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Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential, Smashing Gove

A plan for improving social mobility through education*

*(not just grammar schools, or academies)

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities
by Command of Her Majesty

December 2017

GREENING LAYS OUT HER ACTION PLANS
POLICY SPECIAL: P3-5

The Telegraph
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NEWS

'Social mobility' is Greening's new guiding principal

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Social mobility is now "at the heart" of education policy and will guide the work of the Department's for Education over the coming years, Justine Greening has announced.

Her paper, entitled 'Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential' is described as a "social mobility action plan", but it is also an attempt by Greening to distance herself from the legacies of her predecessors, especially on forced academy conversion and the government's botched attempt to open new grammar schools.

There are few new policies and little extra cash in the new action plan – and most of this is for nudging behaviours, such as the £23 million for "bright pupils", and the promise to establish teaching schools in areas struggling with recruitment.

The document mostly serves as a mission statement for policies Greening has announced since she took over from Nicky Morgan last July. It also brings together proposals for the early-years sector, alongside plans for further, higher and adult education, which were absorbed into the DfE last July.

During Thursday's launch, Greening said the reforms would be driven by a DfE "that finally has all the right pieces under the same roof: from early years, to schools, to universities, to technical education, to apprenticeships, to adult learning".

"I'm launching a plan which puts improving social mobility at the heart of all our education policy, for the first time. Schools and teachers are at the centre of this but they can't tackle this on their own," she said.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4 earlier in the week, Greening said there would be no extra money for schools, as spending on education had risen in real terms by 70 per cent since 1990.

"If we could buy our way out of the problem, we would have done by now," she said.

Most of the £800 million of funding mentioned in the document is not new. Instead, the paper reads like a greatest hits of Greening's year-and-a-half in office, with her flagship £72 million funding for social mobility opportunity areas policy front and centre.

The £75 million Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund and the £280 million Strategic School Improvement Fund are also mentioned, and it sets out new proposals for a £5 million trial of home learning environment programmes and £50 million for school-based nursery provision.

Support for teachers forms the most substantial new investment, and there is that £23 million Future Talent Fund, which will pay for trials of teaching approaches for bright but disadvantaged pupils.

This focus on the "bright poor" appears to parallel the ill-starred grammar school



“No community left behind is our first overarching ambition”

JUSTINE GREENING

proposals announced last year, but selection is conspicuous in its absence throughout

“If we could buy our way out of the problem, we would have done by now”

the rest of the document. Plans to require private schools to support local struggling schools or see their charitable status pulled have not come to fruition.

Greening also indicated that she is turning her back on the eras of Michael Gove and Nicky Morgan. Both wanted leadership to change instantly if a school was deemed under-performing. Greening will tread more carefully, opting instead for collaboration and focusing resources into the most challenging areas of the country (see page 4).

The shift hasn't gone unnoticed. Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, welcomed the move away from academies as the "single idea" for school improvement.

"The Gove era, for all its rhetoric, was basically all 'academies, academies, academies', which was wrong," he said.

However, Greening denied that this much-reduced emphasis on academies meant she was shifting her focus away from

the programme.

Although schools and teachers are "at the centre" of her desire to place social mobility at the heart of education policy, she argued "they can't tackle it on their own".

Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, agreed. But he is still disappointed with the action plan.

"We agree with the minister that schools on their own cannot counter social inequality," he said.

"This much-heralded announcement, however, offers very little real in the way of meaningful action. Justine Greening is in complete denial about the overall picture for schools, with huge cuts to budgets across the board and a constant battle to recruit and retain teachers."

NEWS

AN EXTRA £23M FOR CLEVER POOR KIDS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The £23 million fund established to trial new teaching methods will target the brightest pupils because they “could do with a bit of extra help”, Justine Greening has said.

Speaking exclusively to *Schools Week* after the launch of her social mobility action plan this week, the education secretary defended her decision to focus on bright but disadvantaged pupils with the new future talent fund.

The policy is one of a handful of new announcements in the plan, which also outlines how around £800 million in existing and new investment will be spent to boost social mobility.

Greening told *Schools Week* that the future talent fund was “part of a much broader strategy”.

“I think what I’m saying is there’s a need for balance and we’ve got to help all children. The future talent fund is investment around the kids who are really bright and could do with a bit of extra help,” she said.

“It’s something that people like Sir Peter Lampl at the Sutton Trust have talked about for a long time, and so we’re listening. This sits as part of a much bigger investment from the department in lifting up those areas where we feel children could do much better.”

