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**IS THERE A SURGEON
IN YOUR SCHOOL?**
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P100: Carter's masterplan for improvement

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

The country's 100 weakest academies will be singled out for increased government scrutiny from January as the schools commissioner ramps up implementation of his masterplan to improve failing schools.

Schools Week can reveal that the 100 secondary academies with the lowest Progress 8 scores, which we understand will be known as the "P100", are to

be identified by Sir David Carter and eligible for extra support from January.

The plan to support weaker academies was reported earlier this year, but this is the first time that some of the details, such as timing, can be revealed.

It is understood the schools will not be "named and shamed" – a much-criticised tactic employed by Tony Blair's Labour government – but they will be identifiable when progress data is published next year.

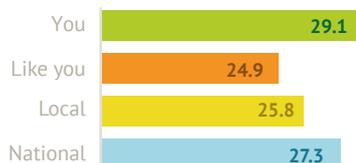
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JARLATH O'BRIEN

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NEWS

Carter's masterplan for school improvement

JOHN DICKENS
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CONTINUED
FROM FRONT

The schools will get extra support from regional school commissioners, who will then be held accountable for the schools' performance.

It comes as Carter this week unveiled plans to introduce "mentor MATs", whereby larger academy chains will help schools to form a multi-academy trust.

Speaking at a Westminster Education Forum on Wednesday, he said: "The idea is that trusts across the country that have been successful and built their capacity, those that have been through that [growth] journey, can provide a relationship for maybe two to three years to enable new MATs to get set up and focus just on school improvement."

He said the more experienced trusts would be able to pick up the "daunting checklist" of tasks needed to create a multi-academy trust, leaving schools to focus on "front-end practices".

"The knowledge these trusts have of how we have developed the system is really powerful and a useful resource.

"We have all this resource in the system – if we continue to not work with it we are never going to get an outstanding education system."

Schools Week understands that the plan for "mentor MATs" is still in the "development stage", but could start up next year. Rather than a national project, it is likely to be driven by a need from schools.



Sir David Carter

Carter is yet to gauge the interest from large academy trusts.

But Sir Steve Lancashire, chief executive of REAch2, which runs more than 50 schools, told *Schools Week* this was a "very positive development" that would formalise the support established MATs already provided.

Toby Salt, chief executive of Ormiston academies trust, added: "As a more established MAT we do believe that we should be professionally generous in supporting emerging trusts.

"Anything that builds capacity in the system and uses the strengths of sponsors can only be a good thing, but we all have things to learn from each other."

Regional schools commissioners (RSCs) will review how effective the improvement support is for each of the P100 schools.

Carter will then hold the RSCs to account should the school's performance not improve by January 2019.

Schools Week understands that RSCs could use teaching schools to deliver the additional support.

Initial proposals proved contentious. Sir Dan Moynihan, chief executive of the Harris federation, reportedly said that a school's sponsors should be accountable for its performance, rather than civil servants.

Carter will also unveil in January his new multi-academy trust health checks, to ensure trusts are well-placed to expand before they are handed new schools.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We are continuing to look how we can improve under-performing academies and the action plans RSCs are putting in place to tackle this issue."

Brexit: a new ingredient in school dinners

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

A London primary school has blamed "post-Brexit" food costs for an increase in the price of its school meals.

In a letter to parents, Avanti Court primary outlined the increase, which works out about £20 extra a year.

The letter, seen by *Schools Week*, says: "Commercial food and sundry product price inflation has already started to rise post 'Brexit', and imported wholesale food costs for products such as rice, dahls and spices have risen sharply by an overall 18 per cent, largely due to the depressed currency exchange rate."

It added that domestically produced food costs have also risen, "as suppliers pass their increased costs on".

The mention of Brexit is likely to prove contentious as it follows a highly publicised row between food supplier Unilever and supermarket Tesco over products such as Marmite.

Unilever wanted to raise prices across a range of goods by 10 per cent, blaming the falling value of the pound. Tesco was reported to have fought the increases before the dispute was settled.

Schools Week understands the mention of Brexit in Avanti Court's letter was a mistake.

A spokesperson for Avanti schools trust,



which runs the school, said: "Our schools have not increased meal prices since 2012 in an attempt to keep the cost to families as low as possible.

"Our catering providers have had to review this now and have also recently seen some ingredient prices rise from their wholesale suppliers, some by as much as 10-20 per cent.

"Their suppliers attribute some of this rise to currency fluctuation, amongst other reasons. We will be making a small increase to our prices to ensure continuing quality of service."

A concerned school parent, who did not want to be named, said: "I support the school in what it is doing and the increase is nominal at an additional 10p per day.

"But the early impact of inflationary pressures to a school is more concerning. It also raises the questions about how the government measures the very real impact of these increases on normal working-class people."

Primary meals now will be £2.10 and secondary meals £2.45, from October half-term.

School meals are vegetarian and include western and Asian dishes, the school website said.

Children can bring in water and fruit, but the school does not allow packed lunches to "reduce the risk of sharing food, which may be against an individual's dietary requirements".

NEWS

RESEARCH REVEALS WHO MAKES THE WORST HEADTEACHERS

JESS STAUFENBERG
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Exclusive

Heads that used to teach PE or RE before leading failing academies are more likely to adopt a damaging “short-termist” approach to running schools, but are awarded the most honours.

A major study by the Centre for High Performance has identified the impact of different “types” of headteacher – with their leadership style linked to their degree subject for the first time.

Researchers Ben Laker and Alex Hill analysed the impact of 411 secondary heads, using interviews, grades, budgets and management information system data across a seven-year period up to 2015 to uncover five headteacher “types”: the philosopher, the surgeon, the architect, the soldier and the accountant.

In what education experts have called a “groundbreaking” analysis of data, the tiny but influential “surgeons”, who mostly taught PE or RE before heading up struggling schools, adopted a damaging “short-termist” approach that nevertheless saw them disproportionately awarded damehoods and knighthoods.

Hill said this type of head “mostly grows results quickly by kicking out low-performing pupils.

“They would lose as many as 75 per cent of [pupils in] the GCSE year, so the percentage taking A* to C rockets. These heads believe in good and bad students. But it’s not real improvement, and when they leave everything falls apart,” he said.

“At present they are being held up as examples of good practice. They have power within the system.”

The “surgeons”, of which 71 per cent were PE teachers and 14 per cent RE teachers, were paid an average of £150,000 a year and were most likely to want a higher salary – yet cost a school about £2 million in consultancy fees to fix problems once they departed.

And they were the only type of leader in those surveyed to hold damehoods or knighthoods, as well as being the most likely to have political sway.

James Toop, chief executive of Teaching Leaders and the Future Leaders Trust, said the “groundbreaking” research was the first to tie leadership types with school performance over a full time period.

“There’s a broader question about how we use rewards recognition within education. It shouldn’t be the ones who shout loudest that get noticed.”

By moving to performance measures that took into account how many pupils had been excluded, the “surgeon-type” of leadership would soon be exposed, the report claims.

Better leadership training would also prevent UK heads from falling back on beliefs about leadership based on their chosen teaching subject.

Hill said: “We decided to see if there was a pattern between leadership types and their subject. And it’s not just a pattern, it’s completely clear.



SURGEON



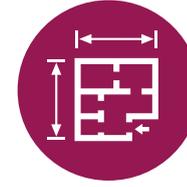
SOLDIER



ACCOUNTANT



PHILOSOPHER



ARCHITECT

Education

Studied and taught

PE or Religion

IT or Chemistry

Maths

English or Languages

History or Economics

Belief

Success

Fitness

Efficiency

Size

Knowledge and wisdom

Community support

Failure

Poor performing students

Fat and lazy processes

Small and weak school

Poor teaching

Don't serve local community

Leadership

“Winners and losers, good and bad”
“Focus on the immediate goal”“Cut resource to force change”
“Machines are more efficient than people”“Growth creates stability”
“Numbers add clarity”“Ideas are powerful”
“Debate and discussion can change the world”“Great leaders build strong nations”
“Study long-term trends”

Action

Style

“Stop that”

“Work harder”

“Grow”

“Teach better”

“Redesign everything”

Approach

Cut poor performers

Tighten up the screws

Increase financial strength

Find new ways to teach

Transform our community

Focus

Improve student behaviour

Reduce costs

Secure financial resources

Improve our craft

Build a new vision

Impact

During tenure

Exam results increase

Costs reduce

Revenues increase

Teachers are engaged

Climate improves

After tenure

Collapse

Back to square one

Costs reduce

Gradual decline

Exam results and profits increase

How many in study?

33

43

62

212

61

“Maybe the subject you chose to study is a measure of other factors – how you grew up and what you believe. With teachers there’s usually no external influence from other sectors. So you fall back on the subject. If you’re a PE teacher, for example, it’s about winners and losers.”

While “surgeons” had the most damaging impact, they made up only 8 per cent of the heads surveyed – the majority of heads in the report emerged as “philosophical” visionaries who stood in the way of organisation-focused change.

About 51 per cent of heads surveyed were “philosophers”, mostly former English literature or languages teachers with no experience outside education, who saw their role as enablers of better teaching rather than prioritising staff management, revenue and better working environments.

“Philosophers talk an amazing game, they believe teaching can solve the world, but they don’t do anything. Those schools coast

or decline,” said Hill.

“If this is the majority of the people in the system, engaging with them about leadership won’t work, because they don’t talk about it.”

In contrast, the highest-performing heads over the longer term – whom the report labelled “architects” and were mostly history and economics teachers – created a budget surplus and pupil grades improved, even once their tenure ended. Some 86 per cent of these had experience outside education.

“Architects” did not produce improved GCSE results in the first three years (results improved long term), focusing instead on relationships with the community and provision for underperforming students, yet they were paid about £86,000 a year and had the fewest CBEs, OBEs or MBEs of any group.

Dan Belcher, senior education lead at the Students, Schools and Teachers Network and a former assistant principal, said short-

termist leadership in particular needed to go.

“I do wonder whether there is a question of a leadership crisis. Leadership is critical – it can act as a buffer between policy and how it is implemented in schools.

“The most important thing for me here is the legacy aspect. We need to look at Ofsted accountability and think carefully about short-termist behaviours that may be encouraged.”

Expert view, page 18

ALEX HILL AND BEN LAKER



NEWS

TWENTY-FIVE FREE SCHOOLS A YEAR DELAY OPENING DATE

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Nearly 25 free schools have delayed opening every year for the past three years, show figures released to *Schools Week* under freedom of information laws.

And most of those delays are because of problems finding a suitable site, prompting the Department for Education (DfE) to overhaul how it awards opening dates for new projects.

A government source said dates were normally set by those applying to open the school, but a new "common sense" approach would ensure sites were bought and planning permission granted before a date was set.

A department spokesperson said: "To maintain these high standards, schools open only when we are confident they are in a strong position to provide an excellent education to all pupils from day one."

Seventy-four free schools have delayed opening in the past three years, with one set for a six-year wait before admitting its first pupils because of insufficient demand for new school places. Ark North Enfield academy, which was due to open in 2014, now doesn't plan to be up and running until 2020.

According to government figures, it is one of seven free schools run by academy chain Ark that have been delayed in the past three years. Five are still to open.

The Harris Federation, another academy trust, has had delays at six free schools.

Angela Rayner, Labour's shadow education secretary, previously told *Schools Week* the "Tories' free school plans are in chaos", but the government has insisted it has a rigorous process that ensures only "high-quality free schools open".

The government figures also show two primary schools run by the Floreat trust, set up by former David Cameron aide Lord O'Shaughnessy, delayed opening this year.

The schools, Colindale and Southall, will now open next year. However the trust, which runs three primaries, is now considering merging with a larger academy trust over financial difficulties.

Two free schools due to be set up by the Perry Beeches trust have also been delayed until at least 2017.

The future of the schools has been placed "on hold and under review" after the trust was taken over by a new leadership team following a government finance investigation.

It found the trust had paid £1.3 million to a private firm called Nexus Education, without a contract or adequate tendering. The company then paid a "second salary" to executive Headteacher Liam Nolan, who has since resigned.

A number of delayed free schools have also folded. That includes Harperbury Free School, due to open in Hertfordshire, which was cancelled this year, despite the government already having spent £1.9 million.

A spokesperson for Ark said: "The difference between the expected open and the original announcement can reflect any number of issues, including difficulties securing appropriate sites, programme delays, or a change in the expected pupil numbers in an area."

ACADEMY SPONSORS OWE £13M IN PLEDGED FUNDING

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Nearly £13 million in capital funding is still owed to the government by eight academy sponsors, with two trusts owing more than £10 million between them.

Early academy sponsors pledged to pay 10 per cent of capital costs, capped at £2 million, towards building a new school.

But a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Local Schools Network has revealed eight sponsors still owe nearly £13 million.

The Harris Federation and Oasis Community Learning owe more than £10 million between them.

It adds to concerns surrounding millions of pounds in potentially unhonoured endowment pledges – the sponsor funding requirement that replaced capital funding – which the government admits it no longer tracks. Malcolm Trobe, interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the unhonoured pledges could prove "problematic" for academies.

"If academies have built the pledged funding and how they can utilise it over a period of time into their strategic financial planning, then there will obviously be a negative impact in what they can actually deliver for young people if the funding was never given."

The public accounts committee has already identified a shortfall of pledged capital funding payments due by the end of 2010 – only £121 million of a promised £147 million of capital contributions was received.

The model was replaced in 2010 by endowment contributions, in which

sponsors created an endowment fund, with interest intended to provide income for each academy. The committee also highlighted a £4 million deficit on endowment contributions.

MPs recommended in a 2011 report that the Department for Education (DfE) agree settlement programmes and check payments were received.

But the FOI reveals that six years on, £13 million of capital funding is still outstanding.

The Harris Federation owes nearly £6 million of a promised £6.5 million – with a repayment plan in place for just one of its six affected academies.

Harris Federation

**HARRIS PLEDGE: £6,500,000
OWES: £5,756,788**

ACADEMIES: HARRIS ACADEMY - SOUTH NORWOOD

HARRIS BERMONDSEY
HARRIS BOYS - EAST DULWICH
HARRIS CRYSTAL PALACE
HARRIS GIRLS - EAST DULWICH
HARRIS MERTON



**OASIS PLEDGE: £6,000,000
OWES: £5,392,263**

ACADEMIES: OASIS ENFIELD
OASIS IMMINGHAM
OASIS WINTRINGHAM

Oasis Community Learning owes just under £5.4 million for three academies. The trust is in talks with the government over repayments.

The DfE is also in discussion with the London Diocesan Board for Schools about repayment of £1 million for the Wren academy in north London.

Inigo Woolf, chief executive of the London board said: "Often with major building projects there can be delays in settling final accounts when resolving snagging items. The final payment is likely to be made shortly."

Agreements or ongoing repayments were in place for five other academies.

However, the situation with remaining endowment pledges is much less clear.

Janet Downs, from the Local Schools Network who lodged the FOI request, said it was now "difficult, if not impossible", to check whether endowment pledges have been honoured as there was no official record.

