



The Telegraph FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION WELLINGTON COLLEGE



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WELLINGTON COLLEGE



FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION



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WELCOME TO THE FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION 2016



Photo: Nick Linford

John Dickens

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A sterling line-up of speakers ranging from the hilarious Rory Bremner, to Germaine Greer and pop sensation Will Young proved once again why the Festival of Education is the standout date in the calendar year for many sector professionals.

And that is not to mention the likes of *Black Box Thinking* author Matthew Syed, Piers Morgan and rugby world cup winning coach Clive Woodward who graced Wellington College's stunning surroundings over Thursday and Friday.

While weather best known for causing havoc at Glastonbury turned its attention this year on Berkshire, more than 1,000 education festival goers – many in wellies – got around to see more than 200 speakers who shared their ideas, thoughts and concerns about schools across the 20-or-so

stages dotted around the grounds.

Over our 16-page supplement we have tried to bring together the best from the festival to share the experience with you.

Page four covers the main tent which included a thought-provoking discussion around the dangers of the Ebacc from Bremner, and Sir Michael Wilshaw who delivered his last speech as the chief inspector (turn over to find out which Ofsted grade he awarded himself).

Page five includes Young, who offered his thoughts on how schools could change the language used around homosexuality, and assistant headteacher Iesha Small who explained how introverted teachers could flourish as school leaders.

The popular Battle of Ideas debates were as heated as ever and covered on pages six and seven.

The round-up includes arguments over whether schools are turning students into

Billy Camden

@BILLYCAMDEN

wimps, questions over the government's anti-radicalisation programme Prevent, and thoughts on a mental health timebomb in schools.

Pages ten and 11 get down to our classroom speakers. Teacher Kris Boulton confessed his worries about how the profession is viewed and urged his counterparts to "earn the right" to be considered as "prestigious", and school leader Simon Knight warned of the risks of special schools joining multi-academy trusts.

We then get into a split debate on the controversial use of high stakes primary testing and a warning from education consultant David Didau about experienced teachers using their intuition in the classroom.

For the sessions that we couldn't get to, we have a selection of expert pieces from education heavyweights such as academy trust chief Jon Coles, national

commissioner Sir David Carter and governance expert Emma Knights.

We round things up with interviews from a selection of speakers and visitors about their highlights from the two days, and why they love the Festival of Education.

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTORS

As new members of the festival team this year representing Wellington College, we are delighted to build on the extraordinary success that our former colleagues Sir Anthony Seldon and David James have achieved over seven years. To be the new custodians of that great legacy has been as exciting an experience as you can imagine. This year we faced many challenges from the biblical deluge on day one that severely disrupted travel plans to the tumult of Brexit on day two, but festival-goers remained upbeat and positive, showing great esprit de corps in the face of adversity.

To open the festival we were joined by Old Wellingtonian Rory Bremner who rallied the rain-soaked troops with a wide range of impressions including Tony Blair, Boris Johnson and former festival mainstay Michael Gove before concluding with a powerful personal appeal to teachers on how to enfranchise ADHD learners, of which he is one himself.

An exciting new strand this year was the "Unsafe Space" hosted by the Institute of Ideas and



Festival of Education director Louise Hunter and Terry Waite

curated by the irrepressible Kevin Rooney. After a year in which many voices in education were silenced notably in universities, we felt it important to have these debates at the festival around issues such as whether trigger warnings were infantilising students, whether the Prevent strategy of collecting data on students constituted spying and whether the mental health "crisis" was as apocryphal as portrayed in the media.

Continuing in the spirit of giving silenced voices a platform, we were delighted to welcome Germaine Greer this year who delivered a colourful talk on what feminism means in a contemporary context, why we need to stop talking about equality and how "we know only too well how to smash things; we need to learn how to put them together again".

It was truly an honour to have Terry Waite join us this to speak about his almost five years of strict solitary confinement spent without books or any communication with the outside world. The lessons he shared in resilience and finding strength through adversity were an inspiration to teachers and students alike. Piers Morgan was at the festival again this year to provide a fascinating interview with Sir Clive Woodward on what makes a true champion.



Laura Mcinerney, Michael Wilshaw and Festival of Education director Shane Mann

Other highlights included an expanded student zone, an engaging talk from A. C. Grayling on the age of genius, Matthew Syed on Black Box thinking, another old Wellingtonian Will Young on the importance of talking about feelings, the incredible University in a Day and the Royal Shakespeare Company with BBC Learning closing the festival with scenes from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.'

The Telegraph festival of education represents not just an incredible opportunity for professional development but the chance to be part of a national conversation on the future of education. It is our hope you will join us again next year to be part of that conversation.

Carl Hendrick and Robin MacPherson, Wellington College Education Festival directors



RORY BREMNER

SIR MICHAEL WILSHAW

MAIN SPEAKERS

BEWARE THE DANGERS OF EBACC, WARNS COMEDIAN

Ebacc subjects are squeezing out the arts from the curriculum in a “terribly backwards step”, says impressionist and comedian Rory Bremner.

Opening the festival on Thursday, Bremner’s take on Boris Johnson proved popular, with much laughter in the main tent.

But the former Wellington College student offered a stark view when asked about the impact the government’s Ebacc is having on the curriculum.

“It’s a terribly backwards step... Of course we need maths, but to champion that at the expense of everything else is a narrow view of education. It fundamentally questions what education is about.”

Schools are now given incentives to ensure pupils study a set of subjects that include maths, English, science, a modern foreign language and either geography or history, under a government drive to move towards a more academic curriculum.

New performance measures will look at a pupil’s best eight GCSE grades, but at least five must be in these EBacc subjects – with many schools focusing pupils on these to gain a maximum score.

Bremner’s opening address followed a street dance display from IMD courtesy of the XXL Street Dance. “These dancers’ discipline, speed of thought and the choreography needed [to perform the dance] – let’s not lose that, let’s value it.”

Julian Thomas, master of Wellington College, echoed Bremner’s sentiment. “Anything that marginalises the arts or creative subjects is a tragedy.”