The focus of the policy on the so-called “bright poor” has drawn comparisons with the government’s botched attempt to open new grammar schools during the last parliament, and is thought of as a compromise for Tory supporters of selection.

According to the social mobility action plan, which is called ‘Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential’, the future talent programme will “trial approaches and present clear recommendations on what works” to support “the most able disadvantaged children, particularly during key stage 3 when they so often fall behind”.

It is part of a drive to spread evidence-based approaches, which will also include a new approach to specialist pupil premium reviews, led by national leaders of education.

Speaking at a social mobility conference organised by the Reform think-tank this morning, Greening said the government’s ambition was to work out how to close the attainment gap between poorer and better-off pupils “once and for all”.

Greening’s softer approach to coasting schools

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Schools that are “coasting” will be given a package of support rather than be forced to change leadership, as part of Justine Greening’s new series of initiatives.

The education secretary wants to ensure that underperforming schools are supported at the right time “rather than simply posing punitive sanctions or structural change”.

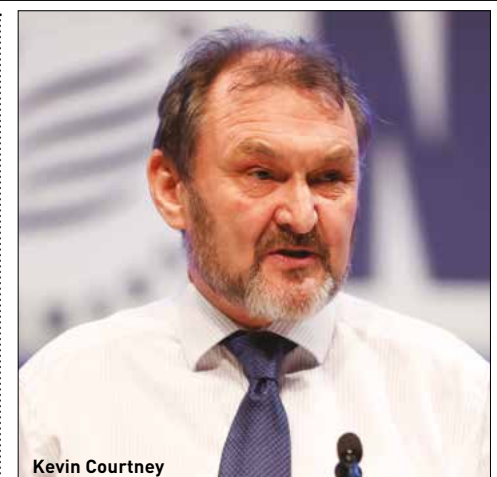
In her new social mobility action plan, entitled ‘Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential’, she has pledged to provide coasting schools with “coordinated support from an accredited school-led system leader” and emphasises that “enforced leadership change” will only happen in the rarest of cases.

This is a radical departure from her predecessor, Nicky Morgan, who introduced laws making it easier to convert any coasting schools into academies.

However no coasting school has so far been forcibly converted.

What Greening refers to as “school-led system leaders” are the largest multi-academy trusts which work across the country supporting other trusts to improve. Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner has established a set of characteristics, including holding people to account and offering career opportunities across the trust.

Under Greening’s plans, these system



Kevin Courtney

leaders will work with struggling schools to improve teaching and leadership.

Geoff Barton, the leader of the Association of School and College Leaders, welcomed the “very different tone” of the new plan, and claimed it acknowledged that “you can’t keep flogging the system with the same attrition of good leaders we have had”.

“I think there has been a realisation that you can’t keep parachuting in new people and assuming you’re going to get it right. I think the logistics are going to be interesting, but saying we are going to support good leaders on behalf of the community they serve is exactly what we should



Geoff Barton

be doing,” he said.

The original approach to intervention at coasting schools underestimated the importance of stability in school leadership in the most deprived communities, he added.

“Having someone who sticks around for a bit in an area, who can articulate why education matters is important, and that won’t happen if you’re dispensing with people just because they don’t turn a school around in nine months,” he said.

The plan has also been well received at the National Education Union.

Kevin Courtney, its joint general secretary, said it was “helpful” that Greening had “finally realised that enforced leadership change and academisation are not the answer for so called ‘coasting schools’”.

“However, this begs the question as to why such actions are deemed appropriate for schools that are rated ‘inadequate’ by Ofsted, and why the government has pursued this line up until now,” he said.

“The academy programme and the system of MATs is at breaking point, yet this plan will see more academy chains anointed as system leaders and given responsibility for supporting schools in these circumstances.

Apart from anything else, it is counterproductive to ignore the wealth of expertise that exists in local authorities and their schools.”

FREE SCHOOL APPLICATIONS REOPEN – FOR ‘CHALLENGING AREAS’

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The next round of applications for free schools will open in early 2018 and will focus on “challenging areas” that haven’t yet benefited from the programme.