"Sponsors of early academies received praise and publicity when they promised money, but commitment is proved hollow if pledges aren't honoured."

A DfE spokesperson said: "We are working with trusts on outstanding pledges to ensure payment arrangements are honoured."



**LONDON DIOCESAN BOARD FOR SCHOOLS PLEDGE: £1,500,000
OWES: £1,000,000**
ACADEMY: WREN ACADEMY

High Court overturns bans on Trojan Horse teachers

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The National College of Teaching and Leadership's ban on two teachers involved in the so-called Trojan Horse investigation has been thrown out by the High Court because of "serious procedural irregularities".

The court ruled last week that prohibition orders issued to Akeel Ahmed and Inam Anwar, former teachers at Park View school in Birmingham, should be "set aside" over concerns the pair were denied access to "highly relevant information" during the course of their professional misconduct hearing before the NCTL.

The hearings follow an investigation launched in 2014 after the emergence of a letter describing an alleged plot to run a number of schools in the city on "strict Islamic principles".

The NCTL held hearings against Ahmed and Anwar several months before similar proceedings against members of the schools' senior leadership teams were completed.

A decision on the leadership teams is not due until December, but Ahmed, who was Park View's acting head of religious

education at the time of his suspension in September 2014, and Anwar, head of modern languages until he was suspended in November 2014, were banned from teaching by the NCTL in February.

The college has been criticised for failing to give the men access to evidence from the other hearings, such as the statements given by their colleagues.

Mr Justice Phillips, the judge in the High Court case, accepted that it "made sense" to deal with the senior leadership team and other teachers separately, but he had "considerable doubt" as to the "fairness of proceeding first" against the teachers.

He added that he did not accept the NCTL's argument that the witness statements provided by the senior leadership teams were "mere denials".

He said the failure to give access to the information, as well as the order of hearings, was a "sufficiently serious procedural irregularity to render the proceedings against the appellants unjust".

A Department for Education spokesperson said the government was "disappointed" with the judgment.

"In light of the fact that the judge has

found against us on a technical, procedural point, we intend to ask for a re-hearing."

However, a source familiar with the case believes the successful appeals by other staff members in the Trojan Horse case "call into question the fairness of the hearings" and suggested "the entire process should be halted", calling the NCTL a "kangaroo court".

The NCTL panel found that both teachers were involved in changing the school curriculum for sex and relationship education "to the extent of failing to teach contraception and safe sex", and said a "mindset" shown in a WhatsApp group that included the two men "tended to undermine tolerance and/or respect of the faith and beliefs of others".

It also found that Ahmed had organised and delivered assemblies "that were overly religious in nature" while also encouraging pupils to pray during the school day and separating boys and girls in some classes and assemblies.

Both teachers argued successfully in the High Court that they should have had access to evidence from the hearings of their colleagues, and both prohibitions were set aside pending a new hearing.

NEWS

TORIES RENEGE ON YEAR 7 RE-SIT PLEDGE

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

A u-turn on a manifesto pledge that all children who do not achieve a level 4 in reading and maths must re-sit their exams at secondary school is one of a raft of changes to primary assessment announced by the government this week.

Education secretary Justine Greening announced on Wednesday that she had abandoned plans for statutory re-sits for pupils in year 7 and intends to focus instead on the "steps needed to ensure a child catches up lost ground".

The u-turn was one of several changes that were announced in parliament and follows intense lobbying by teaching unions and subject associations against the proposals, criticised by some as a return to the 11-plus and an unnecessary burden on pupils and teachers.

As well as confirming there would be no new tests or national assessments until 2018-19, Greening announced that the key stage 1 spelling, punctuation and grammar test would continue to be non-statutory this year.

The test was made non-statutory after the paper was leaked online last year. This continues the policy of allowing teachers to choose if they will use it or not for one more year.

The early years foundation stage profile, which was due to be scrapped as an assessment measure, but was reinstated in August for 2016-17, will now remain in



PA/WIRE

place in 2017-18, and the government will continue with the planned roll-out of the online multiplication tables check from 2018-19.

The re-sit announcement, which reneges on a Conservative manifesto that "if children do not meet level 4 in their 'exams' at the end of primary school, they must re-sit at secondary school", has been welcomed by those who campaigned against the policy.

Russell Hobby, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said he was pleased Greening had "listened to the concerns of school leaders and teachers", while Malcolm Trobe, the interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the promised period of stability was "very sensible".

Kevin Courtney, the general secretary

of the National Union of Teachers, said the changes were "moving the system in the right direction", but would not resolve the "underlying effects of standardised testing and the effects of using unreliable numbers to rank schools and label children".

There will now be a consultation on primary assessment in the new year, which will also look at the implications for accountability after Greening admitted the pace and scale of recent assessment changes had been "stretching".

"There has been significant change in recent years, but the timeline from this point will bring greater stability, with no new national tests or assessments introduced before the 2018-19 academic year."

She reaffirmed a commitment made by her predecessor, Nicky Morgan, that no more than 6 per cent of primary schools would be below government floor standards in 2016, and announced that the government was finally ready to define a "coasting" primary school.

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, said it was "no wonder" the government had been forced to u-turn following the SATs "chaos" in the summer, and said parents and teachers were "struggling to navigate their way" through constant reforms

GREENING WANTS MORE SCHOOL PLACEMENTS FOR TRAINEES

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

School Direct teacher training "needs to be longer" if trainees are to get the experience across different schools that Justine Greening has said she wants to see.

The education secretary told delegates at the SCHOOLS NorthEast summit in Newcastle last week that she wanted trainees to "work in a number of different settings" so they could learn more about school improvement.

But the current mandatory two school placements are already a squeeze within the 10-month School Direct model, experts have said. Any more would be too short to have any impact.

Salaried trainees on School Direct can struggle to get just four weeks on their second placement, said Martin Thompson, executive director of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT).

"Those on salaried routes in particular do find it more difficult to be released for significant periods of time because they effectively have a job, and the criteria doesn't say anywhere how long they have to go for.

"If Justine Greening wants everyone to have broader experience, it can't really be done on the salaried School Direct route with the time they've got now."

The government has increasingly pushed the School Direct route – in which teachers are trained on-the-job – in preference to university-based PGCEs.

However, plans to award qualified teacher status (QTS) after a period of employment in the classroom, rather at the end of the first training year, could create the longer time-frame needed for more placements, Thompson said.

Pam Tatlow, chief executive of MillionPlus, an advocate group for routes based on universities, said PGCEs had two "substantive placements" and often included visits to a third school, while undergraduate courses offered three substantive placements.

She welcomed Greening's suggestion of broader trainee experience, but said: "School Direct trainees do not have access to the same placement experiences as provided by the PGCE and undergraduate routes."

Longer programmes would also increase costs for trainees, she said.

About 50 per cent of primary and 60 per cent of secondary trainees took the PGCE route, while Teach First trained 10 per cent and School Direct about 20 per cent at secondary, according to an analysis of 2013 to 2014 data.

The Department for Education told *Schools Week* that multi-academy trusts (MATs) were well-placed to move trainees around.

A spokesperson said: "As we see more multi-academy trusts, the opportunity for teachers and trainees to work across the trust schools in a range of environments will increase."

But one expert said this could shrink trainee experiences.

James Noble Rogers, executive director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), said: "If MATs have a particular ethos and a particular way of teaching, and are made up of broadly comparable schools, that won't necessarily facilitate a breadth of experience."

Most bids for academy sponsor funding 'rejected'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Exclusive

Cash handouts to help academy trusts expand are not reaching all the chains that want them, says a senior government official.

Applications for the latest round of sponsor capacity funding – government cash available for trusts that want to take over new schools – closed in July.

But a senior government official told the MAT Summit in London last week the government had "cheesed-off" scores of academy leaders after rejecting most applications in the east of England and north east London.

"In our region recently, we had seven times as many people apply for the limited budget we had in terms of sponsor capacity funding, so we cheesed-off six out of seven people," he said.

The disclosure comes at a time when the government is trying to encourage existing schools and trusts to take on more academies.

The official added: "We are hoping that shortly ministers will agree further growth for some priority areas in terms of sponsor capacity funding, but we'll have to see when that comes out."

Trusts can bid for between £50,000 and £100,000 each year from a government pot to encourage chains to take on

struggling schools.

Successful bidders can use the funding to set up or expand organisational structures, pay legal costs, fund IT infrastructure, develop leadership teams, employ staff and bring in education experts.

In 2013-14, trusts received £7.2 million.

At the Westminster Education Forum on Wednesday, schools commissioner David Carter said the latest round of funding applications were now waiting for a decision from education secretary Justine Greening.

"But we know unless we use those grants as we have in the past, we won't be able to provide the support leaders need. It's a major commitment to make sure it's there."

Malcolm Trobe, interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said members were worried about funding for expansion, and called on the Treasury to make more available.

Trobe told *Schools Week*: "There is a significant demand for people to sponsor schools and to do that, trusts need to grow and develop their infrastructure.

"It's a bit of a nonsense when they're asking for more and more sponsors to take on academies and there isn't the funding there to pick up the costs.

"If it is government policy for more academy trusts to develop, then money



should be provided by the Treasury, and not top-sliced from the general education budget."

Schools Week revealed in November last year that at least 17 of the 144 organisations handed capacity funding in 2013-14 had yet to take over a school.

The Department for Education (DfE) said it aimed to recoup any unspent funds. But in March only seven of those trusts had actually handed back any of the grant.

A DfE spokesperson said more than 500 sponsor capacity applications have been approved since they were introduced.

"The sponsor capacity fund is delivering the department's commitment to support the growth and development of new and existing sponsors and academy trusts."

NEWS

'MAKE IT EASIER FOR NEW EXAM BOARDS TO JOIN THE MARKET'

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

"Lower" requirements for new exam boards to enter the market would drive up innovation, according to a new report.

Competition between boards has not resulted in schools choosing easier specifications, but has instead helped to maintain standards, said the author of a report for the Centre for the Study of Market Reform in Education (CMRE).

Gabriel Haller Sahlgren, an economist at the CMRE, said entry into the exams market should be easier so that other providers could join Edexcel, AQA and OCR.

And the government's equivalency framework – which allows grades from different boards to be compared – ought to be removed so that multiple providers could lead the way to more innovative, or harder, qualifications, he said.

"Competition is said to introduce perverse incentives, inducing exam boards to dumb down their qualifications and inflate grades [...]"

"There is, however, no evidence that choice and competition have led to a decline in the standards of national qualification.

"Incentives for schools to choose what they perceive to be easier qualifications are mostly a product of the equivalency framework, and the way the value of qualifications are weighted in school league tables.

"The accreditation framework should be less prescriptive in its attempts to ensure comparability between different qualifications, subjects and specifications."

Speaking with Tim Oates at the Institute for Economic Affairs (IOE) on Tuesday, Sahlgren explained his concern about the equivalency framework.

"One of the problems is you make it very difficult to innovate.

"If you decide that an A is an A and equivalent in all different qualifications, that decreases the advantage of one provider being able to say: 'I have a better qualification than you.'"

Sahlgren gave the Cambridge PRE-U and the International Baccalaureate as examples of alternative examinations that have helped to drive new approaches.

He told an audience at the IOE that such competition could be increased by reducing the "regulatory burden" on possible new exam boards and "liberalising or lowering the requirements for entry into the market".

On fairness and comparability in a system without an equivalence framework, Sahlgren's report recommended a "general cohort-referenced competency test" to provide a comparability metric.

Sahlgren said there was a paucity of hard data, but he had analysed the shifts in market share between exam boards from Ofqual's research published in 2016 of GCSEs and A-levels going back to 2010.

Schools Week asked Ofqual for comment, but a spokesperson said it could not respond before we went to press.

Funding worries prompt trust to ditch UTC

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

A university technical college with low pupil numbers has been ditched by an academy trust for costing too much, while recruitment problems in another has forced it to consider converting into a secondary school.

Bright Futures Educational Trust (BFET) is relinquishing sponsorship of Wigan UTC as it can no longer afford the 14-19 institution.

The UTC has been open three years but currently has just 65 pupils on roll, despite a capacity for 500.

Meanwhile, Bolton UTC – ten miles from Wigan – is consulting community members over a planned change that would allow pupils to enter from age 11 instead of 14.

If agreed, it would be the sixth UTC of 48 to close since the model was launched in 2010.

Dana Ross-Wawrzynki, chief executive of BFET who oversees Wigan UTC, told *Schools Week*: "In the present climate in Wigan where other schools do not support the transfer of their pupils to a UTC at the end of key stage 3, it became very obvious that it would be a long and uphill battle to secure a full house of 500 students for a very long time.

"BFET does not have the finances to keep funding the UTC over several years in the hope that its reputation will bring more students."

The trust, which runs nine schools, took over the UTC in March last year following a

turbulent couple of years in which the UTC was graded as inadequate. It has since been rated good by Ofsted.

The trust asked Vicky Beer, regional schools commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire, if the UTC could convert to an 11 to 19 science, technology, engineering and maths school.

But Ross-Wawrzynki said Beer refused without giving the reasons for her decision – and despite a new secondary school needed to match a demand for places.

Instead, Beer is seeking a new sponsor and negotiations are ongoing.

Ross-Wawrzynki added: "We have not only lost a great school, but have been left with a debt due to the low numbers at the college.

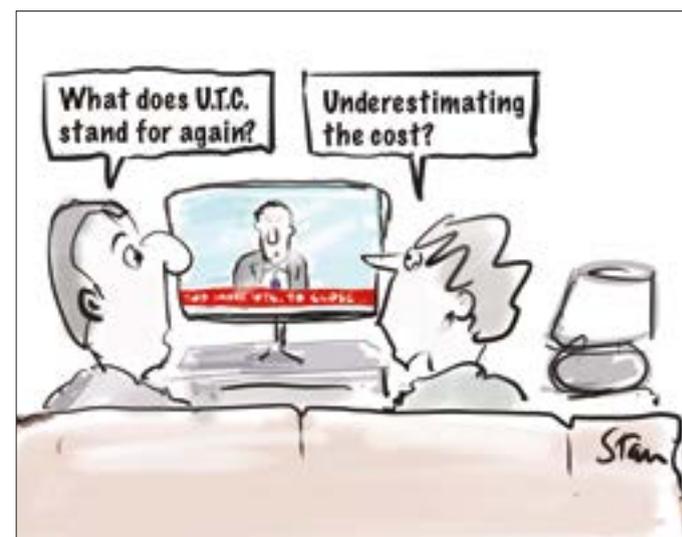
"BFET is working closely with the sponsor to enable a seamless handover."

Meanwhile UTC Bolton plans to become University Academy Bolton.

It opened in September last year and had 241 pupils on roll in January, although it has capacity for 600.

According to its website, the college sponsors "collected evidence" about the demand for year 7 entry in 2014, but went ahead with starting enrolment from age 14.

Local authority figures for the area



indicate an expected shortage of 48 secondary school places in 2017, rising to more than 170 by 2018.

UTC Bolton said that given the emerging shortage of secondary school places it believed the "time was now right" to widen the admission arrangements and proposed a three-form entry year 7 intake from next September. It would retain a focus on specialist science.