Bremner also appealed to teachers and professionals to do more to help children in their classrooms who have learning disabilities, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Bremner, who has ADHD, said: “Please look out for those children. If they are not noticed or diagnosed it’s easy for them to be excluded from class and be seen as disruptive. Then that escalator starts – from classroom to courtroom.”

He told teachers: “There are a lot of techniques that appeal, engage and inspire people with ADHD that actually work even better for people at the top end of the class.”

Bremner, who described ADHD as his “greatest friend and worst enemy”, said those with the disorder were some of the “most creative, energetic and positive people” – naming businessman Sir Richard Branson, singer will.i.am and Olympian Michael Phelps.

He urged delegates to find out what they could from GPs and their peers at the festival and “take the issue seriously”.

“There are 500,000 children that could be liberated; that would be transformational.”

‘I was a chief inspector in a hurry’

Sir Michael Wilshaw has graded his time at the helm of the education watchdog as “Ofsted outstanding”.

He gave the rating to *Schools Week* after an impassioned keynote speech in which he also offered a rare apology to those he had offended.

The chief inspector stands down later this year with Ofqual chair Amanda Spielman due to take over.

In one of his final speeches in office, Wilshaw made an impassioned plea for more action to drive up education standards for the country’s poorest children “who we are still letting down”.

He appeared initially to blame headteachers for not closing the attainment gap.

“As a headteacher, you’re going to get a decent Ofsted, probably, if overall your scores are pretty good – if you get over various thresholds.

“Inspectors ask, ‘But what are you doing for your poor children?’, and heads will say ‘Yes, we know, that’s a target for us in the future’.

“They are then left alone for the next five years. Blame us if you like for not failing schools that don’t do well by their poorest children, but then we would have 60 to 70 per cent of schools that are less good in the country – and what message would that give?”

He said Ofsted’s new shorter inspection framework could fix this. “I hope my successor focuses on it in the way I did and... is tough on those schools that consistently underperform poor kids.”

When asked about the merits of a peer-review system, he said: “Ofsted is a key driver for school improvement.

“I wish I could say that a less accountable system would work, but I don’t think it would. Ofsted has enormously driven improvement... Peer review might be 100 years away but it’s not going to be around in the next few years.”

Wilshaw started his speech in unusually repentant mood: “If I have stirred up emotions from time to time and caused offence by speaking bluntly, then I apologise.”

He described himself as a “chief inspector in a hurry, impatient to bring about improvement through inspection.

He then highlighted what he called the “continuing failure to improve the lives of our poorest children”.

He listed “five main culprits” for this: political ideologues; those who argue children do not need structure in school (whom he labels “structural vandals”); a constricting curriculum for young people who choose apprenticeships; poor teaching; and poor leadership.

WILL YOUNG



IESHA SMALLS



SINGER CALLS FOR BUDDY SYSTEM FOR GAY PUPILS

Singer Will Young has called for schools to adopt a "buddy system" to change the language used around homosexuality.

Young, a campaigner for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) rights, urged teachers to create an environment within their schools that fostered inclusivity – including ending the use of "gay" as a pejorative term.

The former Wellington College pupil suggested the nationwide introduction of a buddy system, where an LGBT pupil was paired with a fellow pupil – normally someone older who could provide a mentor-like role.

"In America there is a nationwide system where someone who is LGBT will find a straight ally. I always wanted to have this.

"It's a great way [to change the language in a school], they [the mentor] will stand up and say 'I don't accept this'.

"It takes a brave person. But one person saying to a group of people 'I find that offensive', and people listen. Then it spreads.

"There are systems over here, but I wish there was one nationwide. I'll bash the government over that."

In 2014, the government paid out more

than £2 million to eight organisations to help prevent homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying.

But Young said it was not enough. "When I look at the money being spent in other areas, it doesn't marry up.

"There needs to be more money. The £2 million from Nicky Morgan is not enough, by far."

Young said he didn't feel safe enough to be openly gay during his school years, but said we are "in a much better place now".

But he warned: "We've come so far with legal rights for adults that we think it's all done and dusted, but it isn't."

"For a young gay person, they

have no sanctuary at school or home, there's nowhere to go. We must look at the language people are using in our schools. It starts with all of us."

He said that race was tackled through "reclaiming the language and empowerment", adding: "Why's that not being done for young LGBT people?"

He said teachers could change the school environment to cut out this language. "We need to tell pupils while this might happen there [use of homophobic words at home, for instance], in this school this is what the rules are and this is how we are going to educate you and communicate to you."



WHY INTROVERTS MAKE GOOD SCHOOL LEADERS

Introverted teachers have five key skills that will help them flourish as school leaders, an assistant headteacher told delegates.

Iesha Small, of Kings Langley school in Hertfordshire, delivered one of the final festival sessions on Friday when she took delegates through five different qualities she believed introverts – which she said was her personality type – could bring to school leadership.

The first was listening skills. Introverts were "classically not overly-dominating people" when it came to conversations, which allowed them to listen carefully to others.

"If people are listened to, they feel valued and it leads to the other person trusting you.

"For leadership in schools, if you are a good listener you can deliver coaching sessions."

Second, the "quiet passions" of introverts allowed them to have a "long-lasting love of what they do.

"If you are passionate about the students you will constantly do your best and put yourself in situations that you are not comfortable in."

Small said the third trait was a "cautious and considered" nature.

"Introverts can be accused of being a little bit indecisive. We can be a little quiet and

not come up with loads of ideas, but when we do come out with something people know it is going to be well considered and thought through.

"This is useful in different situations, particularly in terms of pastoral teams. Whenever there are kids having massive arguments my colleague, who has this trait, is very good at taking a step back and not saying much, to come to a good conclusion."

Small then mentioned "observation and noticing". She gave an example of one student who was constantly sent out of a variety of lessons but it wasn't until she observed the problem that it was acted upon.

"I was able to tell other members of staff from the different subjects that this one student needed a different approach and they were able to work together to find a resolve."

Small said the fifth trait was independence and self-sufficiency.

"If you are a school leader you are going to have to work on your own in some situations and do something that you are not going to like.

"You need to be self-sufficient and not be bothered about what people think of you to make a decision that is best for the school."