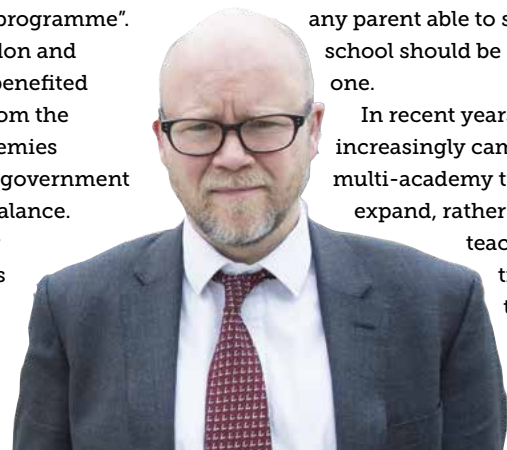
Free schools – which are opened via applications to central government – have been a pivotal government policy since 2010.

In this year’s general election, the Conservatives pledged to open 100 free schools every year for the next five years, but this only amounts to 17 extra free schools given those already in the pipeline.

This week’s ‘Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential’ social mobility plan commits the government to inviting “a new wave of mainstream free school applications in early 2018, with a particular focus on enabling more challenging areas to feel the full benefit of the programme”.

It claimed that London and the south-east have “benefited disproportionately” from the free schools and academies programmes, and the government wants to redress the balance.

The news will cheer prospective applicants who have been waiting since last spring for the next round of applications after bidding was



indefinitely delayed by the general election.

It has also been broadly welcomed by the New Schools Network, the charity that promotes free schools and assists with their opening.

Toby Young (pictured), the director of New Schools Network, pointed to the strong GCSE results at free schools in Bradford, Blackburn and Warrington, and claimed that their performance meant “it is not surprising that free schools feature in the social mobility action plan”.

“These schools have demonstrated that the American ‘no excuses’ model, which has proved so effective at raising the attainment of disadvantaged students in cities like New York, Boston and Chicago, is equally effective at raising attainment in some of England’s most deprived areas,” he said.

However, the change is something of a blow to the programme’s underlying ideology, which was built on the notion that any parent able to show demand for a school should be able to apply to found one.

In recent years, applications increasingly came from successful multi-academy trusts seeking to expand, rather than parent or teacher groups, but these trusts are also needed to support turnaround at struggling schools that are already open.

Early last year, an investigation by

Schools Week found that the proportion of applications from teachers had dropped from 26 per cent in 2011 to 11 per cent in 2013, while the proportion from existing sponsors rose from seven per cent to 24 per cent over the same period.

The government’s continued focus on free schools as a potential solution to social ills has been criticised by some campaigners. Janet Downs, from the Local Schools Network, said it was “wrong to think free schools and academies are the only route to school improvement”.

“Neither academisation nor free schools are a magic bullet,” she said.

Downs pointed to Ofsted’s latest annual report, which said converting schools that had been less than good for 10 years didn’t have any “material effect” on their status.

She also highlighted a revelation in the diaries of the former schools minister David Laws, that the DfE had manipulated performance data “to show academies and free schools were doing better than LA schools when this wasn’t the case”.

“The sample of free schools is too small to come to a conclusion about the effectiveness of the model. However, the New Schools Network does it all the time,” she said.

“So if it’s true to say free schools appear in the top 10 for Progress 8 it’s also true to say 20 per cent of free schools are below the progress floor standard – more than any other type of school barring UTCs and studio schools.”

PULL OUT AND KEEP

SUMMARY OF POLICIES

Justine Greening finally published her social mobility action plan, entitled 'Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential'.

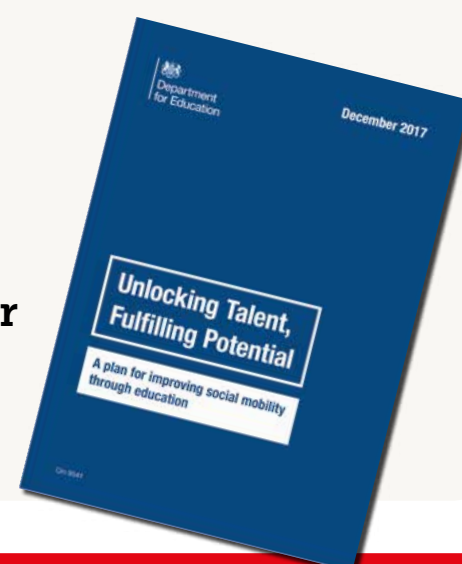
Much of it includes policies we already knew and some philosophical underpinnings about how it hangs together.

But the bit you want to know is: what's new, and what's specific, rather than a vagueish-sounding promise?