If Bolton UTC does become a secondary school, it will join UTC Lancashire, Central Bedfordshire UTC, Hackney UTC and Black Country UTC – which all shut citing low student numbers and consequent lack of financial viability.

The proposals come less than a month after Greenwich council announced it was spending £13 million to convert Royal Greenwich UTC in south London into a secondary school.

DfE refuses to release pupil data agreement

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government has refused to release a new agreement that prevents the Department for Education from passing pupil nationality and country of birth data to the Home Office.

The Department for Education (DfE) told *Schools Week* that an old agreement that allowed the Home Office to access certain information from the national pupil database had now been "superseded", but would not release the wording without a freedom of information request.

Ministers have sought to reassure parents that the additional data, which schools have had a duty to collect since September, will not be used by the Home Office for immigration processes after some schools' demand to see passports prompted a boycott from parents.

The government claims it is collecting the data to help schools to cope better with pupils with first languages other than English, but privacy campaigners have warned that any agreement not to share the new data with other departments is "in effect, worthless" because it is not backed up by legislation.

"Any hastily sketched-out arrangement 'on paper' for the two new census items will not

change existing practice," Jen Persson, from the Defend Digital Me campaign group, told *Schools Week*.

"Any new agreement, unless it has a statutory footing, will have no validity and could be changed at any time on the whim of future policy, without any clear oversight. Using confidential data of some of the most vulnerable in our school communities in this way is a massive breach of professional and public trust."

Under the old agreement, the Home Office and police were allowed to request data on pupils for individual pupils where their parent or guardian was suspected of an immigration offence or where they were an unaccompanied minor and there was concern over their wellbeing.

They were not able to request or see whole-class or whole-school batches of information, and had to provide the names of individuals they were interested in to the DfE.

While the government claims the new agreement will prevent the DfE from sending additional information – specifically data on pupils' nationality and country of birth – to the Home Office, it would not release the document.

Mike Kane, the new shadow schools

minister, said it was "extremely concerning" that the DfE had been passing information about individual pupils to the Home Office, and called for further clarity on what information would be provided in future.

"Schools are central to cohesive and happy communities and should not be used as a substitute border force for the government," he said.

"The government must urgently clarify the nature and scale of the information shared in these cases, and ensure census information is used appropriately to maintain its integrity."

A DfE spokesperson said the data "has not and will not be shared with the Home Office or police" and insisted that there was "an agreement in place to this effect".

"[The data] will be used to help us better understand how children with, for example, English as an additional language, perform in terms of their broader education, and to assess and monitor the scale and impact immigration may be having on the schools sector.

"Where the police or Home Office have clear evidence of illegal activity or fear of harm, limited data including a pupil's address and school details may be requested."

NEWS

Nottingham pursues cap on out-of-hours work

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

A cap on the amount of work teachers can complete "in their own time" is being pioneered in Nottingham and could be rolled out across the country.

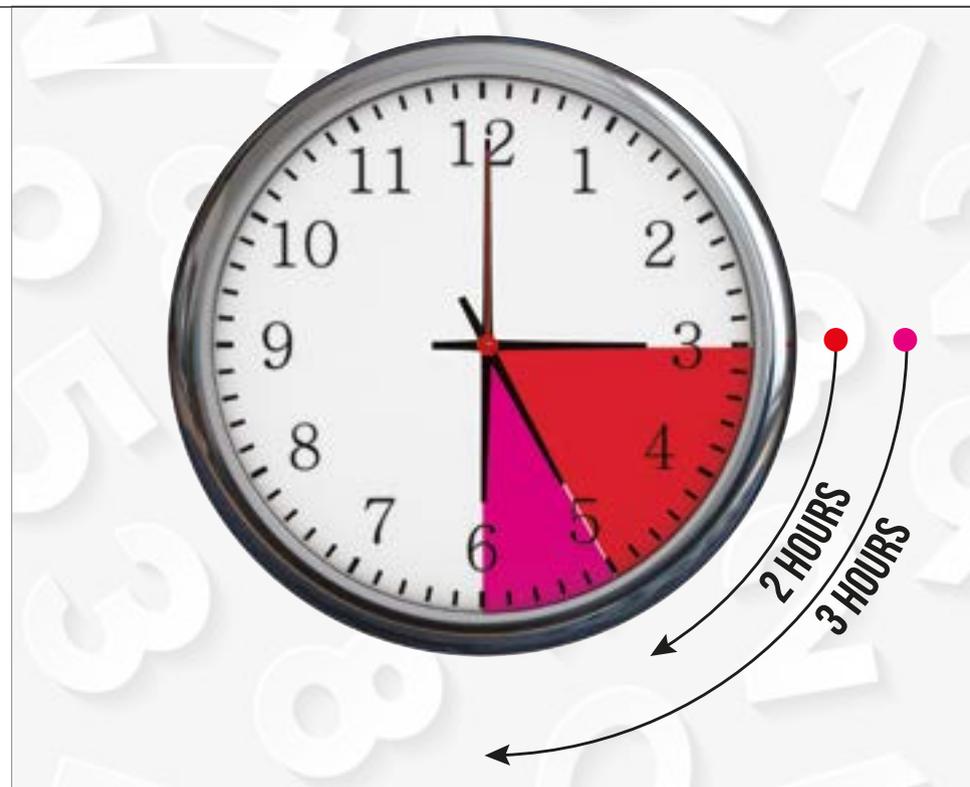
David Anstead, from the Nottingham Education Improvement Board, told MPs on the education committee on Wednesday that the cap of two hours a night for classroom teachers and three hours for school leaders had been adopted by a "handful of schools" in his area, and that institutions across England had shown interest in the idea.

The committee is in the middle of an inquiry into teacher supply issues, prompted by reports of a "crisis" in schools and worrying data on recruitment and retention.

Anstead told the committee that the "desire to be doing the right thing" was a problem that often left teachers dealing with "60 books into the evening". He said that the amount of lesson preparation, marking and data entry they did in their own time had "grown massively".

"One of the solutions is to be working together to say actually it is all right to be doing a lot less. Ofsted and other people will be all right with this. And there's a sort of safety in numbers approach to it," he said.

Nottingham's "fair workload charter",



backed by unions and headteachers in the area, has already been implemented in some schools and is expected to be rolled out to others next year.

But Anstead anticipates the scheme will go further.

"We've got schools coming in from across the country asking if they can engage with this.

"[It] would mean, in practice, if you finished in school at 4pm or 5pm, classroom teachers would still do another two hours. If you had a meeting that, say, went to 5pm or 6pm, you would still do another two hours.

"Staff associations were supportive of still quite heavy workloads, but they saw this as a step in the right direction because it was a

massive reduction in what they do now."

Anstead said the next stage was to "go back to marking and lesson-planning policies to get them to be reasonably deliverable in those two hours".

Mike Cameron, a school governor and former teacher, said the idea was "astonishing".

"Embedding the idea that a teacher should do a full day's work at school and then go home and do another two hours a night. This is under the guise of 'capping' workload. Actually what it does is to create an expectation ... that teachers should work at home every night," he tweeted.

"Here's what the expectation should be – the workload of a teacher should be able to be achieved in a working day. If it can't, then the workload has to be reduced."

Schools minister Nick Gibb said one way of cutting workload was to "send out the message" that teachers did not need to leave large amounts of written feedback on pupils' work.

"Feedback on the face of the exercise book or piece of work is one of those notions that came from somewhere in the ether, possibly from someone speaking at a conference.

"It was never required by government, it was never required by Ofsted, and so we have to send out the message that this is not required."

Durand chief: 'I'm a victim of bullying'

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

An academy chief whose trust is under investigation has launched a blistering attack on the government.

The Durand Academy Trust this week published on its website a series of previously unpublished letters that its chair of governors Sir Greg Martin (pictured) sent to the government, including former prime minister David Cameron.

The trust has been told the government will pull its funding next year after it failed to comply with requirements relating to the complicated structure of the trust and its associated companies.

But Durand has vowed to challenge the termination in court.

In the letters, including one sent to David Cameron in April, Martin said he was "disappointed" that Lord Nash, academies minister, and Peter Lauener, chief executive of the Education Funding Agency (EFA), were in charge of an investigation into Durand's activities.

He said the trust was the victim of a campaign of "bullying and harassment instigated by Lord Nash and his sidekick Peter Lauener".

Lauener was also accused of "colluding" with Margaret Hodge MP, former chair of the public accounts committee, to "generate an image of wrongdoing" of Martin.

The former executive head at Durand in Lambeth, south London, was criticised by MPs at a committee hearing in January last year when it emerged he was paid more than £400,000 in salary from the school and management fees from London Horizons, which runs the school's leisure facilities on a commercial basis.

Martin also claims that Hodge was incorrect to say "that I was running The Coterie [a dating agency] from the school and that it was registered at the school. This is simply not true."

Companies House records show Martin was a director of The Coterie from September 2014 until his resignation in January 2015. He was one of four shareholders.

The dating agency was registered at Horizons Health and Fitness, in Liberty Street, Stockwell, south London. The "not-for-profit leisure and accommodation business", according to the school's website, was set up to "efficiently use the land owned by Durand".

Martin said in the letters: "What we have done, entirely correctly, is to challenge unfair, unreasonable and false allegations and statements made by these various bodies."

He urged the former prime minister to intervene to "stop these unelected and hugely privileged people born with, as you would say, not one but two silver spoons

in their mouths, denying our parents and pupils a chance to improve their life chances".

He also sent a similar request to new education secretary Justine Greening in July.

In a letter dated May 20, Martin also told former education secretary Nicky Morgan that he had already seen a Charity Commission report of an investigation into the Durand Education Trust – which owns land occupied by Durand academy in Lambeth.

A spokesperson for the commission said the "substantive part of the investigation has now completed and a report will be published soon". It was "standard practice to liaise with the charity in question regarding the draft of an inquiry report before its publication".

Martin, speaking to the *Today* show on Radio 4 on Tuesday morning, said the EFA had "abused its power".

He also said the EFA instigated the Durand contracts knowing about the leisure centre and that the trust had followed required tender procedures.

The agency declined to comment.



EEF GIVES £1.2M FOR P4C RE-TRIAL

A philosophy programme claiming to improve the reading and maths skills of primary pupils has been granted a further £1.2 million for testing on a larger scale.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) released its philosophy for children (P4C) report last year which showed how philosophy sessions for pupils as young as nine could improve maths and reading progress by an average of two months, with an even greater change for disadvantaged children.

The findings were based on a randomised controlled trial of 3,159 primary pupils across 48 schools.

The EEF has now announced it will re-grant the programme a £1.2 million fund to test the programme in 200 primary schools, with 9,000 year 5 and 6 pupils.

Sir Kevan Collins, chief executive of the EEF, said the new trial will "allow us to find out if the programme can produce similarly good results when implemented in many different schools".

In P4C sessions, pupils and teacher sit in a circle. The teacher shows a video clip, image or newspaper article as a stimulus. After a short period of silent thinking time, the class split into small groups to generate questions and discuss them.

The EEF has also announced funding for five new randomised controlled trials designed to find out the impact of different learning programmes on pupil attainment (see schoolsweek.co.uk for full details).

NEWS: MAT SUMMIT 2016

Education can make you (and me) sick

Over 250 delegates met in Windsor for the 2nd annual MAT Summit - an event bringing together leaders across multi-academy trusts to discuss the issues facing the sector.

Editor Laura McInerney chaired the two-day event as part of Schools Week's exclusive media partnership with Optimus Education.

LAURA MCINERNEY

@MISS_MCINERNEY

The stress of working in education can make people ill, former education secretary David Blunkett told academy leaders this week, as he recounted how a fear of union conferences contributed to his own physical battles.

Speaking at the MAT Summit 2016 in Windsor, run by Optimus, Blunkett (pictured) said that he was surprised when he was booed at the National Union of Teachers conference in 1999 during his tenure as education secretary – but defended his policy of the time to “name and shame” under-performing schools.

“One of the schools was on the edge of my constituency, and that school had dwindled to 250 students, parents were voting with their feet, children were getting a lousy education – only 4 per cent got their GCSEs,” he said.

“We said we won't put up with this any more. Either the school is gone, we close it, or we have a fresh start. In that case, it



worked. The school is flourishing.

“Even with the English and maths proviso, that school now has a pass rate of more than 50 per cent and students' life chances are transformed.”

However the former cabinet member – who is now a peer in the House of Lords – said that constantly battling the profession took a strain on him, something many teachers would recognise.

“We have a problem in the teaching profession, don't we? Teachers feel stressed out and understandably so.

“I felt sick. I felt sick before I went into some of these conferences and I felt very badly for about two days afterwards.

“That's because you are human. And your guts churn up and you end up with physical problems, which I didn't go on about, but I had ulcerative colitis and I had

a Barrett's oesophagus [reflux of acid from the stomach into the oesophagus], which had to be operated on. I was lucky we caught it before it became cancerous. These things have a knock-on impact.”

He told delegates to take time making decisions and not to feel the need to respond to everyone immediately.

He also said that while trust leaders faced “being evaluated against each other, against criteria, while the same MATs are being paraded as being wonderful all the time”, they must decide on their own values and stick to them.

Asked about grammar schools, he was clear that he would seek to defend the legislation he introduced in 1998 banning any further selective schools, which the prime minister has said she will now overturn.

A Department for Education consultation

looking at how academic selection might be extended will end in December.

Blunkett said: “I think it is part of a trend for being retro and looking back over our shoulder. Everything is about the past as though the past was a wonderful era ... but we are 65 million people on the edge of a continent facing the disintegration of our currency and our tomorrow. This is about getting real.

“They have trodden into a quagmire – and those are very difficult to get out of.”

His view on how to traverse the quagmire was to tell the nation that it had been a “very interesting consultation, we've heard what the nation says – that's familiar to people now – and naturally we'll take account of this”.

He then urged the government to clarify that what it “really meant” in its consultation was a gifted and talented programmes in all secondary schools – just as he and Estelle Morris did while in office, though he admitted funding was not continued in the later years of the Labour government.

Asked if he still had hope for education, despite the hurdles around funding and teacher recruitment, he said: “I have hope because education is the most wonderful way of changing the world and the life chances of others.

“People in it are committed to something bigger than the structural change imposed on them. Whether it is from my government, in literacy and numeracy strategies, or the current [grammar] consultation. It is bigger than all of us.”

'YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO SHARE OFFICE SERVICES'

Shared services are logical, Marcus Robinson, a partner at professional services firm PwC told delegates at the summit. “But they typically fall down because most people, and most organisations, are happy for others to share their services but aren't prepared to go and share from others.”

As schools face squeezed budgets, shared back-office functions are increasingly seen as a way to make efficiencies.

In the 2015 Budget, the chancellor highlighted that costs for functions such as HR and finance, varied between schools “from £202 to £1,432 per pupil”.

Robinson said each school having its own services was likely to be untenable and suggested to delegates that an “exchange”

model of shared services between multi-academy trusts might boost efficiency.