BATTLE OF IDEAS



Q: TRIGGER WARNING: ARE WE TURNING STUDENTS INTO WIMPS?

John Dickens

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Schools have stayed silent while risk-taking opportunities for pupils have been eroded – resulting in youngsters being “mollycoddled into cottonwool kids”, said author Claire Fox.

The first session of the popular Battle of Ideas kicked off on Friday morning with panellist Fox, director of the Institute of Ideas, arguing that schools were sapping the morale and resilience from pupils.

“Teachers have adopted policies that have sapped resilience away from pupils and deny pupils the tools to cope. We are leaving them exposed.

“Education has gone along with it. [They need to] take ownership of it and have the courage to not keep flattering the young.”

She gave the example of “health and safety mania” taking away opportunities, such as pupils playing conkers, while campaigns tried to end contact sports in schools.

Fox also said anti-bullying agencies have “invaded” schools, expanding the definitions of “bullying” to include “teasing, spreading jokes and being left out of friendship groups”.

“It’s irresponsible to stir up these anxieties. It undermines pupils’ coping mechanisms about what are,

essentially, only words.”

But Phil Beadle, a literacy consultant and English teacher, said he “struggled to understand how any force at looking why bullying was potentially damaging was in any way causally responsible for perceived fragility in certain generations”.

He added: “Grit and resilience is being forced on kids that already have a hell of a lot of grit and resilience.”

Fox argued that pupils now “find it difficult to hear challenging ideas”.

But Beadle said that, in his experience, it was adults that were likely to take offence, not youngsters.

“The rampant idiocy of taking offence is something I’m profoundly offended by.”

Ian Morris, head of wellbeing at Wellington College, said the education system challenged pupils and allowed them to do extraordinary things every day.

He also said evidence showed that the present generation of pupils did not need to rely on the “crutches of wimpishness” that earlier generations did, such as nicotine and alcohol.

But he said: “Pupils are suffering from a school system that can undermine their strength. The pervasive culture of instrumentalism in schools, allowed by weak leadership and Ofsted putting the emphasis on wrong things, undermines children’s autonomy and their ability to think

freely and critically – although they are pretty good at doing that anyway.”

He also hit out at the culture of therapeutic education that “views all young people as essentially broken” and the “poverty of political debate in Britain”.

He said the latter was making youngsters selfish and narcissistic. “The current climate of political apathy and individualism is really corrosive and making children wimpish.”

Deana Pucci, founder of The RAP (raising awareness and prevention) Project and a former assistant district attorney of New York City, told delegates: “We haven’t made kids paranoid enough.

“The reason why so many youngsters in the past haven’t come forward about sexual abuse is because they weren’t paranoid enough.”

She said parents and teachers needed to realise the pressures that youngsters were under, highlighting access to pornography and early sexualisation, which affected their mental health.

“They are dealing with complex issues. When I was teased, I could go home and close my door. These kids can’t – there’s Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat.”

She said the answer was to educate young people about the potential dangers of the modern world.



IAN MORRIS



KEVIN ROONEY



DEANA PUCCI



PHIL BEADLE

BATTLE 2



Q: Is Prevent turning teachers into spies?

A government programme aimed at stopping youngsters being drawn into terrorism is creating a climate of "suspicion and mistrust", claimed headteacher Terry James.

The second session of the Battle of Ideas asked whether the government's anti-radicalisation programme Prevent was "turning teachers into spies".

James, head of Queen's school in Hertfordshire, said he agreed with Labour MP Andy Burnham that the Prevent brand had become so toxic it "had to go."

"There's a climate of suspicion and mistrust, instead of eradicating it [radicalisation], it is making conditions for it to flourish."

He described the Prevent training he was "subjected to", as one of the "most depressing and annoying experiences of my professional life".

The consultants delivering the training refused to take any questions and claimed the training course was not anti-Muslim and was relevant to both primary and secondary heads.

"But of 20 case studies, 19 were about Muslim radicalisation. One at the end, which looked like a real after-thought, was a young lad in the north being encouraged to join the English Defence League."

He said none of the slides featured primary-aged pupils: "If I had been a Muslim or a primary school teacher I would have been even more annoyed."

Liz Watts, research director of EdComs, said a recent survey of 112 teachers by her organisation found 50 per cent thought the Prevent strategy was effective in their schools.

But she said that many believed Prevent had become "one dimensional", noting some were concerned it did not help schools where pupils were at risk of being radicalised by extreme right-wing groups.

"Teachers are reacting

against the need to provide a more balanced view. Schools do not see it as the answer to all their problems."

Zubeda Limbada, founding director of social enterprise ConnectJustice, said some teachers felt their ability to debate was being "undermined as they have to be the vanguard to prevent pupils being drawn into terrorism".

That was echoed by Toby Marshall, who has taught sociology and philosophy in further and higher education.

"Truth, openness and transparency is the cornerstone of a liberal education. Pupils are free to express their views without fear of monitoring."

"If we value free speech then we should re-enact it. Prevent shuts down free speech."

However, Watts said 70 per cent of teachers reported they were confident to challenge extremist ideas by students.

"When ideas are presented before them, yes they can deal with them and talk about them, but actually identifying those students seems a step too far. That seems to be the nub of the issue."

"Teachers do feel schools are encouraging debate and discussion around terrorism and extremism. It's not that debates are being shut down, but identifying and categorising individual students is where we seem to be falling short."

But Limbada said her work with different communities found that Muslim pupils felt targeted by the strategy.

"Prevent, if done wrong, has serious consequences. We need all young people to be able to air grievances in safe spaces."

But Marshall added: "One of the greatest obstacles to win over the hearts and minds of the next generation is fear and uncertainty over political ideas, and anxieties over unintended outcomes of our discussion."

"Prevent might be causing problems to this, but if not Prevent, then what?"

Zubeda Limbada



Q: MENTAL HEALTH 'TIMEBOMB': ARE YOU MAD?

A classroom focus on boosting pupils' self-esteem hinders learning, said a London physics teacher.