Schools Week stripped out all the little pots of cash that had already been announced, and here is what's left.

What are the actual policies in 'Unlocking talent, fulfilling potential'?

1. £50 million for more school-based nursery provision for disadvantaged children
2. Establish an expert group on reception learning
3. Coasting schools to get coordinated support from an accredited, school-led system leader instead of enforced leadership change
4. Actively increase high-quality initial teacher training partnerships in challenging areas struggling with recruitment
5. New teachers to get "universal entitlement" to a "core of support" during their first years
6. Consultation on clearer career pathways for teachers
7. Develop an effective accreditation system for teacher professional development
8. Prioritise the opening of teaching schools in challenging areas
9. Revise performance metrics to ensure greater support for underperforming schools
10. New wave of free schools in 2018 will particularly focus on challenging areas
11. Review into "children in need", to understand these pupils
12. Carry out an external review into school exclusions
13. A £23 million Future Talent Fund will trial approaches to teaching bright children
14. Introduce a "transition year" for 16-year-olds not ready to access A-levels or T-levels



NEWS

More primaries beat the floor standard – but more are coasting too

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Fewer primary schools have fallen below floor standards this year but more are “coasting”, according to key stage 2 data released by the Department for Education this week.

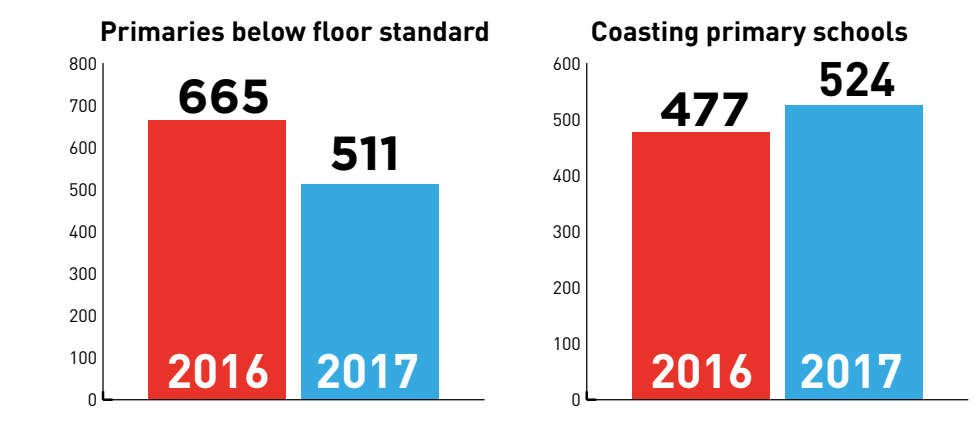
Just 511 schools (four per cent) dropped below the standard this year, down from 665 last year (five per cent).

However, the figure is skewed by schools that reopened as academies and were subsequently excluded from the measure as they are considered closed. An additional 35 closed primary schools fell below the floor standard but were removed from the figures.

London schools are least likely to fall below the standard, while primary schools in the west Midlands, the east Midlands and the south-west are most likely.

The data also revealed that more primary schools fell within the definition of “coasting” this year, which means that fewer than 85 per cent of their pupils achieve the expected standard, and that the average progress made by pupils is less than -2.5 in reading and maths, or -3.5 in writing, over three years.

This summer, 524 schools (four per cent) met this definition, which is a 10-per-cent increase on the 477 (three per cent of schools) that were coasting in 2016.



Julie McCulloch, the interim policy director at the Association of School and Colleges, said the tougher primary curriculum introduced three years ago was making itself felt, pushing more schools towards coasting.

Because schools only meet the definition if they fail on progress and attainment measures for three years in a row, schools struggling with the new curriculum are now appearing in the figures.

Five per cent of schools in Yorkshire and the Humber, the Midlands and the east of England are currently coasting. London has the lowest proportion of schools at one per cent.

Where a school falls into the category, a regional schools commissioner or local authority will look at its context and

consider what action, if any, should be taken. The school may be told to become an academy or get a new sponsor.

Schools raise the bar for poorest pupils
Meanwhile, *Schools Week* analysis of the data shows a dramatic drop in the number of schools failing to get their poorest pupils to the expected standards in reading, writing and maths.

An analysis of school-level data reveals that in 81 primary schools, every pupil on free school meals reached the expected standards in all subjects – a rise from 33 last year.