“Why can't those MATs that have already invested and already have good services be able to share those out to other MATs in a way that feels commercial, but in a way that generates a surplus?”

He described how PwC “came very close” to working with a multi-academy trust on a joint venture, “where the idea was that we would create a new business that would provide all non-teaching services back into the MAT. The way that it operated was at historic cost, but it aimed to do better than that [financially], thereby creating a surplus that went back into the MAT, sharing out again into schools.”

In 2015, AET, which then ran 76 schools, developed a £400 million bid in collaboration with PwC to outsource its services. However, the proposal was considered “novel and contentious” by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), and was later stopped.

Head of the EFA, Peter Lauener, said the agency would not agree to the proposal because of “wider concerns”.

Robinson suggested to delegates that instead of a “monopolistic joint venture”, future policy could allow trusts to share services they had developed and then allow “gaps” to be filled by commercial organisations.

SCHOOLS TURN OFF EMAIL FOR CHAT APP

A “chat app” could ease workload problems, according to one education entrepreneur who has seen its use increase among multi-academy trusts.

Slack, an instant messaging service, has replaced day-to-day email communication in many commercial and public sector organisations – including government departments.

John Roberts, founder of education ventures Edapt and SixthDomain, told delegates at the summit that the software was increasingly used in schools, including some “very large multi-academy trusts”.

“Communication is key externally, internally and across MATs. At Edapt, we have members of the team across the UK, Europe . . . the world. Slack has been a game-changer for us.”

Roberts said he had no relationship with Slack “other than it has changed my life and business”, before explaining how the software enabled him to message his team and bring up data about clients “right from my phone”.

“If you hate endless email chains and want access to data, use this,” he said.

In April, Slack claimed that more than 2.7 million employees worldwide used its freely available software to share information instantly.

Premium options are available, including stronger password protection.



Roberts said that in 2015 he had asked headteachers to share their stories of using the software, but none had got back to him. This year he had asked the same question, and received an instant response from one head who said it had had improved communication and data-sharing in his school.

Another head said that instant messaging services meant staff were no longer walking around the school “finding members of staff” to pass on messages.

“Think of the impact on workload, immediately, free, and you can start it in ten minutes,” Roberts said.

The use of “channels” on Slack – private areas where invited members can chat to one another – is also encouraging a new form of professional development in the United States.

SLACKedu was started by Tim Monreal, a social studies teacher in the US who developed an experimental channel for teachers where more than 200 teachers discuss issues each day.





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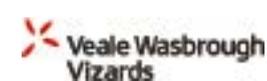
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NEWS

PROGRESS 8 ANALYSIS



Disadvantaged schools more likely to fail

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Hundreds of schools face being labelled as failing under the new Progress 8 measure, with analysis showing those with disadvantaged intakes are still more likely to fall below the government's floor standard.

An analysis of provisional key stage 4 data published by Education Datalab found that 296 schools had a Progress 8 score below -0.5 – the government's new floor standard from January.

Progress 8 is supposed to be a fairer accountability measure that does not unfairly punish schools with challenging intakes.

But a separate analysis by the Education Policy Institute (EPI) also found that schools falling under the floor standards are still disproportionately those with disadvantaged intakes – although the disparity has reduced.

Schools only face intervention based on their official key stage 4 results, which are published in January. The provisional figures can change after late results and re-marks are factored in.

But the figures suggest hundreds of schools could be eligible for government intervention – including forced academy conversion.

However Datalab found that more than one third of schools likely to be categorised as failing had already been converted into academies following government action.

Dr Becky Allen (pictured), director of Education Datalab, said: "If we believe Progress 8 is a fair and valid method of judging school performance, then the sponsorship model hasn't worked for them."

The provisional data shows the Progress 8 scores of sponsored academies does increase over time, from -0.25 in year one, to -0.1 in year six (although this is still below the national average for all state schools of 0).

Education Datalab also found that nearly a third (8) of the 26 flagship free schools with published results also fell below the floor standard.

Allen added: "Is it just 'teething problems' at these schools? In which case, can they demonstrate that these have been resolved?"

"Or is there something more systemic that must call into question either the process of



setting up free schools, or the ability to hold all schools to account using Progress 8?"

Free schools, overall, performed slightly below national average on both progress and overall attainment measures.

The potential proportion of all schools below floor standard (9 per cent) is slightly lower than in both 2014 and 2015 (11 per cent).

The government introduced Progress 8 as a fairer accountability measure, as schools are judged on the progress of every pupil rather than those who achieve a C grade or above.

While floor standards have historically affected "schools with high levels of disadvantage as these pupils tend to have lower prior attainment", according to the

EPI, it was hoped the new measures would overcome this issue.

But EPI's study found these schools are still more likely to be deemed as failing, although the disparity is falling.

Last year, a school with more than 50 per cent of its pupils eligible for free school meals had a 22 per cent chance of falling below the floor standards. That is now just 10 per cent, based on this year's provisional figures.

Progress 8 scores will also be used to judge "coasting schools" from next year, which ministers said would hit schools in "leafy areas with more advantage" that have "gone below the radar".

The Progress 8 threshold score for the coasting label has been revealed as -0.25.

But EPI said that its analysis suggested schools are "far more likely to be labelled as coasting if they have rates of disadvantage that are above average".

The Department for Education said: "The number of secondary schools below the floor standard will not be confirmed until January 2017. Anything ahead of that data is speculation and should be treated as such."

The seven positive outliers on Progress 8

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

High-quality homework and tireless teachers are behind the soaring success of outlier schools leading the way in new Progress 8 scores, according to new analysis.

Research by Education Datalab into the provisional key stage 4 data has identified seven secondary schools with Progress 8 scores above the +1 mark (full list below).

That means every pupil at the school achieved, on average, a grade higher than an average pupil in other schools with the same prior attainment.

Becky Allen, director of Datalab and report author, said all the schools were "very different".

Four – Steiner, St Andrew's and the two Tauheedul schools – have, what Allen calls, "unusual intakes".

She said: "This means that we cannot really be certain as to how much of the amazing progress students make from ages 11 to 16 is a reflection of pupil characteristics and home learning environments."

The other three schools, which do not have socially selective intakes, are in London. They all have intakes at or below the national average for pupil attainment.

"It seems very likely there are policies, procedures and teaching approaches that could work across a variety of settings.

"However, if their outstanding results rely on recruiting outstanding teachers who are willing to work exceptionally

long hours, then their success isn't something we can replicate across the system because such teachers are a scarce resource."

Hamid Patel, chief executive of Tauheedul education trust, which runs two of the outlier schools, said staff often "go above and beyond the call of duty to give all learners the support they need to achieve, and surpass, expectations".

Max Haimendorf (pictured), principal of King Solomon academy, also said teacher quality was a "big lever" for his school's soaring score.

"We tell our teachers we are going to help them to become better teachers, we provide weekly coaching advice on their development.

"It means very talented people want to work with us because they are ambitious and driven people and they want to feel they are having an impact in their work."

The school also had a longer day, a narrow curriculum focused on English and maths, and reading homework for pupils every night at key stage 3.

Chris Tomlinson, executive principal at Harris academy Battersea, also picked up homework as a key factor.

"The quality of homework books is phenomenal. Such high aspirations, high support and high challenge."

The Harris federation took over the school two years ago.

Principal Dave Moody said a dedicated team dealt with behaviour, allowing teachers to teach.

"Behaviour was awful [when

we took over]. The kids had not learned anything in three years. But we've given them five years' knowledge in those two years."

The school also has one of the highest percentage of children eligible for the pupil premium (80 per cent).

"Our admission policy has stayed exactly the same. It's one of the things I'm most proud about – we are not about backdoor selection," Tomlinson said.

Last year's key stage 4 cohort at King Solomon, a two-form entry all-through school set up in 2007, were below average attainment when they joined the school.

Haimendorf said last year's cohort had joined from other primaries, whereas the academy's own primary pupils were now filtering through.

The prior attainment of pupils had subsequently risen, which meant that future Progress 8 scores might drop, but the school's attainment scores should get "ever higher".

The other schools did not respond to a request for comment.

THE TOP SEVEN SCHOOLS

Steiner academy, Hereford

St Andrew's Catholic school, Surrey

Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School, Blackburn

Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School, Blackburn

City Academy Hackney, east London

Ark King Solomon Academy,

Westminster, central London

Harris Academy Battersea, south London

Early scores removed from website

The Department for Education removed a webpage enabling the public to download performance scores for every secondary school in England less than an hour after *Schools Week* flagged the issue.

National statistics on pupil achievement at key stage 4 were released on the department's website on Thursday morning.

The figures showed the distribution of Progress 8 scores across schools and revealed an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving five GCSEs, including English and maths.

The release, published on the department's official statistics page, also included a link to a site where users could look up scores for individual schools one at a time.

However, it later emerged that a second government website allowed the public to access Excel files that, after downloading, revealed all schools' Attainment and Progress scores in one document.

The site clearly stated that the information was not expected to be published until yesterday (October 20).

The data release was flagged to the education department at 7.03pm on Thursday. By 7.49pm, the information had been removed.

When questioned about the disappearance, a spokesperson said the data was "incomplete and will be republished next week".

The department refused to answer whether it intended to release the information on Thursday or if it was put out early in error.



NEWS



PROGRESS 8

PROGRESS 8 AND ATTAINMENT 8 ARE THE NEW HEADLINE MEASURES FOR SCHOOLS - BUT WHAT TRENDS ARE EMERGING IN THIS NEW WORLD OF DATA? JOHN DICKENS AND FREDDIE WHITTAKER CRUNCHED THE NUMBERS TO FIND OUT

1 THE EBACC - NOT YET REACHING 90 PER CENT

The proportion of pupils entering and achieving the EBacc has increased slightly, but is still way off the government's target of 90 per cent.

The Department for Education's statistics show the proportion of pupils entering the exam has risen in the past year from 38.6 to 39.6 per cent.

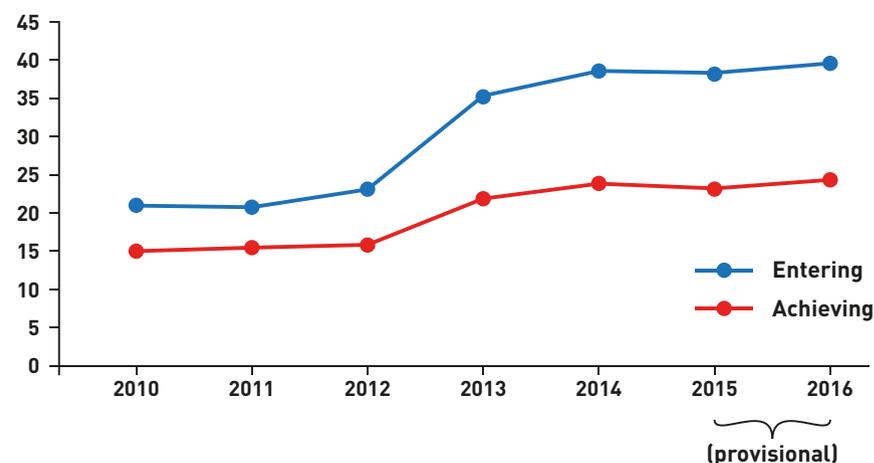
The data also shows a slight rise, from 23.9 per cent to 24.5 per cent, in the proportion of pupils actually achieving the measure, which is based on five subjects

- English, maths, the sciences, history or geography and a language.

The proportion of entries is long way off the government's target of at least 90 per cent of pupils entered for all EBacc subjects.

The data also shows that more state school pupils are now achieving the EBacc - but the rise is split between an actual rise in results, and a tweak in the way English GCSE performance is included in the measurement. **FW**

PERCENTAGE OF PUPILS ENTERING AND ACHIEVING THE EBACC, STATE-FUNDED SCHOOLS



2 STILL TO SPEAK THE EBACC'S LANGUAGE

Research organisation Education Datalab claims the overall EBacc entry rate has stalled because there "has been little increase in entries in languages".

The proportion of pupils entering a language subject has fallen slightly in recent years, from 50.5 per cent in 2013-14 to 49.3 per cent in 2014-15, and down to 49 per cent this year.

Datalab points out that London continues to "lead the way" on languages, with an entry rate of 62 per cent, but explains that this could be due to the capital "having greater numbers of children who speak a

different language at home and who have taken GCSEs in these subjects".

Russell Hobby, from the National Association of Head Teachers, is concerned by the decline in French and German GCSEs taken this year: "77.7 per cent of those pupils who entered four out of the five EBacc components were missing the languages component in 2016, up from 67.4 per cent in 2015," he said.

"The government will find it impossible to meet their targets of 90 per cent EBacc take-up if this trend continues." **FW**

PROPORTION OF PUPILS ENTERING A LANGUAGE SUBJECT (%)



3 GIRLS AND BOYS

Girls topped every metric in the government's new accountability measures. They continue to score higher than boys in English and maths progress (66.7 per cent v 58.6 per cent) and in the EBacc entry rate (45.1 per cent against 34.3 per cent) and its achievement (29.8 per cent v 19.4 per cent).

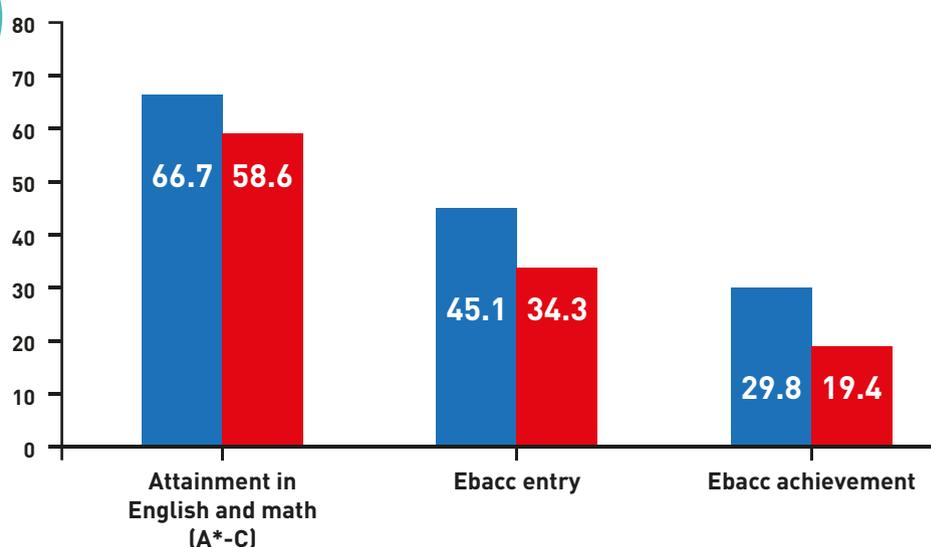
They also do better in Attainment 8, with

an average score of 52.1, compared with 47.5 among boys.

But the revelation that girls across England had an average Progress 8 score of 0.11, compared with -0.17 for boys suggests that, over their secondary years, boys fall behind in their expected progress while girls progress more than expected.

FW

GIRLS AND BOYS



Regional Manager for the Midlands

Are you an entrepreneurial teacher, ready to lead the expansion of Enabling Enterprise in Birmingham and across the Midlands?