In the final Battle of Ideas session, Gareth Sturdy said he believed the focus in teaching on dealing with pupils' self-esteem allowed them to produce "all manner of excuses for poor behaviour or achievement."

"It's a bit of a mask for children to not focus on the business of learning, that's my experience."

"Learning things is hard – it's an affront to your self-esteem and it's difficult to get to grips with."

"Students often find that a challenge. If you approach students in the situation by saying 'are you OK?' and 'is everything all right?' then the transition of knowledge does not get done – which is the job I'm there to do."

He denied there was a mental health crisis, but instead said the problem was how adults referred and related to children, using a language that had been "medicalised".

Ken McLaughlin, a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University where he teaches modules including mental health, added there had been an "exponential growth of diagnosis criteria" in recent years.

"Is it the supply of therapists that is promoting the demand for therapy?"

We lived in an "anxious age", he said, "but the last thing we need is more awareness raising. It just makes us sick."

However Rachel Kelly, an author and mental health campaigner who has suffered with depression, said: "I feel strongly that if I had known more about it [mental health] then I would not have been so ill."

But Sturdy disagreed. "Talking about it has become a bad thing. Incidents of self-harm have increased after lots of groups go into schools and ask if pupils self-harm? That's a real problem out there."

McLaughlin added that young people

should be left to "develop themselves. Going through adolescence and puberty can be a painful time. It's undermining their ability to move into adult life."

But Kelly said the severity of the mental health problem should be discussed.

She said research by Dr Kristin Neff, from the United States, suggested there was a "growing concern we've gone down the wrong track with youngsters and self-esteem."

"The conclusion she reaches is that fostering self-esteem has been a disaster for teenage mental health."

Kelly instead suggested promoting "self-compassion", which "is a very different mindset. It is much more about our commonality and what unites us, as opposed to what's different and separates us."

But she said schools should be discussing how bad the mental health problem was.

"What direction can we take to foster good mental health and resilience? What can we do as teachers?"

She suggested putting strategies in place within education from early on – such as breathing exercises.

"If that becomes part of the curriculum alongside exams, maybe we wouldn't have such a problem."

Rachel Kelly

EXPERT

ADVERTORIAL



ANITA CROSLAND

CITY & GUILDS 14-19 SENIOR EDUCATION
CATEGORY MANAGER

Under current Government reforms of 14-19 education, from this September this year we will see changes to schools and Further Education curricula meaning that young people will be able to study a range of new vocational and arts qualifications at Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Key Stage 5 (KS5).

These changes mean that 14 – 16 year olds across the county will, in theory, be able to choose to study subjects other than GCSEs at school, a level of change that has not been seen since the introduction of GCSEs in the late 1980's. The new technical awards will allow young people to study vocational subjects through applied learning and help to provide more informed choices when progressing onto further education post 16, whether this is through more traditional A-levels, apprenticeships or new technical vocational qualifications at post 16.

At ages sixteen plus, young people will now be able to study Technical certificates (intermediate level 2 Technical Qualifications) or Tech Levels (advanced level 3 Technical Qualifications on a par with A Levels). Both of these qualifications are recognised by employers and perfect for young people who want to specialise in a particular industry. The Department for Education (DfE) have just released their 2018 performance tables which include the new qualifications noted above, alongside more traditional academic qualifications such as GCSE and A Level.

I believe these changes will bring about really exciting, and necessary, change by providing greater choice for young people and a broader and more balanced curriculum. It's important to note straight away that the new qualifications won't be lesser options for less gifted children, they will be every bit as rigorous

as similar academic qualifications and teens will be able to accrue UCAS points if they are studying at level 3. The reason I particularly feel the need to stress this point I will discuss in more detail later.

At the moment we have a one-size-fits-all system in place which I'm sure any educator will tell you simply doesn't work for all. Whilst some young people do really well with GCSE and A-Level others would thrive with the option of a vocational course. Some youngsters already have a pretty clear idea of what they want to do so a chance to experience their chosen field now and gain the skills and knowledge that employers look for can put them ahead when they hit the jobs market. The double benefit of this is that as young people are accruing UCAS points at KS5 so it doesn't close the door to higher education.

Additionally, employers are telling us that the current educational system just isn't preparing young people for the workplace. A recent piece of City & Guilds research found that half of employers felt that education wasn't meeting the needs of their business. With youth unemployment levels still standing at almost three times that of the wider adult population, it's vitally important that education seeks to address this.

This is all great news and on paper it sounds like a no-brainer. Loads of young people will be studying these new qualifications up and down the country come September right? Well not quite. As with apprenticeships a huge amount of stigma is still attached to taking a vocational qualification as Nicky Morgan noted earlier this year. This PR problem needs to be addressed if we want to see millions of young people experiencing the benefit of a vocational course.

A recent survey of teachers by the Sutton Trust found that

65% of teachers wouldn't recommend a young person who has been predicted grades that would allow them to go to university to pursue an apprenticeship. Whilst the DEMOS commission on Apprenticeships last year found that 92% of parents thought that apprenticeships were a good idea but less than a third (32%) said they would consider one for their own child.

This is a significant problem as both parents and teachers are incredibly influential in shaping young people's career choices. City & Guilds carried out another piece of research in December 2015 called 'Great Expectations' surveying over 3,000 14 – 17 year olds about their career aspirations and found that over two thirds intended to go to university whilst economic modellers EMSI told us only one third of the available jobs are predicted to be graduate jobs. With the average three-year degree course now costing £44k that's a pretty sizable gamble for a young person to take with more money than a vast majority of them will ever have had access to.

With little independent careers advice available to them many young people are making choices now that will affect their futures without having all the facts to hand. Parents and teachers are doing what they think is best for young people but they don't have all the information either.

However, I believe that we will see change over the coming years with more collaborative working between the vocational education sector and schools. Last week I spoke to hundreds of teachers at a Pixl meeting at Westminster and was thrilled with the level of enthusiasm and interest in the possibilities of offering vocational education to pupils from the teachers I met there. I really do think it's a case of watch this space...

City & Guilds have produced a guide to the 14 – 19 reforms which can be viewed at www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/apprenticeships/trailblazers/reforms

City & Guilds recently launched 137 brand new technical qualifications at KS4 and KS5, developed in partnership with employers from 13 industry sectors offering choice to teenagers and providing employers with the skilled workforce they need.

