for sure, resorting in the future to Google-assisted examinations will be a retrograde step. It will be a step back to the current “knowledge-lite” learning that we desperately need to put behind us. The message to pupils preparing for exams will be: “Don’t worry about subject knowledge. You can look it up on the internet.” And, of course, this notion already seduces many teachers because it makes their life easier. The truth is that it is not the teaching of skills, often bogus or cross-curricula, that presents a challenge, but the teaching of subject knowledge.

We have a crisis of educational standards in our schools. Since 1953, spending in real terms has increased by 900% and yet, according to the OECD, and uniquely in the developed world, our recent school-leavers are less literate and less numerate than their grandparents, educated in the 1950s. We have slipped into mid-table mediocrity on the Programme of International Student Assessment (Pisa) international rankings of educational attainment – up to three years behind the best of the Asia Pacific and some way behind developing countries such as Vietnam. In Europe we are ranked level with Slovakia, a country that spends about 50% less per capita on education. Many of our universities have to run catch-up courses for their new undergraduates. Employers are consistently telling us that too many school-leavers are unemployable.

These are serious matters and we need a solution. But all that Google-assisted exams will do is to further undermine the importance of subject knowledge and make things worse.

Chris McGovern is chairman of the Campaign for Real Education