Enabling Enterprise is an award-winning social enterprise. Our mission is to ensure that one day, all students leave school equipped with the skills, experiences and aspirations to succeed – beyond just a set of qualifications. We do this through creating innovative educational programmes for schools that introduce new, more enterprising teaching approaches. Our work is reinforced and supported by over 110 top businesses including PwC, Birmingham Airport, Virgin and many others.

This Regional Manager role is a key one in the development of Enabling Enterprise as we look to build on the progress and growth in Birmingham, Nottingham and the wider Midlands over the last four years. We currently have a network of 40 schools and over 10,000 students as well as over 30 business partners in the region, and this new role will be focused on accelerating this growth.

You will be leading a team of three others initially, but we are looking for someone keen to build on our great existing momentum in the region and be excited about growing this team further.

This role needs leadership and management from day one, so evidence of being able to take initiative, make connections, organise and lead others is essential. Similarly, any business, sales or relationship management experience would also be beneficial.

If you're looking for your next role and want to help transform education in England, we want to hear from you.

Preferred start date is 3rd January 2017, but would be flexible for the right candidate.

Working hours: 40 hours per week, although in this senior role flexibility is likely to be important. It is important to be aware that this role involves travel across the West and East Midlands as well as regular visits to the other regions in London and Manchester.

Salary: Up to £40,000 subject to review in 12 months, plus up to 3% matched pension

Key Responsibilities:

Programme Delivery

- Ensuring top quality delivery of programmes to schools in the region by liaising with schools and teachers, organising and delivering teacher training and other specialist support.
- Building strong partnerships with business supporters and working with them to plan and facilitate trips for the students.

Sales & Marketing

- Building up Enabling Enterprise's profile across the region to support the recruitment of new schools, employer partners, and team members.
- Promoting Enabling Enterprise programmes to new schools across Birmingham, Nottingham and the Midlands.
- Recruiting schools to take up our programmes to fulfil our ambitions to reach more students each year, and modelling good practice to new Education Associates.
- Managing the Midlands team throughout the process of engaging new schools, from initial contact with schools through to confirming the income we need to make the region sustainable.

Management of the Midlands Office and Education Associates

- Provide management for the existing Midlands team of three.
- Over time, recruiting and training new Education Associates to join the team and building a strong office culture.
- Using project management tools to manage activities, and managing workload.
- Building strong relationships with local businesses and with EE Head Office in London.

Training and Quality Assurance

- Ensuring that the delivery of our programmes is to the highest possible standards.
- Supporting the training of Education Associates, as they are recruited, through modelling good practice, observation and feedback, and supporting reflection.

Applications should include a CV and Covering Letter and be sent by email to: jobs@enablingenterprise.org by 9am Monday 7th November.

For more information, visit our website: www.enablingenterprise.org

The Forest High School

HEADTEACHER



Salary: Scale Group 4 - L20 - £62,240 - L27 - £73,876

(Salary is dependent on level of qualification and experience)

Location: Cinderford, Gloucestershire

Contract type: Permanent and Full-Time

The Forest High School is situated in Cinderford, a proud former mining town in a stunningly beautiful district of Gloucestershire. An 11-16 school which has a PAN of 450, but with 319 currently on roll. There are 21 teaching staff and the children are taught in aging school buildings.

The school is awaiting a decision to bring a small primary school onto site accompanied by a £6m partial rebuild of the school to form an all-through school.

SGS Academy Trust was asked to sponsor Forest High School in 2015. The school was placed into special measures at the same time. The future of the school was at risk because of the poor performance, combined with poor accommodation and a declining pupils on roll.

Since 2015, with significant support from SGS Academy Trust, the school is showing some signs of improvement but progress is not quick enough, as identified by the Trust in March and confirmed in our latest monitoring visit in September, however the KS4 results in 2015/16 were the best in several years.

We are seeking candidates who will lead from the front; be the inspirational leader of this struggling school with huge potential; someone who can look beyond the barriers and work with us to turn this school around and deliver a good / outstanding school for Cinderford.

We welcome visits to tour the school on 1st November 2016 at the following times: 9am and 1.30pm

To book, please call Alison McGinley, Headteacher's PA on: 01594 823720

To apply for this exciting opportunity please complete the application form and submit a supporting statement of no more than two sides of A4, font size 11, indicating how your expertise and experience to date would equip you to lead and drive improvements at The Forest High School.

To request an application pack please email: sharron@onlyfe.co.uk

The successful applicant will be required to obtain and maintain a satisfactory Disclosure Certificate as a requirement of the job.

South Gloucestershire and Stroud Academy Trust welcomes applications from all sectors of the community and is an equal opportunities employer.

Closing Date: Noon, 2nd November 2016

Expected Interview Date: Over two days 8th & 9th November 2016

The Stockwood Park Academy

PRINCIPAL



THE
SHARED
LEARNING
TRUST

**Salary: L33-39 – more for an exceptional candidate
Required for April 2017**

This is a very important post. It is a great opportunity for the Trust to recruit a leader with drive and ambition to lead The Stockwood Park Academy and build on the good work that is already taking place. The post has arisen due to the previous Principal being promoted to Chief Executive Officer of The Shared Learning Trust. The Associate Principal has been appointed Interim Principal from September 2016 for a fixed period.

To promote the highest expectations and standards of behaviour the Principal is expected to be available for duties during the school's day and use these opportunities to interact with staff and students alike during this time. The Trust views the quality of teaching and attainment with the utmost importance so the new Principal will be actively involved with learning walks and drop-ins to lessons and leading the strategy on academic achievement.

All applicants should have sound business acumen, problem solving abilities and strong passion and resilience.

Finally, our school leaders are Principals rather than Headteachers. As such, skills and attributes will be utilised outside of the academy, in the leadership of strategic groups across the Trust. In addition, the Trust has strong partnerships across Luton and the expectation is that the new Principal would play a key role in this.

For further information and details of how to apply, please visit:

www.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

and return completed application forms with a covering letter to:

Kevin Martin, Human Resources Manager,

The Shared Learning Trust,

Wilbury Drive,

Dunstable,

LU5 4QP.

E-Mail: **academyrecruitment@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk**

Tel: ask for **Kevin** on - **01582 211226**

Visits to the Academy are warmly welcomed.

Closing Date: 9am on 7th November, 2016

Interview Date: w/c 14th November, 2016



A brilliant opportunity to lead a thriving 11-18 Academy (1400 students) and be part of a group of Principals working within a family of schools

“Students are proud ambassadors for the academy. They make good contributions to the academy and to the local community”

(Ofsted, May 2015)



We would like from you:

- Substantial leadership experience as a Principal or Deputy and a track record of improvement and impact.
- The determination and confidence to strive for, and achieve, even better outcomes for all of our students.
- The interpersonal skills to bring out the best in students, parents, staff, Governors and the wider community.
- To play a role in promoting and developing partnership and collaboration through effective leadership.
- To be a leader who will have a strong presence around the Academy.

We can offer you:

- “The academy’s provision for safety is outstanding. Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that students are safe in and around the academy” (Ofsted)
- The chance to join an ambitious multi-academy trust that is going places.
- Superb modern, purpose-built accommodation.
- A strong commitment to your training and professional development within a standalone multi-academy trust.

Sir William Stanier Community School

Director of Maths

Salary: L7-11

Required: January 2017



The Senior Leadership Team, Governors and The Heath Family Trust are seeking to appoint a talented, innovative and ambitious strategic leader of the Mathematics faculty. The successful candidate will lead and manage all aspects of Maths. This is a fantastic opportunity to build or extend a leadership profile in a school that has shown continuous and sustained improvement.

Application packs and further information can be obtained by emailing our Hays Recruitment Partner, Daniel Burgess, at: **daniel.burgess@hays.com**

To find out more about working at Sir William Stanier School, please visit:

<http://www.hays.co.uk/jobs/sir-william-stanier-community-school>

Closing date: 18th October, 2016 12 noon

Candidates should:

- Be able to lead by example as an outstanding Maths teacher
- Understand and be able to articulate how they have raised standards through effective Self-Evaluation in the classroom and subject area
- Be an effective system leader with a clear understanding of process
- Be able to show how they have used performance management and accountability systems to improve performance of themselves and others
- Have proven leadership skills and the ability to motivate and inspire others
- Have a clear commitment to continuous school improvement
- Have a high level of data literacy to analyse trends across the school and initiate effective responses
- Be an excellent communicator with strong and interpersonal skills
- Have an up to date knowledge of the emerging issues in school leadership

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Successful candidates will be subject to pre-employment screening including an Enhanced check via the Disclosure & Barring Service.

SCHOOLS WEEK



Wallace is your go-to person for everything jobs-related.

He will advise you on the best formats and channels to get your recruitment opportunities seen by people working in schools and the wider education sector.

Wallace joined the team in January 2016, having worked as a sales and marketing executive for leisure and hospitality company, Eclectic PLC.

He's here to help you share your roles with our audience of switched-on, engaged readers.

Searching for the right candidate with the right calibre, can be both challenging and time consuming, alongside trying to work towards a budget.

Schools Week offers cost effective approaches through proven advertising mediums, which are tailor-made to work in line with your budget and more importantly your expectations.

Speak to Wally to find out how Schools Week can support your recruitment needs.

Tel: 0203 432 1397

Email: wallace.williams@schoolsweek.co.uk

**I'm here to make
recruitment that bit easier**

NEWS

PROGRESS 8

PROGRESS 8 AND ATTAINMENT 8 ARE THE NEW HEADLINE MEASURES FOR SCHOOLS - BUT WHAT TRENDS ARE EMERGING IN THIS NEW WORLD OF DATA? JOHN DICKENS AND FREDDIE WHITTAKER CRUNCHED THE NUMBERS TO FIND OUT



4 ACADEMIES AHEAD ON THE SURFACE

The provisional Progress 8 data shows that overall academies are doing marginally better than local authority-maintained schools, but this isn't the full picture.

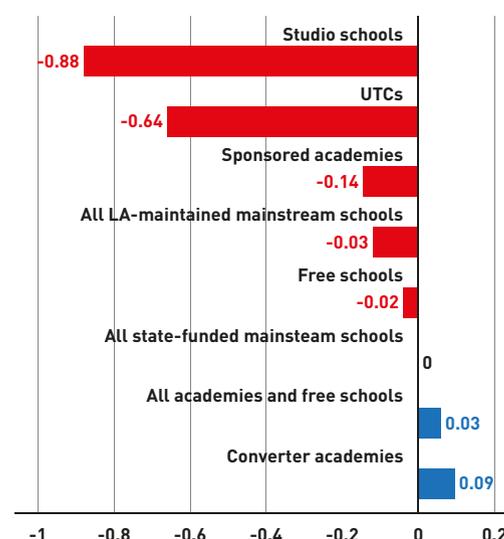
The boost for academies is mostly down to converter academies, most of which were good or outstanding school, doing well on the new measure, with an average score of 0.09.

A lot of converter academies (1,322) are subject to the measure, so their success

skews the figures, masking the below-average performance of sponsored academies, UTCs and studio schools.

We have not included FE colleges in our graph, because although they have by far the lowest average score (-2.24), only 15 institutions are subject to the measure, which makes the data unreliable. **FW**

Progress 8 score by type of school



5 SELECTIVE SCHOOLS SOAR

As *Schools Week* reported last month, grammar schools score a lot better than comprehensives and secondary moderns on the Progress 8 measure.

Selective schools had an average score of 0.33, while comprehensives had an average score of -0.01 and secondary moderns -0.05.

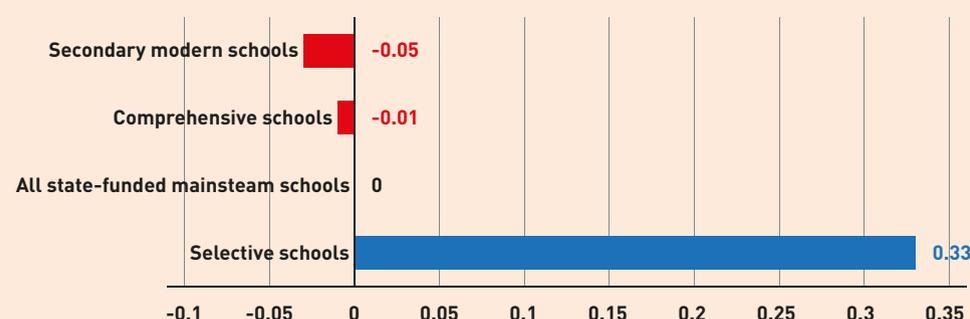
But Education Datalab said scores in grammar schools could be "overstated" because of unreliable SATs scores.

Director Dr Rebecca Allen compared

pupils' end of primary test scores with whether or not they passed the 11-plus, finding that most pupils attending a grammar school achieved a score of 5.2 or above on their tests.

However, when analysing grammar progress scores, some schools have large numbers of pupils entering with much lower SATs scores – in some cases as low as 4.5 – suggesting pupils had an inaccurate score on entry. **FW**

Progress 8 score by admissions basis



6 YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE FAITH

Religious schools mostly outperform those without a religious character – with Jewish, Sikh and Muslim schools way ahead.

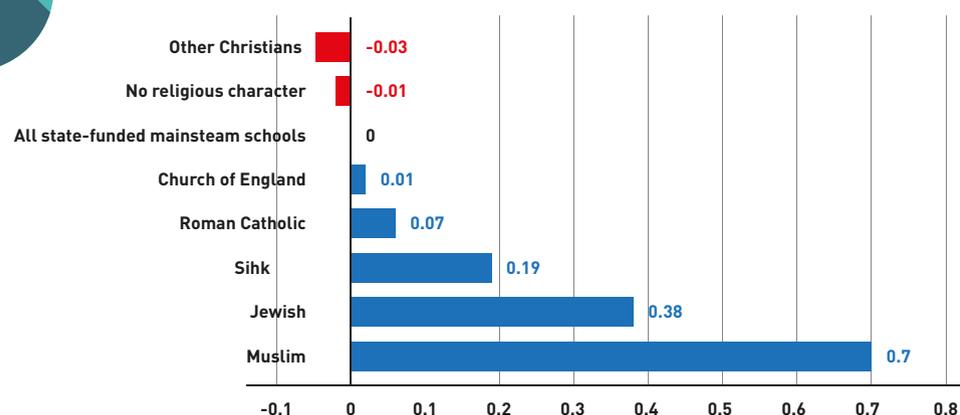
The statistics also show that Jewish, Sikh and Muslim schools are doing much better against Progress 8 compared with those of Christian faith.

Muslim schools this year had an average

Progress 8 score of 0.79, while Jewish schools scored 0.45 on average. The average score among Sikh schools was 0.35.

This is compared with average scores of 0.08 for Catholic schools, 0.02 for Church of England schools and -0.01 across schools with no religious character. **FW**

Progress 8 score by religious character of school



7 LONDON V THE NORTH

London boroughs dominate the top-scoring local authority areas for Progress 8 scores, with the north trailing behind.