To find out more about the City & Guilds TechBac and Technical Baccalaureate courses visit our website www.cityandguilds.com/techbac

APPRENTICESHIPS:

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22 to 23, June 2017

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CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS

TEACHERS NEED TO 'EARN' PRESTIGE

Billy Camden

@BILLYCAMDEN

"Rigorous" teacher training could change the perception that the profession is not "prestigious", says a London teacher.

Kris Boulton, deputy head of maths at King Solomon academy in north London, told a packed festival room that teachers needed to "earn the right" to be seen on the same level as other professions such as doctors, lawyers, and barristers.

He said that the Teach First programme, a scheme that placed graduates from the country's top universities into challenging schools, had partly changed this perception, but "there is much more that needs to be done".

Boulton told delegates: "I am scared to just say that I am a teacher, I almost always respond with a variant of that. I do that because I am usually looking for some sense of prestige.

"I live with three barristers and when they introduce themselves to people, they are proud and get a great response.

"Yet when I do a similar thing the response I tend to get is 'oh, you must really like kids'; the implied assumption is that I must not have had a lot of choice or I am not that smart."



Kris Boulton

He added that reality TV programmes helped people to see that teaching was a "tough job", but one that sat on the same level as coalmining, for example.

"When we talk about prestige we get held up in this idea of talent and accomplishment. But that isn't there for teaching right now."

Boulton said that teachers would not "win this battle for prestige" by telling people to stop undermining the job. "It will be won by earning people's respect.

"It is a difficult truth but I don't think we

have earned it yet.

"I felt that my PGCE didn't give me any sense of status, because I didn't need to know anything. The bar is very low and it was too easy to pass.

"Not a lot of trainees learn enough about their subject and pedagogy. When everybody can pass, we will never get that sense of prestige."

Boulton did, however, recognise that half a million teachers were needed and they would be hard to find.

"But don't assume that if you raise the

bar then we will have fewer people getting through, sometimes the reverse is true."

He suggested that one way to push teaching to a more "respected status" was by introducing a prestigious route into the profession.

"In Japan they have multiple entrance routes into teaching, there is a really difficult elite route where only a few pass, then there is a more mainstream route and then there is a specialist route."

SPECIAL SCHOOLS 'LEFT OUT' IN MOVE TO ACADEMIES

Special schools are at risk of being "lost" as the government moves towards an all-academy system, a special educational needs and disability (SEND) school leader has warned.

Simon Knight, deputy headteacher at Frank Wise school in Oxford (pictured), said he was worried that multi-academy trusts (MATs) saw secondary and primary schools as their "leader" and "struggles to see" where special schools would "fit in within that community".

Speaking to *Schools Week* after a SEND session at the festival, he said: "The academies policy is a classic example of a lack of strategic stress-testing and national policy on the specialist sector.

"There is a huge amount of fragmentation and variability in the system.

"I think there is a risk that the top-down accountability structures focus far



more on GCSE outcomes and the SATs-type outcomes.

"It is sometimes difficult to see or compare the quality of what is happening in a special school. Therefore, there is a risk that if schools in the mainstream are leading MATs that have special schools within them, then they

may not fully appreciate some of the demands placed upon the special schools sector or the qualities that they are seeing . . . or equally know how to hold to account poor practice."

Knight said that there were "pockets" of good and appalling practice, but added: "What we are seeing is a free market approach where the best practice will evolve and develop over time. But children don't have time, they have one shot at this and we need to be far more sophisticated about policy reform and far more aware of the implications it will have on them."

Knight said that one of the major problems was that the middle tier created to oversee academisation, including regional school commissioners (RSCs) and their deputy directors, did not have any special schools expertise.

Schools Week revealed last month that every RSC will now have two deputy

directors appointed from within the sector. The names revealed so far include two headteachers, an education consultancy chief and a council's education director.

Knight said: "I know some of the deputy RSCs personally and respect them greatly - and in terms of reflecting the mainstream sector they are people who are well positioned to be able to inform and develop the system - but what we don't have is a strategic plan for having SEND knowledge and expertise across all the different regions.

"As we move towards a fully academised system, it is essential that those running and leading and holding to account that system reflect the full breadth and depth of education in this country. At the moment it seems that special education is poorly represented by those groups of people."

HIGH-STAKES TESTING IS 'PUTTING OFF' PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS FROM LEARNING



A national reference test should replace high-stakes testing in primary schools because the current system does not "serve the best interests" of children, an education writer has claimed.

Jack Marwood (pictured), primary school teacher and author of the *Icing on the Cake* blog, told delegates on Thursday that current primary school tests leave children "distressed" and "narrow" the curriculum.

"The interests of children in the primary sector is to enable the greatest number to leave confident in their ability to read, write, and add up, but also with a love of learning and an understanding of the social learning environment that we call school, so that they are ready for their second phase.

"Primary children are immature and their confidence as immature humans is very easily eroded. I don't think it is within their interests for us to put any of the children off learning in those initial stages of schools and I think that is what high-stakes primary school tests definitely do for some children."

Primary testing has proved highly controversial during the past year including the government's decision to ditch this year's spelling, punctuation and grammar tests for all year 2 pupils, the abandoning of the new reception baseline tests, and controversy over the use of an "exclamation sentence" in literacy and how to use a comma in key stage 2 maths.

In May some parents also kept their children out of school in protest at "a school system that places more importance on test results and league tables than children's happiness and joy of learning".

Marwood called for a national reference test "where we have a sample of the population to see generally how children are getting on in the primary sector".

The government confirmed in March that selected secondary schools must take part in such tests. They monitor, over time, how cohorts of students are performing and will act as a guide for increases or decreases in that cohort's GCSE grades.

But fellow panellist Michael Tidd, deputy headteacher at Edgewood Primary School in Nottingham, warned sample testing "can only tell you quite limited information".

He said: "It [sample testing] tells you about the big national picture but not about where you can tackle things."

Tidd also said that schools "run a risk" of harming the most "disadvantaged" children if primary testing is thrown out altogether.

