

Questionnaire

UK COVID-19 Inquiry: Module 2 - Rule 9 Request to Dr Gavin Morgan - Reference:

M2/SAGE/01/GXM

Please provide the following information:

1. A brief overview of your qualifications, career history, professional expertise and major publications.

Professional Expertise

- 30 years experience in UK education
- 22 years post-qualification experience in educational psychology
- 15 years at University College London – teaching and curriculum development into educational psychology doctorates
- 10 years committee member of the British Psychological Society – Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP)
- Chair of British Psychological Society, Division of Educational and Child Psychology, 2019

Research experience and expertise in supporting children’s mental health

Employment

Academic & Professional Tutor, University College London	01.08.2009 – present
Senior Educational Psychologist, Northamptonshire	01.09.2017 – present
Area Senior Educational Psychologist, Cambridgeshire	01.09.2006 – 31.08.2016
Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist, Warwickshire	01.11.2004 - 31.08.2006
Educational Psychologist, Coventry City Council	01.09.2000 – 31.10.2004
Teacher, Northamptonshire	01.09.1995 – 31.08.1999

Education

Doctorate in Educational Psychology	University of Bristol	2011
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MEd (Educational Psychology)	University of Bristol	2000
PGCE	University of Leicester	1995
BSc Hons Psychology	University of Teesside	1993

Recent Publications

Morgan, G. (2016) 'Organisational Change: a solution-focused approach', *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 32 (2)

Sheffield, E.L., and Morgan, G. (2016) 'The perceptions and experiences of young people with a BESD/SEMH classification', *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 32 (4)

Jalali, R., and Morgan, G. (2017) 'They Won't Let Me Back' Comparing student perceptions across primary and secondary Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)' *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 22 (4)

Hamilton, P., and Morgan, G. (2018) 'An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful progression of students in alternative provision' *Educational and Child Psychology*, 35 (1)

McDonald, I., and Morgan, G. (2019) 'Same-sex parents' experiences of schools in England'. *Journal of GLBT Studies*, (15)

Vivash, J., and Morgan, G. (2019) 'The Role of Educational Psychologists in Fuelling the Narrative of the 'Velcro TA'' *Frontiers in Education* (4, 66)

Hagarty, I., and Morgan, G. (2020) Social-emotional learning for children with learning disabilities: a systematic review. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 36 (2)

2. A list of the groups (i.e. SAGE and/or any of its sub-groups) in which you have been a participant, and the relevant time periods.

SPI-B – March 2020 – present

HEFE advisory sub-group

Children’s Task and Finish Group

3. An overview of your involvement with those groups between January 2020 and February 2022, including:

a. When and how you came to be a participant;

Invited to join SPI-B in April 2020. There was contact made to the British Psychological Society – seeking someone with expertise in educational and child psychology, and my name was recommended.

I then contributed to SPI-B meetings, and particular relevant subgroups

b. The number of meetings you attended, and your contributions to those meetings;

I attended every SPI-B online meeting which followed – in April/May 2020 these were often several times a week – it lessened over time, but at least weekly, sometimes daily for several months – and many of the subgroups would meet even more frequently – with responses requested in the evening to be delivered by 8.00am the following morning.

c. Your role in providing research, information and advice.

Discussion points as and when relevant to my area of expertise

4. A summary of any documents to which you contributed for the purpose of advising SAGE and/or its related subgroups on the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

5. A summary of any articles you have written, interviews and/or evidence you have given regarding the work of the above-mentioned groups and/or the UK's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please include links to those documents where possible.

I contributed to numerous documents – especially relating to the well-being of children.

I am not sure if this is what you mean by the question, but I also gave numerous interviews to TV news, radio news channels and newspapers – including an interview with the Observer which led their front page in June 2020.

6. Your views as to whether the work of the above-mentioned groups in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic (or the UK's response more generally) succeeded in its aims.

This may include, but is not limited to, your views on:

a. The composition of the groups and/or their diversity of expertise;

I think generally this was sound – with a breadth of expertise, although perhaps there was not enough expertise from similar psychologists in my field of expertise. I was quite often a lone voice when it came to discussions/thoughts around the impact of decisions made upon the well-being of children.

b. The way in which the groups were commissioned to work on the relevant issues;

Given the timescales and need for urgency of information and opinion, some reactive work was appropriate. There were some very short and tight timescales with information needed literally over-night sometimes, but this was understandable.

Expertise was requested from those specialists with particular interest and knowledge in specific areas, which again was appropriate.

b. The resources and support that were available;

My main concern here relates to some of the negative attention that I received following media interviews and exposure, and some of the worrying, aggressive and threatening emails that I received – over time there was some response to this from SAGE, although I presume that this was not anticipated beforehand. This could have easily escalated as it was relatively easy to see where I worked for example.

c. The advice given and/or recommendations that were made;

As stated above, I was often quite a lone voice in giving views that may not have been what was wanted – I felt at times that we were being encouraged to provide evidence that was supporting the narrative of SAGE and the government – ie, the wearing of face-coverings in schools by children, which I opposed.

d. The extent to which the groups worked effectively together;

I always felt that there was good spirit amongst the groups, and that despite my concerns of being a lone voice, we did get on well together, and worked effectively, especially the smaller working groups.

f. The extent to which applicable structures and policies were utilised and/or complied with and their effectiveness.

I am not too sure what is meant by this question – though there were many occasions when SPI-B made recommendations that were subsequently ignored by the government. I felt at times expert guidance and advice was ‘cherry-picked’ to suit the narrative. The government was ‘led by science’ when it suited the agenda, and certainly not all of the time.

7. Your views as to any lessons that can be learned from the UK’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular relating to the work of the above-mentioned groups.

Please describe any changes that have already been made, and set out any recommendations for further changes that you think the Inquiry should consider making.

My main point of concern is the ‘cherry-picking’ of advice, and that some large important issues, ie - school closures and the severe (and on-going) impact on well-being of children was ignored, and not given the attention that was warranted – especially when I was the only educational psychologist on

SPI-B – despite the positive ‘esprit de corps’ amongst us, at times decisions may have been affected by ‘group-think’, and dominant members of SPI-B.

I did at time, speak out in the media about this, to get a wider airing of my views, which I felt were important, but seemed to be going unheard in SAGE and wider government.

8. A brief description of documentation relating to these matters that you hold (including soft copy material held electronically). Please retain all such material. I am not asking for you to provide us with this material at this stage, but I may request that you do so in due course.

I only have draft copies of documents that I contributed to.