Once you discount local authorities with fewer than 1,000 pupils in their GCSE year, all 10 of the best-performing council areas are in the capital, while all but two of the

10 worst-performing areas are in the north of England.

In its release, the government has highlighted a similarity in the pattern to that of 2015 Attainment 8 data and provisional scores for the proportion of pupils getting five GCSE A* to Cs including English and maths. **FW**

Best-performing LAs by Progress 8 score

Area	Score
Hackney	0.35
Kingston upon Thames	0.34
Westminster	0.32
Barnet	0.32
Harrow	0.32
Brent	0.31
Hounslow	0.29
Ealing	0.28
Merton	0.28
Redbridge	0.28

Authorities with <1,000 pupils excluded

Worst-performing LAs by Progress 8 score

Area	Score
Salford	-0.3
Hartlepool	-0.33
Oldham	-0.34
Isle of Wight	-0.34
Liverpool	-0.35
St. Helens	-0.35
Nottingham	-0.35
Blackpool	-0.38
Darlington	-0.4
Knowsley	-0.88

Authorities with <1,000 pupils excluded



EDITOR'S COMMENT

@miss_mcinerney | laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk

In praise of uncomfortable facts ... and historians

While it is easy to lie with statistics, it is even easier to lie without them. And if you are going to accuse teachers from certain subjects of being worse school leaders than others, you probably ought to have some numbers to back you up.

Researchers Alex Hill and Ben Laker are no stranger to controversy. Their research into the actions of superheads, exclusively revealed in Schools Week earlier this year, drew a crowd of haters. Hill and Laker's view that school leaders' penchant for excluding low-attaining pupils was not a great idea, actually, became lost when people vilified them for pointing out the fact that if you went ahead and excluded the kids, it would look like your school really had "improved" on the performance measures looked at by Ofsted and the education department.

Now, they are back with another rather awkward message. (see page 3)

After studying detailed information, gathered during Laker's PhD study of more than 400 turnaround academies, they have found that – shock, horror – secondary academy leaders tend to

behave stereotypically based on the academic subject they previously taught.

Mathematicians focus on numbers: increasing revenues and driving for growth. English teachers focus on the "craft" of teaching, engaging people with stories and debating ideas. The only problem? It tends to be a lot of words, and not a lot of action.

For someone who rolls her eyes about the pomposity of many historians, it gives me no joy to say that they came out of the research well. Seemingly, they are the ones most likely to gain gradual, sustainable exam improvements due to their focus on strong leadership, long-term trends and building a "strong nation". Their pomposity is well-earned, it seems.

On the one hand, this is hugely controversial. Telling teachers of RE, PE and English they are likely to be less good leaders in turnaround academies could put off thousands of

people from doing crucial roles.

On the other hand, it sort of makes sense. It is only natural that any teacher, faced with the pressured situation of taking over a failing school, will fall back on what they know best. You can't spend years succeeding at a subject at school, take it for a degree, spend eons teaching it – and then be expected to become a totally different person once in a leadership role.

It's why the words uttered by Libby Nicholas, the chief executive of growing new academy trust Reach4, are so important. Nicholas is an English teacher, but has never forgotten what a pupil once wrote on a feedback form about her. It said: "Miss inspires us through words and emotions and stories. But it might also be useful for her to think about those one or two people in the class who are inspired more by facts and figures."

Since the decline in the national qualification for headteachers, there has been a void in leadership training, especially for leaders

going into the most challenging failing schools. Without broader managing experience they are finding themselves falling back into bad habits.

This can be resolved by better leadership training, which many trusts and universities are now developing, but also through simple awareness.

Laker and Hill's statistics may be uncomfortable, but they give useful pause for thought. It is up to the sector to take their message seriously.

Correction

In Edition 80, the profile of Charlie Stripp said he had previously worked for MEI, the Mechanical Engineers Institute. This was an error.

Stripp has worked for Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) since 2000, and has been its Chief Executive since 2010.

He was seconded in 2013 to the NCE/TM as Director, while still continuing his role at MEI.



READERS' REPLY



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU
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WWW.SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

Academy pension review will look at funding gap

Sheena H, address supplied

Michael Gove undertook a consultation on this issue in late autumn 2013. I contributed on behalf of our school, but we have never, to my knowledge, seen the outcomes, if any.

Teachers 'not prepared' for pupils' poor mental health

Jake Capper, York

We are a large School Direct teacher training provider in York and we do provide quite a bit of mental health training to our trainees. We have sessions on wellbeing for both staff and pupils, our trainees speak to ex-headteachers about stress and management and to specialists from mental health, including Natasha Devon. As schools become more skilled at dealing with mental health so will trainees. I don't think it is a simple fix of putting more in training and suddenly there will be fewer mental health issues, it needs to be a more cultural shift for the whole education system. We also need to remember that teachers and doctors are doctors. As long as mission creep continues so will problems.

Claudia Sanchez, address supplied

Ah, we have to be experts in social work, special needs, social equality, EAL, inclusion, nutrition, counselling, sewing, current affairs, child protection, safeguarding, radicalisation. Feel free to add the ones I left out!

Private schools spend three times more on each pupil

Brian Griffiths, address supplied

At a very high level of wealth, the fees are irrelevant. What is interesting is why at more modest income or wealth levels, is so much is paid for a service that is available free? Either the service is of very high quality or the free service is well below par. Or both. The debate should not be about explaining differences in performance because of finance, but about how that situation arises in the first place. If those on lower incomes could use state resources towards private fees it would revolutionise the educational marketplace.

The legacy of decades of political interference is profound. We should either make private education illegal or allow every family to use a voucher from the state towards private education. Either would shine a torchlight on the root cause of the problems. The status

quo is not working and neither the right nor the left has the stomach to really open up the issues.

Ian Taylor, Bristol

If the "attainment gap" between private and state schools is not a consequence of spending three times as much on privately educated students, I suggest reducing the fees at private schools to the same level as that of state provision. Then the private schools could educate more of the students they claim they want to assist.

State schools are constantly criticised for not achieving the same results as private schools. Imagine criticising a farmer for not achieving high yields when he was allowed one third the plant growth fertiliser of his neighbours. The poor farmer not only has to accept the criticism, he has to work harder to get a reasonable yield, and his seed corn is of a much more variable nature. The parents who pay for educational privilege know this full well. It would be a step forward if paying for advantage was acknowledged and the hard work of the "poor farmers" was recognised.

The social capital of a private education

Penny Rabiger, London

The big difference is often described as a sense of entitlement that is inherent in the day-to-day socialisation of privately educated people from an early age. Their social capital is also an important and inter-related part of this. If you are used to moving in circles where people are well-off, work in certain professions, and this is your "normal", of course you are going to expect to be spending your working life among them too. There is still nothing proven that private schools provide a better education than state schools but they will indeed have better resources and facilities and will also have an institutional self-regard as something exclusive and special. Educational achievement in raw grades will never be enough. The biggest barrier to any and all of the many charities and programmes that try to address social mobility will be cracking that social capital, the networks and inherent sense of entitlement that privately educated people have.

Is race the elephant in the staffroom?

@EquitableEd

This is an important piece. Glad that @CathMurray_news is raising this. Hope it's the start of more dialogue and action @WomenEd

@elmulcahy

Great piece from @CathMurray_news in @SchoolsWeek I've felt the same way! Are we reluctant to mention race because we don't "own the debate"?

Inclusion supporters need a winning way with words

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Peter Hitchens, Mail on Sunday

Why would supporters of sixth-form colleges, which select at 16, be opposed to selection at 11? And given that all good schools select covertly and opaquely in one way or another – catchment, feeder schools, parental contract, feigned or real religious belief, ruthless exclusion – what is the particular objection to open and transparent selection on merit?

Contact the team

To provide feedback and suggest stories please email
news@schoolsweek.co.uk and tweet using @schoolsweek

To inform the editor of any errors or issues of concern regarding this publication, email
laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk with Error/Concern in the subject line.

Please include the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

However big or small, if you have information or a story you think our readers would be interested in, then please get in touch. For press releases make sure you email our news email account, and don't be afraid to give us a call.

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REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES
A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



PROFILE

CATH MURRAY

@CATHMURRAY_NEWS

Jarlath O'Brien, headteacher, Carwarden House community school, Surrey

Ofsted is not something Jarlath O'Brien talks about to his staff, he tells me, as we sip tea in his office, foliage framing our conversation.

He goes a little further: "I don't give a shit about Ofsted, really. They're nice people and they've got a job to do, but they can come to our school tomorrow and they'll see a school that's at least good. I don't care whether they say it's good or outstanding."

His governors hate him saying this, but he doesn't think there's a big difference between his school performing at "good" and "outstanding". "I'm not interested in chasing that badge and putting it on a banner. It does my nut in."

It's nothing personal; O'Brien is complimentary about Ofsted's inspectors. In his recent book, *Don't Send Him in Tomorrow*, he discusses competing theories for why special schools have much better inspection outcomes (92 per cent good or outstanding) than mainstream primary or secondaries.

Some have questioned whether inspectors know what they're looking for. O'Brien is adamant: "I've had quite a few inspections and pretty much every one was really on the mark. They'd worked in schools like mine for a long period of time – you couldn't bullshit them. They knew what good progress in this school looked like."

But "good progress" doesn't automatically mean that students are prepared for adult life, he says. And exam results are certainly not his measure of success. He empathises with his mainstream colleagues on this one: "They have this period in August where they're trying to work out whether they keep their job or not. And if those numbers are the wrong side of the line, they don't."

So if it's not Ofsted ratings or results that hold O'Brien to account, what does? His answer becomes something of a refrain throughout my visit: "What they're going to be like when they're adults. That's our intense focus . . . doing everything we can to give them the best possible chance in adult life."

The stats O'Brien quotes in his book on life outcomes for people with special educational needs are, in his own words, "dire". But if you're the parent of one of those kids, "those stats are your child and there's a nausea that comes along with that the whole time". He feels lucky to have strong parents in the school, who "tell us in no uncertain terms, 'We want you to do whatever you can do to make my child live and work independently'."

He introduces me to Carwarden's head girl, who's been working at a nursery once a week. Employers who sign up to accept students on work experience often start off thinking they're doing the school a favour, O'Brien later tells me, but their perceptions change. The students desperately want to do a good job and are quick to prove themselves: "They're grafters," he adds, proudly.

It's getting them through the door that's the challenge. The employment process is intimidating, job interviews are stressful, yet neither is representative of how good you will be at the job. So a big part of the school's role is to open doors.

"The acid test of how good we are as a school is what they're doing when they're 25," he says. If a person hasn't managed to hold down a job by then, either they will have lost confidence in themselves, or employers won't trust someone who's been out of work for so long.

So there's an obvious financial benefit to your school doing what it does, I suggest, even if it costs more per student than the mainstream. "The moral argument to me is quite obvious," O'Brien counters. "But it doesn't really seem to hit home." The economic argument would be a long-term one, he says as he reels off a list of potential

“I DON'T
GIVE A S***
ABOUT
OFSTED”

costs to the state (I paraphrase): supported living; some kind of benefit; cost to the NHS; a full-time carer; and for some, involvement in the criminal justice system. "So for me that seems a compelling argument. But no one has yet put the numbers on it. It would be eye-wateringly big, I'm sure, but these people are invisible."

O'Brien worked in mainstream schools for five years before moving into special education – and with the self-flagellating humility of a convert, in his book describes himself as having been "blissfully unaware and completely uninterested" in the sector before what appears to have been his Damascene awakening.

Hidden away at the top of a leafy hill in Camberley, it could be argued that Carwarden House, which became an academy in 2014, isn't helping with the visibility problem. It's a small (140 pupils) secondary for children with "moderate learning difficulties", most of whom have either come straight from a mainstream primary or after failing to manage in a mainstream secondary for various reasons, often behaviour. And it seems even O'Brien isn't convinced about the system, admitting: "My vision is that schools like mine aren't needed anymore."

It's a statement I keep challenging him to clarify.

So all the pupils at his school could be educated in mainstream provision, if only it were run better? "Oooh! That's a tough question. Would I say all? No. No. Gosh, I don't want to put a number on it. Plenty."

He also blames the high-stakes "accountability framework" for mainstream schools, which makes them consider some kids more "risky" to keep on roll than others. "We have to remove that. We can't have a system where a kid is deemed a risk to have in your school, just because of who they are."

So if schools for children with moderate learning difficulties were closed (not for those with "severe and profound, multiple difficulties" who, he recognises, require "highly specialised provision") what would be his alternate vision?

It turns out that O'Brien is running two, somewhat contradictory, scenarios in his head. One involves

JARLAT

SEND provision being built more consistently into mainstream schools.

He cites Bridge Learning Campus in Bristol, with a primary, secondary and special school on the same campus. "I've been on record before as saying any new school that's built needs to have SEND provision built into it. I'd like it to be that way."

His reasoning is that children with learning difficulties are currently seen as "other" and he wants to help to normalise them.

Co-sited schools also circumvent the logistical barriers his school encounters in trying to reintegrate some students into the mainstream: "Their lessons finish at different times, those kind of things. None of them is insurmountable but they all make it that bit harder to do."

The other idea – which seems diametrically opposite – is to form a specialist SEND multi-academy trust, inspired by



O'Brien in his passing out parade as a special constable with Thames Valley Police in 2005

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What's your favourite book?

The Selfish Gene by Professor Richard Dawkins. Watching Dawkins in the 1991 Royal Institution Christmas lectures turned me on to science. He communicates deep, complex scientific concepts with such breathtaking clarity that he convinces you that you too can understand them.

What's your favourite non-work-related pastime?

Swimming with my children. We are uninterrupted – I have no access to email or my phone – and I'm big believer in the therapeutic power of water.

If you were invisible for a day what would you do?

I'd go to all those places that I'm protected from in my middle-class bubble. I'd want to see what life is really like for those living in the most abject poverty, the most difficult of circumstances.

What would you want to put on a billboard?

"They need your support, not your contempt." Having worked as a special constable and as a teacher of children with disabilities, I see many people in society who are judged to be feckless and lazy treated with contempt and disgust, and it bothers me.

A dinner party with three people. Who are you going to pick, dead or alive?

Helen Keller, who became deaf and blind before the age of two, yet graduated and campaigned all her life for the rights of disabled people. Richard Dawkins – his science writing is without peer and I share his stance on atheism. Graham Greene – he's my favourite author (beats George Orwell in a photo finish).

H O'BRIEN

the Eden Academy in north London, which would support mainstream schools with SEND training.

When I ask why he joined the academisation bandwagon, he squirms. The answer is a pragmatic, jump-before-you're-pushed one: "What we didn't want to do was to get to a stage where full academisation was in the offing, and the regional schools commissioner said, 'You've got two years to convert, and this is the list of multi-academy trusts you can join,' and I would look at it and go, 'You must be joking'."

And given that this does indeed seem illustrative of the current political climate, it's perhaps unfair to criticise O'Brien's juggling opposing visions of the future – at least he'll have a plan B up his sleeve.