He told delegates: "Holding schools to account through testing is possibly one of the most efficient and effective way to target and help disadvantaged kids.

"We can't get rid of these, we need to keep them and if we want to change them then we need to talk seriously about what that would look like and how we best deal with that."



THINK AGAIN ABOUT RELYING ON YOUR INTUITION

Experienced teachers have been warned against using their intuition because it could lead to them making "unreliable" judgments when it comes to student outcomes.

David Didau (pictured), an education consultant and former teacher, urged attendees at a packed-out Festival of Education session to think carefully about when to trust their "gut instincts".

He said: "As teachers we rely on our intuition a great deal to make decisions and we essentially trust that because we feel that as we become more experienced, as we spend more time in the classroom, we become more expert and better able to make reliable and intuitive judgments. Well, maybe not.

"There has been a number of studies that have indicated that teachers really improve, in terms of student outcomes, in the first three years of their career. But then they seem to start to plateau and that after about ten years, we begin to get less good, in terms of student outcomes."

Didau said this "arch" of performance is not uncommon and does apply to other professions, such as radiologists.

He said: "As a radiologist you work remotely and get sent X-rays and you make a decision, you send them back, but you never find out whether you were right. But what does happen is that you become increasingly confident over time about your decisions, but you don't know whether the judgment you are making is

a good one."

Didau said that there are some aspects of the profession where teachers get "excellent feedback", such as in behaviour management, but added that areas such as the "quality of instruction" can show bad intuition.

He said: "What tends to happen to teachers is that we teach and then take feedback from the response of students during the lesson and we say it seems to work.

"I started to notice that sometimes a lesson has gone well and the students show me they have learned, but the next time you see them they have forgotten it all.

"We often don't actively look for this to try and find out or test them again on that lesson. How then do we know whether our instruction was any good?"

Didau added: "I think that what happens is that if you are certain about something you don't think about it and you're not concerned. But sometimes that can lead to what I refer to as the illusion of knowledge.

"When you are uncertain and you think about it and you mull over it, like when you teach a bad lesson, you notice that students learn the thing because you go back to it.

"Knowing that you don't know something could be a useful thing. Confidence and certainty can be problematic."

EXPERTS



JON COLES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
UNITED LEARNING

A new direction for school reform

"The power of the Crown has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished."
John Dunning, motion in Parliament, 1780.

For those working in education, it won't have taken the act of self-immolation of June 23 to notice a growing feeling of powerlessness and mute rage in the face of an over-centralised, over-mighty state that seems neither to listen nor to hear, making barely comprehensible decisions for which it is barely accountable.

In 1976, James Callaghan took the unprecedented step for a prime minister of giving a speech about education. He devoted much of it to defending himself against critics who felt that politicians ought not to discuss schooling at all. Its manipulation as a tool of social control by the totalitarian regimes that had brought the world to disaster in the previous generation was a still fresh memory.

Forty years on, the state's role is transformed. David Laws, the former schools minister, captures it compellingly: "The thing is that we've created... an amazingly responsive system where the stakes are so high ... that with frightening speed, once you change one of these things ... within 24 hours ... you've got heads writing to parents saying, 'Next year you're going to have to study a totally different range of subjects'."

There are at least four things wrong with this. First, as Austrian economist Friedrich Hayek demonstrated, the problem of information asymmetry makes this form of "central planning by performance indicators" (Onora O'Neill) impossible to do well. The centre can never have information as good as that on the periphery.

Second, the problem of perverse incentives is not a problem of some particular indicator but an inherent problem with indicators. Growing use of ECDL and the three-year key stage 4 are just two current manifestations. Over years of shifting targets, leaders increasingly internalised the idea that doing well in government measures is identical to doing right – the problem of "governmentality".

Third, the problem of "shifting tectonic plates". Some aspects of the system (curriculum, qualifications, accountability, funding, teacher training) are so fundamental that any change should be approached with great care. Change demands so much attention that it carries significant opportunity cost in reduced focus on improving classroom practice. Yet central government finds such change

impossible to resist.

Fourth, policy thinking is based on a deficient theory of motivation. Douglas McGregor famously distinguished "Theory X" managers (who believe that workers are lazy, dislike responsibility and respond only to clear sanctions and rewards) from "Theory Y" managers (who believe that workers are intrinsically motivated, want responsibility and find self-development in their work). Under successive governments "Theory X" has predominated.

So, what needs to happen?

"Theory Y" policymaking would be a start. If the purpose of school reform is that more teachers succeed with more children in more classrooms, some obvious points emerge.

Growing the capacity and capability of the profession is critical. Today's most able graduates want work to provide meaning, self-expression and participation in decision-making.

Policy should aim not to crowd out discretionary effort. Beginning from clear and meaningful vision rather than from deficit is vital. Relationships in the working environment matter too: policies too often promote instrumental and mechanistic views of the managerial relationship.

We need to balance problem-solving and appreciative enquiry. Problem-solving is sometimes necessary, but difficult and energy-consuming. Appreciative enquiry (taking what is good and exploring ways to extend and deepen it) is energy-creating – and energy more than time is in short supply.

Accountability for what you do and achieve is important. But real and meaningful accountability is not just "arms-length" and not just about the numbers (though it is about the numbers).

Unrealistic? Then consider London Challenge: the most successful if most misunderstood school improvement policy of recent years – and based on Theory Y thinking.

Meanwhile, what can we do? Well, for a start throw our weight behind the College of Teaching. Because our profession is so institutionally weak that we don't control our own entry standards; cannot set out expectations for early professional development that equate with other professions; cannot stand up for the evidence when powerful voices seek to promote other agendas.

With a stronger professional body, we can mitigate the effects of government power, however public policy develops. You could call it "taking back control".



DAVID CARTER

NATIONAL SCHOOLS
COMMISSIONER

Building an education system on collaboration, leadership and great governance

When I describe system leadership, what I mean is the way that groups of talented leaders work together to form plans and take decisions that have an impact on the outcomes and experiences of children in a whole community, and not just the school they attend.

Why is this important?