CV

1975	Born in Park Royal, north London
1980 – 1986	Harmans Water primary school, Bracknell
1986 – 1993	Brakenhale school, Bracknell
1996 – 1999	BSc (Hons) physics, Cardiff University
2000 – 2001	PGCE, University of Reading
2001 – 2003	Teacher, Emmbrook comprehensive, Wokingham
2003 – 2004	Teacher, Reading Blue Coat school (independent)
2004 – 2006	Teacher, Emmbrook
2006 – 2008	Assistant headteacher, Millside special school, Slough
2008 – 2011	Deputy head, Holyport Manor special school (later Manor Green), Maidenhead
2011 – present	Head, Carwarden House community school, Surrey

OPINION

ALEX HILL

Founder, the Centre for High Performance



BEN LAKER

Founder, the Centre for High Performance



Appoint an architect to get the job done

The UK is falling behind in international league tables because it is appointing, rewarding and recognising the wrong school leaders, say Alex Hill and Ben Laker

Why does the UK educational system fall behind its peers? In the 2012 Program for International Assessment (PISA) study, the UK invested the 8th largest amount of 34 OECD countries, but only came 19th in mathematics, 14th in science and 16th in reading.

To try to answer this question, we studied the changes made by 411 leaders of UK academies and the impact they had both during their tenure and in the three years after they left. Our findings, published in *The Harvard Business Review*, suggest it's because we're appointing, rewarding and recognising the wrong leaders: leaders who talk a good game, but have no impact, or leaders who make everything look great while they're there, but it all falls apart after they leave. Instead, the leaders we found who improve long-term exam results – we call them architects – were the least rewarded, least recognised and were rarely appointed.

Many leaders talk passionately but don't change anything

Why is this? Is it because their exam results don't improve until late in their tenure or after they've left? Or is it because they're outsiders who've often not worked in education their entire career and see things differently?

Is it because they're leaders first and teachers second in a profession that prioritises teaching and often thinks schools can't, or shouldn't, be managed? Or is it because they don't publicise what they're doing and quietly get on with the job in hand?

Whatever the reason, we need to fix it if we want to improve our education system.

At the moment, we reward and recognise

a group that we call "surgeons" who dramatically improve exam results whilst they're in charge by cutting poor performing students and focusing resources on the immediate problem – the children taking their GCSEs this year. In our study, 38 per cent of these leaders received a knighthood and 24 per cent a CBE, MBE or OBE. They were also typically paid 50 per cent more than other leaders. However, their improvements weren't sustainable and in some cases it took four years for the school to recover, with up to £2 million paid to consultants to help clear up the mess.

However, possibly more worryingly, the worst performing leaders in our study – the "philosophers" – were the ones we encountered most commonly, especially in "good" or "outstanding" academies. If our findings are representative of the whole UK educational system, then we estimate that 82 per cent of our schools are led by philosophers. These articulate leaders are also highly recognised, with 30 per cent receiving a CBE, MBE or OBE and 43 per cent appointed as national leaders of education. However, although they talk passionately about the importance of good teaching and get everyone excited, they don't actually change anything and their schools either coast or decline.

We need to identify, develop and appoint more "architects" if we want to transform our educational system. But how can we do this?

First, we should measure the number of students who graduate from a school with at least grade C in five or more subjects, not the percentage of students. This would show the value they add to society and encourage our best leaders to run our largest schools.

Second, we need to judge leaders on their legacy as well as their tenure, and accept that it takes up to three years before sustainable improvements start to show.

And third, we need to encourage talented leaders to come and work in our schools by creating a positive, supportive, stimulating and rewarding environment. Most architects had worked in industry for 10 to 15 years before running a school – and used the leadership experience they'd gained elsewhere to redesign the school and transform the community it serves.



TOM HICKS

Housemaster and head of group boarding, Wellington College

Cut the red tape to let private and state mix

Tom Hicks was thrilled when his son had the chance to play in a local under-7 football tournament. But then bureaucracy showed the red card...

As a kid, there was little that got the blood stirring more than the anticipation of a sports tournament. It would start the night before: you would lay out your kit and dream up extravagant set-piece moves that never saw the light of day. We never won, but no matter. It really was the taking part that counted.

Imagine my delight when the local prep school invited all the local primary schools to take part in an under-7 football tournament. My eldest son loves football and, while he is no Lionel Messi, the thought of watching him in his first "proper" tournament stirred memories of my own dreams of glory.

As a teacher at the prep school, my wife prompted our son's state school to organise a team to play on its magnificent pitches. There were to be no winners or trophies, just nigh-on 100 local kids enjoying fresh air, recreation and team spirit. Awesome.

How wrong we were. Apparently, any trip that involves pupils going off site requires a fully-fledged teacher to accompany them. So while the school saw this was a good opportunity, it told us that all the teachers were busy that day. Absolutely right, we thought, you should be busy teaching the children. No matter, several parents, already DBS-checked (presumably for this sort of eventuality), put themselves forward for the day.

But no. Volunteers are not qualified for this. We now find ourselves in a quandary. If we can't persuade the school, or the local authority, to allow the team to be taken by willing volunteers, we may have to remove the children from the school for the afternoon, incurring several unauthorised absences and causing a headache for the headteacher. I believe that only four schools are to take part, from 15 invited.

I posed this dilemma to a colleague in another independent school who, it turned out, had seen a similar thing: in this case, four primary schools had been approached with the offer of free, after-school coaching with two Olympic sportspeople, and not one positive response had come back. I wonder if the parents had even been

informed of the opportunity. If I was a parent with a child in one of those schools, I'd have been apopleptic.

This seems bang-your-head-on-the-table crazy. As an experienced teacher in private schools, I have seen what a positive impact sport can have on young children, yet as a parent of two in state education, I am flummoxed by the red tape that seems to be denying the chance for independent schools to offer the outreach so badly needed in a society increasingly polarised between the haves and the have-nots.

Independent schools are desperate to reach out

Of course I understand the need for watertight child protection and safeguarding. Yet if a DBS-checked, safeguarding-trained group of parents (one of them a teacher) with parental permission and a risk assessment can't scoot a mile down the road with their five sons for a kick-around attended by St John's Ambulance, I'm not sure the world hasn't got just a little paranoid.

Mitigating risk is vital, and every person involved in education must understand that, as even one child falling through that safety net into physical danger or being exposed to predatory influences is a tragedy. However, an equal tragedy would be to sacrifice the chance for cross-sector collaboration and the wellbeing (and sheer fun) of young people on the altar of bureaucratic anxiety.

I don't blame my son's teachers, I think the school is great. But the machine needs fixing somehow. Independent schools are desperate to reach out (their future survival depends on it) and state schools should be biting their arms off to take these opportunities.

I am gutted my lad and his mates won't be able to show off their double-dummy, rainbow-flick free-kick routine. But if it has exposed a flaw in the system that we can change for the better, then I'll take that as a win.

Should teachers 'fling mud at the wall' or should they follow a mastery approach, asks Heather Fearn

There are two teaching mindsets. First, there are those teachers that expose children to the curriculum and assume they will learn it when they are capable. They might suggest a child is not developmentally ready to learn letter sounds; that their family circumstances explain their struggle to understand osmosis; they were congenitally incapable of remembering how to conjugate the verb 'avoir'; or they are just not bright enough to appreciate the causes of World War One.

At the end of year 1, Elsa, the daughter of a friend of mine, was really struggling with maths. The teacher took this first approach, often labelled "developmentalist". Elsa's difficulties were seen as evidence that she was simply "learning at a slower pace" or possibly had dyscalculia. In early years, the developmentalist teacher might assume that if some children fail to learn as much as others, this is evidence they are not "ready" to learn. So if a child is struggling with year 1 maths, perhaps she should still be playing with the sand tray. This leads to the presumption children should only be taught material deemed to be "developmentally appropriate".

The cognitive psychologist Daniel Willingham explains there is some consistency across children in their ways of thinking at different ages, but that such thinking is so task-dependent that trends



HEATHER FEARN

Education blogger at Esse Quam Videri

It can be harmful to 'wait' until children are ready to learn

cannot be used to dictate classroom practice. He also suggests it is harmful to wait to teach children until they seem "ready" to learn, because their understanding won't develop from "a magical process of brain maturation", but in fits and starts, as they gradually learn the prior knowledge necessary to understand new concepts.

Willingham was right about Elsa. It turned out that she had somehow missed out on that most basic idea of "one more". A few days of teaching was all that was needed to give her access to year 1 maths. A few more years of the sand tray would only have left her further behind her peers. The problem with developmentalist assumptions is that they can lead the well-meaning teacher to blame the child's weaknesses for their learning failure when it is the instruction that needs to change.

At upper primary and secondary level, the developmentalist teacher faced with

a struggling child has to try to teach the material, which leads to what I (rather uncharitably) call the "flinging mud at the wall" approach. You keep teaching the child presuming that when they become "ready" some of the learning will stick, and you accept that many children will go through your lessons not understanding as much as others. At secondary level these assumptions are clear to see in maths and modern foreign languages, where spiral curriculums allow the re-teaching of topics each year in the hope that with repetition and maturation, more of what has been taught will gradually stick.

What about the second type of teacher? They tend to assume any failure of pupils is either because they lack the necessary prior *knowledge* to build new understanding, or because the teaching has not provided adequate *explanation* or *practice*. Despite the misuse of the term, the best description of this teacher's approach is "mastery mindset".

Such teachers consciously plan to ensure all children "master" the material at the level intended – to allow subsequent learning. Elsa lacked necessary knowledge and this was quite possibly because explanation and practice were insufficient.

Sometimes it is the instruction that needs to change

With a "mastery mindset" the teacher asks questions such as:

- What prior knowledge is necessary to understand this new idea?
- Are there smaller steps I can use to build towards this new learning?
- How can I make my explanation clearer?
- Did the students get enough exposure/ repetition/practice/testing to ensure they will remember what they have learnt in the long term?

A teacher has countless pressures and constraints that may mean they are unable to provide each child with the necessary knowledge, explanation and practice. However, what is the use of a mindset that focuses on the reasons children can't learn? I've found that when I start asking the questions above, invariably children can learn far more than I previously assumed.

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Our blog reviewer of the week is Jill Berry, a former head, now educational consultant and Twitter addict @jillberry102

8 conflicting habits of wildly successful people

@LollyDaskal

If you think of the educators that you consider to be particularly effective, are you aware that there can be contradictions and tensions in the way they behave? Lolly Daskal explores eight conflicting habits that could characterise those we believe to be successful. It may help us to reflect on the way we enact our roles and relate to the students and to the staff that we lead. Daskal concludes: "As you work to develop your own style of leadership and success, learn to embrace your own contradictions and let them add depth and texture to everything you do."

If you don't have time to read our new book on teacher workload, here's a summary

@ATLNansi

Managing Teacher Workload, edited by Nansi Ellis, is a timely and potentially very useful book. While recognising that those who work in schools cannot and should not take full responsibility for mounting workload and finding strategies to address the issues, it accepts that there are steps teachers can take to guard against unsustainable overload and burn-out. Ellis summarises the contributions: "A lot of this book is actually about refocusing the time we have on the things that matter, rather than getting bogged down in busy-work. What can you stop doing, to focus on what's more important?" My advice would be that,

however overwhelmed and pressured you may feel, making time to read this book could save you time in the long-run.

We need to take a leaf out of the Bad Moms' book

@fod3

On the subjects of potential overload and the importance of resisting the tendency towards perfectionism, Freya Odell reflects on watching the film *Bad Moms* and how it encouraged her to re-examine how teachers use their time and how leaders at all levels can support them to get the balance right. Odell recognises how fear of vulnerability and the pressure of accountability can lead to unsustainable perfectionism, but says: "The destruction of 'perfectionism' lies with leaders, and establishing a culture in which the threat of PRP, job losses and budget constraints does not prevent staff honesty and development."

How to undermine your impact in one simple move

@susanjritchie

I'm not sure I agree with all that Susan Ritchie says in this post, but it certainly stimulated my thinking. She argues that the current focus on authenticity in leadership can encourage leaders to over-share and to be less discriminating than they need to be in what they say to those whose professional practice they are responsible for overseeing, supporting and challenging. "There are some things it's appropriate to share at work (and this goes for us all) and some things that are best left for...well, best left". Deciding what not to do and say as a leader, can be as important as deciding what you should do and say.

What I have learnt during my leadership journey

@rondelle_10

Lastly this week, I enjoyed reading Bukky Yusuf's reflection on her experience of senior leadership and what she learnt from her mistakes and her achievements. She summarises seven lessons that may help us as we chart our own journeys and concludes: "Hindsight is always a wonderful thing. It allowed me to ascertain what I could have done differently to have had greater impact in my leadership role. However, for educators considering leadership or just about to embark in this role, I hope that the points above aid your transition during your next career steps and help move your organisations forward."

CORRECTION Last week's blog review was compiled by Harry Fletcher-Wood, not Andrew Old as published.

BOOK REVIEW

The Art of Standing Out

Author Andrew Morrish

Publisher John Catt

ISBN-10 1909717835

ISBN-13 978-1909717831

Reviewed by Dawn Cox, Head of RE



The title of this book made me think that it was going to be about Ofsted. Overall, it's not. It is about leadership in schools; its challenges and potential rewards. Morrish's experience and wisdom has been packed into 206 pages, which includes his NQT year in a catholic school and, later, working as a headteacher in schools that were in special measures.

His style is personable, but at times it seems disjointed, jumping from stories to advice, anecdote to quote, within a couple of paragraphs. It is a "busy" read that may best be read in chunks. You will almost certainly want to annotate or make notes to ensure that you've picked out and remembered his key messages.

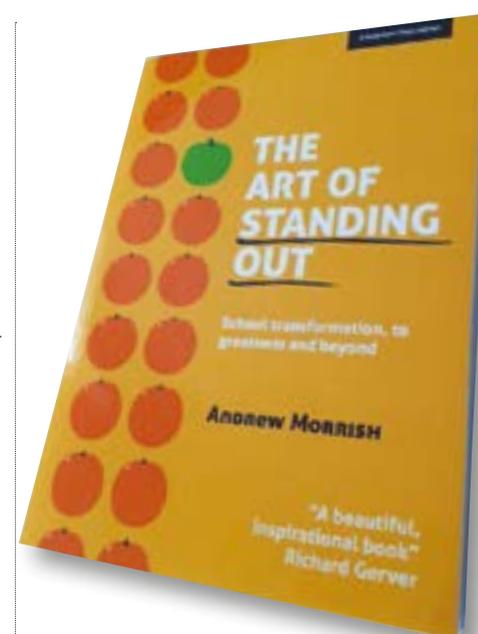
Morrish offers principles and guidelines that he has used and refined over his career. These are easily accessible and transferable to all school leadership contexts: the three Bs, a formula for change, the three lenses of perception, eight traits of standout leaders. Print them out and put them up on your office wall.

Its educational clichés and quotes would be a meme-maker's dream. The originators of his motivational quotes range from Disney to A. A. Milne to fellow head Vic Goddard. He draws on the wisdom of many other authors including leaders, educationists and psychologists, linking ideas on how humans work with school leadership.