When we are planning something so important as the improvement of a school, ensuring the collective thoughts and experiences of all of the leaders in a group are utilised to create powerful impact makes sense. As our educational landscape transforms we need to ensure that as we develop the ways we organise education, we simultaneously raise standards to a level we have never seen before. There are three core principles that underpin how I believe we will achieve this.

1. Every school must give and receive support. Schools do not remain static for long. They are usually improving or declining and for that reason even the best schools in our education system will have pockets of practice that needs to improve. At the other end of the journey, a school that is in crisis will have some great practice, but maybe not enough of it. As a school moves through the improvement cycle, recognising the need to offer and accept support will become an important dimension of leadership thinking.

2. The growth in formal collaboration through the multi academy trust (MAT) structure will mean we need more leaders able to lead across a group of schools. The role of executive headteacher or chief executive is new in our evolving system, and with more than 900 operating MATS we know more great leaders are taking this step.

3. System leaders work in different ways. A MAT chief executive is an obvious example but there are others. Middle Leaders and outstanding teachers who support

the development and improvement of colleagues across their MAT are system leaders. Colleagues who work as teaching assistants, IT network technicians, school sports coordinators and estate managers lead staff in their area of expertise. These new ways of working are opening up not only new career opportunities, but better educational and learning experiences for children.

So what do the best system leaders do?

The role is not the same as leading one single school. I, like many others, have come through this route, and we have learned that the leadership skills and capabilities needed are different. The scale and scope of the system leader role means that change takes longer and needs a deeper understanding of the different contexts and stages of the improvement journey.

We need more great leaders to undertake this work

The focus of trust-wide improvement requires a level of engagement and communication that goes beyond what is possible in a single school. Holding people to account for their part of the plan, when you might not come into contact with them every day, is just one of the challenges. There is also a high degree of skill needed to identify effective practice and transmit it to the classroom setting in a different school.

Whatever the context we need more great leaders to undertake this work. It is at the heart of the secretary of state's vision for education in this country when she and I talk about moving beyond a debate about structure to an ambition to use the structure to raise standards.

The discussions on governance at the festival very much confirmed others across the country and in Westminster since my *Schools Week* column last term, but three things particularly struck me.

First, how little is known by the sector about the governance implications of the move towards a world of multi academy trusts (MATs), despite the best efforts of organisations such as the National Governors' Association (NGA) to spread the word.

Conversations are still at a fairly elementary level, with no sophisticated analysis of the implications for moving our state-funded schools into the third sector.

Although not mentioned in the White Paper, much of the decision making – the power – in the system is being passed to trustees (also non-executive directors).

At local level, good people – both executives and those governing – are trying to make new structures work.

With the interests of pupils at heart, they are making it up, often unaware of sources of reliable information.

This is no way to go about building a new education system, not even a school-led, self-improving one.

There is now in many quarters a wariness of information coming from the Department for Education (DfE), and a widespread lament about the lack of evidence and little sharing of experiences – a gap NGA is trying to help fill.



EMMA KNIGHTS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NATIONAL GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Three big issues with governance

Second, the desire of the vast majority involved to keep and even strengthen connections with the community is heartening, especially in the light of last week's vote.

How to achieve this in a meaningful way needs work. While the role of those governing at school level is seen by almost all as key, the ethos of the whole trust is also crucial.

Otherwise there is a danger that a gap will grow between the schools' communities and the elite on the MAT board.

Given the uproar on the publication of the White Paper, when parents were clearly concerned about their local school being given to a trust with no local connections, you might have expected a national conversation on the legitimacy of those

who are governing more and more schools, but the juggernaut just trundles on.

Geography and size of MAT are keenly relevant to this discussion, but surely also to outcomes for pupils.

The DfE sends mixed messages. Lord Nash, the junior schools minister, has for two years extolled the importance of schools within MATs being within half a lunchtime's travel away from each other, while some regional schools commissioners are still gifting schools to MATs based in another region.

Talk within the DfE is all about 'growth' but its own vision seems to be about 2,000 MATs. This would mean most MATs between 10-15 schools, with some remaining well below that to compensate for the large chains of more than 30.

A better way to think of this is the 'average' MAT being responsible for 4,000 - 5,000 pupils, not 30,000.

The third issue raised and one I am tripping over everywhere I go is: who is going to volunteer to govern in the future?

Governing is a difficult role at the best of times, even more so when money is short. Some experienced, skilled people say they will not be continuing past this term of office as their role at academy level is no longer a significant one.

Who is going to volunteer to govern in the future?

Almost half of us who govern began as parent governors, and with that route being thought of as second class, we are in danger of cutting off an important source of committed volunteers.

The system is not yet convinced of the need for paid trustees – but it is a discussion we will return to before long, especially as I predict the outgoing HMCI will repeat this call. However at present there are far more important issues for us to be grappling with to ensure our schools are governed in the best interests of all our pupils.

A 2008 McKinsey report highlighted that the most powerful force holding women back is entrenched beliefs. To address this, at the Festival of Education four of the WomenEd national leaders focused on one of our core values – confidence.

Keziah Featherstone explored one of the privileges of headship which is to nurture leadership talent. Both children and teachers deserve the best leaders so it's no longer good enough to wait to see who puts themselves forward for opportunities.

You'll always get the same people and there are far fewer opportunities than is ideal. Keziah urged leaders to find those teachers in the dark – lurking in art cupboards, science rooms or sitting in primary staffrooms.

We have a responsibility to allow them to shine, to find ways to hone their leadership skills – a place at the table, a mentor to nurture.

She argued that we can't do talent spotting the way we have always done it, otherwise the gender imbalance and underrepresentation of black, Asian, and minority ethnic colleagues in leadership will continue.

Jules Daulby considered how we can support women to be less fearful. When asked if she would consider applying for her last three jobs, for one she said, 'that's



VIVIENNE PORRITT

CO-FOUNDER WOMENED

Ensuring more women progress into education leadership

very kind, thank you, but I don't think I'm ready yet'. The application form and interview were easy; it was this initial step where she needed a nudge.

This is Imposter Syndrome – thinking everyone else is more expert, and has something more worthwhile to say. So how to beat it?