I often found myself nodding in agreement. His focus on improvement lies in strategic processes that help to develop a school through its peaks and troughs. His values are clear as he describes supporting staff in difficult times. He's clearly a "thinking" headteacher, sticking to his "one-part doing, three-parts culturing". His reviewers refer to his "authenticity", "honesty" and "humanity"; I can see why. While you may not agree with all the pedagogies used, you can't argue with his passion to ensure that all children can access an exciting curriculum.

Morrish is candidly honest about his experiences of Ofsted; as an inspectee and inspector. The chapter on inspection certainly gives an insight into how things might evolve for inspection in the future.

He entwines anecdotes from his personal life and school experience, with analogies linking to sound advice for leaders. On one



page he writes deeply moving accounts of seeing his disabled brother's education at a special school and on another, a humorous anecdote about a toilet; both have influenced his leadership in some way. The analogies are many and varied: frogs, bidets and dance floor classics are all smoothly linked with leadership.

I defy any leader to read this book and not to take something away that they can use in their own context. Morrish doesn't claim to have a magic formula but it is a great "go to" resource for aspiring, new or experienced school leaders. If you annotate it well, you can dip in and out when you want to focus on a particular area of leadership, whether it be making sure your message is clear, dealing with underachievement or motivating staff. Or as Morrish suggests, buy one for yourself, read it and pass it on to someone else.

Finally, however, my concern about this – and all leadership books – is that all this great experience and advice is only accessed by those that have the inclination to read and take it on board.

Maybe all school leadership courses should involve compulsory reading of "real-life" leadership books, in which case *The Art of Standing Out* would be one. It doesn't replace talking to and asking current heads for advice, but it comes close.

Next week

Mental health and well-being in the learning and teaching environment

Edited by Colin Martin, Mick Fleming, Hugh Smith

Reviewed by Bukky Yusuf

Winning friends and influencing people are important, especially when new ministers are appointed and new policies are introduced.

Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers was published in 1905 by officials very aware of the strained relationship with the teaching profession as a result of payment by results, which had recently ended. This was their attempt to re-establish a good working relationship with the nation's teachers, long inured to government prescription.

Take its title. It's a publication presenting "suggestions" for teachers to "consider", not slavishly adopt. It doesn't spell out detailed criteria to be adhered to; it doesn't contain politically inspired hobby-horses that ministers or officials want to impose.

Its first sentence sets the tone: "In issuing this volume the Board of Education desire at the outset strongly to emphasise its tentative character, and to invite well-considered criticism designed to make it more useful".

It's not a definitive document; it's not set in stone. It even encourages readers to engage in constructive criticism of its contents. Compare that with government white and green papers more than a century later.

It also respects the professional autonomy of teachers to decide on teaching methods. "The only uniformity of practice that the Board of Education

THE PAST WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER



RESPECTING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONALISM

COLIN RICHARDS

desire to see... is that each teacher shall think for himself and work out for himself such methods of teaching as may use his powers to the best advantage and be best suited to the particular needs and conditions of the school." No hint here of synthetic phonics, methods for the teaching of long multiplication or the like.

It recognises that comprehensive central prescription is neither possible nor desirable: "Uniformity in details of

practice (except in the mere routine of school management) is not desirable even if it were attainable". Note the reference to "mere routine", which puts school management firmly in its place as a facilitator, not determiner, of classroom practice.

Its next sentence is particularly significant: "But freedom implies a corresponding responsibility in its use." It is offering teachers considerable "degrees

of freedom" but expects that freedom to be exercised with care, diligence and, though it doesn't use these exact words, moral purpose.

It goes on: "Teachers who use this book should use it as an aid to reviewing their practice and as a challenge to independent thought on such matters." Note the reference to self-review and to independence of thought – both essential professional attributes then and now.

It welcomes dialogue with the teaching profession: "Substantial agreement, or dissent on definite and reasoned grounds, fortified by experience will be results equally welcome to the Board."

There's the reference to evidence-based practice made more than a century ago with the implication that official advice could change in the light of teachers' experience.

Perhaps the most significant sentence is the firm assertion that "no teacher can teach successfully on principles in which he does not believe, nor must he lightly use his class as a field for experiment". Ministers and headteachers take note!

It's unclear what effect this affirmation of official support for teacher professionalism actually had; the research has not been done. Some teachers and others may have seen it as simply rhetoric, but what splendid rhetoric at that.

Colin Richards is emeritus professor of education, University of Cumbria



A week in Westminster

Your regular guide to what's going on in central government

THURSDAY:

Progress 8 day! For the first time, national data was released on the new headline measures – Attainment and Progress 8. We've got the full details (pages 11-13), which are worth taking a glance at, but totally weren't funny and we didn't even get a cloying press release from Nick Gibb telling us how brilliant the scores were. Sad times for this column.

At 11am there was a big debate on grammar schools in the Lords with a smorgasbord of celebs and top politicians, but one man was conspicuous by his absence.

Film-maker David Puttnam and author and broadcaster Melvyn Bragg attacked the grammar plan, with Puttnam particularly concerned about the impact of greater selection on racial tension.

Former education secretary David Blunkett, ex-Liverpool council leader Mike Storey and shadow education minister Mike Watson also spoke against the plans.

However, Lord Nash, minister for the school system and the man who is really

supposed to stand up for the government's policies, was nowhere to be seen.

A government source told *Week in Westminster* that Nash's absence was legitimate – he had another commitment long before the debate was scheduled – but one could be forgiven for thinking he wasn't too miffed to miss it.

A little-known story about Lord Nash is that when he took over Pimlico academy in 2008, after it had been in special measures for some time, one of the things he did was strip out an internal "streaming" set-up giving middle-class pupils preferential treatment over others.

The school is now outstanding. It works for everyone. No selection required.

FRIDAY:

Nah. Didn't happen.

MONDAY:

Workload may be one of the biggest issues facing the teaching profession right now, but *WiW* is also worried another group of MPs have a lot on: the parliamentary

education committee.

Now that edu-sec Justine Greening (can we call her J-Green yet?) must oversee higher and further education, the committee's remit has also expanded. It must now scrutinise education policy across all age ranges.

Anyone who keeps an eye on parliament will know time is already tight for the committee, so members are either going to need matchsticks for their eyes, or the number of committee meetings dedicated to school issues will start diminishing.

While we're on about J-Green, it seems she has found a drawer in the education department that her predecessor missed. She has updated a form that you can fill in to nominate a retiring teacher for a "letter of thanks". First published in 2012, it seems no one noticed it the entire time Nicky Morgan was in office. We like to imagine the person who administers it having a two-year long tea break. They must be so angry to have been discovered.

TUESDAY:

Remember "enemies of promise" – the language Gove used about anyone who didn't like his reforms. Well, now there's a

new phrase – "friends of grammars". At a parliamentary reception, hosted by ultimate pro-grammar MP, Graham Brady, and called "The Friends of Grammars Reception", Theresa May urged people present to bring her evidence, some evidence, any evidence, that selective schools work.

She reportedly said: "I get challenged in the Commons by those who say to me 'where is your evidence that grammar schools make a difference?' But I would say to all of you that you can give us the evidence."

A collection was later made for scratchings on the back of fag packets. We look forward to them being turned into an "ad hoc research notice" published by the DfE.

WEDNESDAY:

Nick Gibb gave evidence on teacher recruitment. Again. He had nothing new to say. In sum: there still aren't enough teachers and he still doesn't have an answer.

Right. Half term? Yes please. See you after the break.

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School Bulletin *with Sam King*



Left to right Stephen and Mia Downs and life skills teacher Steve Priday

First-aid lessons help pupil to save her dad's life

A Bristol pupil's first-aid lessons at school helped her to recognise her father was experiencing the early signs of a heart attack.

Mia Downs, a 14-year-old pupil at Bedminster Down school, realised that her dad's chest pains were serious and called an ambulance. Doctors later said that Stephen Downs was having a heart attack.

All students at Bedminster Down receive basic first-aid lessons in year 8. In year 11, they are taught cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to deal with

bleeding and choking casualties.

Headteacher Gary Schlick, said: "We believe that practical life skills are part of a rounded education. In Mia's case, her quick actions learnt at school potentially saved the life of her father."

Mia said: "As soon as my dad was complaining of a tightness in the chest as well as feeling sick, I knew I had to do something straightaway. I stayed on the phone with the ambulance dispatch and did everything they asked. I'm glad that he was able to be treated so quickly in hospital."

Pupils from the academy show off their spooky creations



Bikes that go bump in assembly

Things got spooky at one Bristol academy, as students rode bikes decorated with Halloween decorations into school, as part of an effort to encourage pupils to be more active.

Despite it being a week ahead of the appointed day to trick and treat, pupils at Minerva primary academy adorned their bikes and scooters with skeletons, bats and cobwebs for the school's annual Bike-o-Ween competition.

Thirty pupils from years 3 to 6 took their bikes and scooters into a special assembly, where their decorating skills were judged by

a panel of judges, who gave extra points for pupils who made their own decorations.

Cath Archer, a learning mentor who organised the event, said: "Although this is a fun activity for the children, we are hoping it will encourage them to get to school by bike or scooter as part of our healthy living programme."

"This event is part of a range of activities that take place throughout the year to encourage healthy eating and exercise."

The school is one of ten academies in Bristol, Bath and Weston super Mare that are part of the Cabot Learning Federation.

A new chapter for school's library

FEATURED

A school in Cumbria hopes its new "quirky" library will get more pupils interested in reading.

With Harry Potter-inspired furniture, cardboard cut-outs of Gandalf and Shakespeare, and even a resident cat, the new, creative space at Chetwynde free school in Barrow has been designed to spark the imagination of pupils (and encourage them to spend more time with their nose in a book).

English teacher and literacy co-ordinator at the school, Jill Robinson, said: "It sounds like a really fluffy project, but it isn't, because deep down what we're rooting for is the kids making progress. If they haven't got the reading right, it affects everything for them across the curriculum."

The previous library was in the school basement and, with no natural light, did little to inspire pupils to read, Robinson said.

Donations from parents, school fundraising and the help of local businesses with free plumbing, painting, electric and carpentry services, allowed the new library to take shape in a former staffroom.

Attention to detail is integral to the new library, with bookworms hidden amongst books, and staff constantly moving the Gandalf and Shakespeare figures around to create an air of magic.



The quirky new library at the heart of Chetwynde School



"We've got all these quirky little touches because we wanted it to be a place where your imagination can just escape," Robinson said. "If you want kids to read, you've got to get them into the library to start with."

The new library has also given a new lease of life to the school's librarian, Fiona Lowe, who worked in the basement for 13 years.

Chetwynde, a former private independent school, became a free school two years ago, educating pupils from 4 to 18.



PUPILS REVIVE A DYING ART

A competition is aiming to revive the dying art of letter writing by encouraging pupils between the ages of 5 and 16 to say thank you by post.

Organised by the University of Birmingham's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, the project aims to boost children's well-being.

In previous years, the awards have attracted over 40,000 entries, with letters addressed to big names such as author J K Rowling and actress Angelina Jolie; as well as to those closer to home, with pupils thanking their families, pets, teachers and the emergency services.

In one letter, a young boy writes to his two-year-old adopted brother who has Down syndrome, saying "you have brought more light between the people that are around you and especially to us, your family".

Dr Tom Harrison, director of education at the Jubilee Centre, said the tradition still had an important part to play in modern life, even more so in a digital society.

"Saying 'thank you' to someone is a simple act but it can have a profoundly positive effect on both the recipient and the person giving thanks."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

Thomas Flower has been appointed deputy headteacher at Heathfield community college in East Sussex. He was assistant head at Worthing high school in West Sussex, where he was part of the leadership team responsible for bringing the school out of special measures. Once the school had achieved an Ofsted rating of good, Flower decided to look for "another challenge".

Speaking of his new role at the East Sussex secondary, Flower said: "It's a good school, but it's got enormous capacity to be an even better school. I want it to be a school where students can access the same opportunities as their peers across the country."

He said he planned to "improve the effectiveness of teachers", through empowering staff and making them feel able to innovate in the classroom.

He also planned to look at ways of narrowing the achievement gap by staging interventions both in and out of the classroom.

Flower, who started his new job last month, has so far been impressed by the staff and their commitment to the school's vision of developing teaching and learning. "One of the things we talked about is



Thomas Flower



Christopher Edwards



Marian Fairley

much greater precision in planning. It's about meeting the needs of the students sitting in front of you, so you can teach much more focused lessons as a result."

Christopher Edwards has been appointed headteacher of Brighton Hill community school in Basingstoke from January next year.

He is currently deputy head at Magna Carta school in Runnymede, where he has worked for just over three years. The school received an Ofsted "good" in September 2013, after

converting to an academy.

"It has always been my dream to be a head," Edwards said. "I've been doing the NPQH qualification course this year and it really whetted my appetite to get a headship as soon as possible."

He began his career as an English teacher, and hopes still to have the opportunity to teach in his new headship, as well as "instilling a feeling of pride" in the school,

and "building a team ethos".

Edwards is currently writing a book about motivating teenagers and hopes to bring his expertise to his new role. "I've got myself a bit of a reputation as being able to motivate disengaged students, and I put together a book proposal for Routledge and they liked it."

Marian Fairley is stepping down as headteacher at Lynnfield primary school in Hartlepool after six years and after 30 years in education.

Fairley first taught in Buckinghamshire, taking up the headship at Lynnfield in 2010 after working as a deputy head at a school in Middlesbrough for ten years.

Speaking of her retirement this December, she said: "I have been very fortunate to enjoy a long career in education but think the time is right to hand over the reins.

"There is no greater privilege than to work with children and help to shape their future lives. I will leave the profession with many fond memories of wonderful children and fantastic people I have met and worked with. It will be a wrench."

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

			1			5		
	7	3				8	1	
4			8		7			2
		9		7	8			
6			3	2	9			5
			4	5		6		
3			7		4			8
	5	6				4	7	
		4			5			

Difficulty:
EASY

		7					5	9
4	3	5			9		8	
	9				1	3	4	
		8	1					
		1		9		6		
					2	5		
	6	9	7				1	
	1		9			4	7	5
7	5					9		

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

4	8	3	9	6	1	5	7	2
6	7	1	2	5	8	4	3	9
2	9	5	3	7	4	1	8	6
9	1	6	7	3	5	8	2	4
8	4	2	6	1	9	3	5	7
3	5	7	4	8	2	9	6	1
5	2	9	8	4	7	6	1	3
1	6	4	5	2	3	7	9	8
7	3	8	1	9	6	2	4	5

Difficulty:
EASY

7	4	1	8	9	5	6	2	3
6	8	2	3	4	7	1	5	9
9	3	5	1	2	6	7	8	4
5	1	9	7	3	2	4	6	8
3	6	4	9	5	8	2	7	1
2	7	8	4	6	1	9	3	5
1	5	3	6	7	4	8	9	2
4	2	6	5	8	9	3	1	7
8	9	7	2	1	3	5	4	6

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a *Schools Week* mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins a mug. Tweet a picture of your completed spot the difference using @schoolsweek in the tweet.