When approached, don't look behind you to see who people mean. For those women with Imposter Syndrome, don't wait to be asked. Knock on the door and say 'I'm thinking of applying for this post, what are your thoughts?'

Hannah Wilson encouraged women to have the confidence to be authentic and carve a female-shaped space rather than, as Germaine Greer described at the festival,

wedging ourselves into 'man-size holes'.

Hannah asked women to challenge their self-imposed glass ceiling. Strategies included ensuring women have mentors and coaches and to embrace networking opportunities, drawing strength from such connections.

Hannah explained how she had learned to take criticism as a compliment that she is stimulating change, whilst helping her learn and be more resilient. Finally, Hannah advised women to make a list of their non-negotiables as a leader and use these to frame personal and professional decisions.

I closed the session with a plea to women to apply for leadership roles, as many don't know they can.

Women should believe in our own worth

by negotiating the salary and conditions in a new role or in performance-related pay

Use your position to challenge the systemic glass ceiling

discussions.

Education Datalab has previously highlighted the pay gap for full-time women in schools because we lack the confidence to ask and negotiate. With performance-related pay for all it's expected to get worse as national pay structures break down.

Our message to existing leaders (and we welcome more men to our sessions) is to use your position to challenge the systemic glass ceiling.

Our key messages to women are to feel the fear and do it anyway and to know and celebrate your own worth. A lack of belief in yourself can lead to apologetic language. Rather than say 'who, me?', be proud and say 'yes, me'.

VOXPOPS - How was the



**ANDREW
 PEARSON**

"The two days have been fantastic. I really enjoyed David Weston this morning talking about unleashing the greatness in teachers and Guy Claxton.

I've wanted to hear Guy speak for ages and I thought he was fantastic, really inspirational."



**ANDREW
 SABISKY**

"The festival has been highly entertaining as ever and it has been lovely to chat with many people. I saw Tim Oates yesterday talking about

science practicals. It is a bit of a niche subject but it was really well structured and entertaining with lots of content packed in."



**DEBORAH
 LEIGH-
 BAILEY**

"When I came here today it was going to be based around eroding barriers and it was a really good opportunity to listen to the views from other people and how the partnerships in the schools they have are working. I sat in on a

session to do with social mobility and it was fascinating for me to speak from a different perspective and realise that this is something that everyone believes is really important."



**GINNY
 SMITH**

"The festival has been really good, Hywell Roberts was brilliant, he had some hugely inspiring ideas about getting people engaging with story lines, which I think is really important, being

able to make kids see the importance of what they are doing in school and that it fits into a bigger picture rather than 'you need to learn this because we say so'."



HELEN PIKE

"The festival is great. I particularly enjoyed hearing Jonathan Black talking about the future careers for young people and how we need to take

cognisance of the global implications of what has happened with the EU referendum and that our young people don't bear the brunt of it."



JILL BERRY

"I've really enjoyed the festival with some amazing speakers. The session I enjoyed the most was David Carter's. I went to him because I have read pieces by him in the past and he seems to have good judgment and I wanted to know whether my initial impression was likely

to be confirmed, and it definitely was. I think he was brilliant about the future of education in Britain and he had a clear sense of strategy and an idea of the structures that we need to get the standards that we want."



**JORDAN
 COX**

"The festival has been absolutely fascinating. There is so much emphasis around the different areas of education and my biggest surprise was

Piers Morgan. He had an absolutely fascinating conversation with Clive Woodward about the links between sport and education."



**JULIE
 ROBINSON**

"Very much enjoying the festival, particularly day two without the monsoon, it is less like Glastonbury and more like a conference. I have been

to Barnaby Lenon's session about the media myths to do with the independent sector. It was very provocative and I really enjoyed it."

festival for you?



KATE HOWELL

"The festival is in a beautiful setting and after today I am going to figure out how to move here. I saw a wonderful session earlier put on by Lucy Crehan which was

really refreshing and honest, I really learnt a lot and it was definitely worth coming all this way just to see that."



LUCY CREHAN

"I try and to go back to the festival every year because it always gets me thinking about different things and it is great meeting all these interesting people. The most unusual thing that I saw this year was John Amaechi telling me how to be a Jedi. It sounds silly but in all seriousness

it is remembering that when you have conversations with anybody you make them feel a certain way. Particularly with students, it is really important that you are aware of all of those interactions and the message you are giving them about themselves."



MARC ROWLAND

"I've needed the festival to cheer me up this morning after the EU referendum result. I always like coming here because

I get to hear alternative views. Hearing that range of views and challenging my own orthodox is why I love the festival."



NAUREEN KHALID

"This is my second year and it has been brilliant, even better than last year. One thing that I really enjoyed was the fact that they had a governance session this year. That was the cherry

on the cake because usually when you have education events governance will get forgotten and side-lined, but it is really important in the new educational landscape."



PEDRO DE BRUYCKERE

"I really enjoyed the festival and in particular the talk by Robert Coe which was a good overview of improving education. But actually I loved talking to

a lot of pupils about their views; for me that was the most interesting part of the festival."



SIMON KNIGHT

"The last couple of days have been as stimulating as ever and the challenge I placed upon myself this year was to not only go and listen to people I know, but to learn about things that are different. And for me a really interesting one was Claire Fox talking about our

generation and some of the challenging conversations that we need to have. It was very thought provoking and interesting to see a panel debate where there was disagreement rather than a broad consensus."



TOM REES

"This is my first time here and for me it is the variety that is so great. From seeing the England Rugby World Cup coach one moment then to a teacher talking about what is going on in their classroom the next. The highlight

probably was the David Weston lecture in the chapel which was very evidence informed, a very clear viewpoint and how he reiterates all the time that it is about what happens in the classroom that develops teachers."



TONY SEWELL

"I went to Jane Overbury's speech on London's School of Excellence which I helped set up, and that was interesting because she was able to articulate where the project was going and the legacy of it. In contrast to that, Peter Tatchell who

was talking about freedom of speech in the NUS was quite controversial. What I like about the festival is that mixture. You have the academic stuff but also the socially related things so the variety is very good."



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