Reflecting this improvement, 232 schools didn't get a single pupil on free school meals to the expected standards – whereas last year it was nearly treble that number, at 762.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said teachers were becoming better at “identifying and tracking” their poorest pupils, following considerable pressure from the government.

But there is a wider attainment gap between pupils on free schools meals and their peers this year, as those from wealthier backgrounds have pulled ahead.

Whereas last year there was a 21-percentage-point difference between FSM pupils achieving the expected standard and non-FSM pupils, this year that rose to 22 points. This summer 64 per cent of non-FSM pupils met the standards while only 43 per cent of FSM pupils did.

Education Datalab has said the gap between the poorest pupils who get a “high level” score – a scaled score of 110 or more in reading and maths, and working at greater depth in writing – and their peers has widened by two percentage points on last year. The gap has increased most in maths.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, warned that even though more schools are getting better results for the poorest pupils, the playing field was not levelling out.

“The issues that underpin inequality reach far beyond the school gates,” he said, calling for a joined-up approach to services that support families.

TEACHERS DON'T KNOW HOW TO HANDLE HARASSMENT

The majority of teachers do not feel equipped to deal with sexual harassment in schools, and more than half are unsure whether their school has any policies in place to address it.

A poll of more than 1,600 teachers by the National Education Union (NEU) and UK Feminista – a prominent feminist activist group – found that 27 per cent of secondary teachers also would not feel confident tackling a sexist incident at school.

The study, which also surveyed over 1,500 pupils, has prompted more calls for new guidance and training after it found a “vicious cycle of under-reporting of sexism in schools”.

Just 20 per cent of secondary school teachers said they were trained in recognising and tackling sexism as part of their initial teacher education, and only 22 per cent received training as part of their continuing professional development.

Teachers reported being “unclear” about what constitutes sexism or how to explain to students why it is harmful.

New guidance was promised by the schools minister Nick Gibb in October, after MPs accused him of a “lack of action” following the publication of a damning committee report last year.

The Department for Education reiterated that it will be published within the next fortnight.

Maria Miller, who chairs the women and equalities committee, said there was “clear evidence that sexual harassment is blighting the lives of girls in our schools”.

BRIGHT TRIBE LOCKS HORNS WITH NORTHUMBERLAND COUNCIL

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

A local authority is demanding the £1 million the government gave a MAT to take over failing schools in the north-east after it abandoned one and left it in a similar amount of debt.

Bright Tribe had been lined up to take over Haydon Bridge High School since it was put in special measures in 2015, but withdrew last month citing a “significant and increasing financial deficit” and falling pupil numbers, though not before accepting a grant from Westminster.

An irate Northumberland council has criticised the Department for Education’s “inability” to find another sponsor for the troubled school, and is even considering creating its own trust to handle the situation.

A spokesperson for Bright Tribe said that its due diligence had concluded that the school’s existing deficit budget, incurred before the trust was proposed as a sponsor, presented “too much of a risk” to the trust’s other schools.

She claimed the MAT “invested heavily” in many schools in the region, including making improvements to school buildings, and had used the grant to appoint a regional team and other staff.

Sixty per cent of the places at Haydon Bridge, which is rated ‘inadequate’, are currently empty, making it difficult to afford enough teachers, according to the agenda



for a council meeting next week to discuss the school’s future.

The regional schools commissioner, Janet Renou, has warned it may need to close, leaving its 300 pupils without a school.

The DfE said the education of pupils at Haydon Bridge was a “priority”. It will work with the council and the RSC to “find a suitable alternative for pupils and staff”. Northumberland schools are also set to receive more cash next year under the new funding formula.

Other schools in west Northumberland are also struggling. Of the 27 maintained schools near Haydon Bridge and Hexham, 22 are predicting a financial deficit by 2020/21, and there is an average school place surplus of 30 per cent. The council said many rural schools are small, attracting limited funding, and use older buildings that require ongoing investment.

The council is considering a “spin-off” trust to establish a MAT. This would begin with a pilot involving a “small group of ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’ schools” before other schools that are “struggling to remain viable” are invited.

Northumberland is not the only council

to consider such a move. In March last year, Camden council in London took the first steps towards becoming an academy sponsor, although it did not follow through. This September, meanwhile, Essex county council confirmed it had applied to set up its own MAT; if approved, this would be the first spin-off academy trust.

A spokesperson for Northumberland council said the MAT could “enable small rural schools to build sufficient capacity to remain both financially and educationally viable”.

“The recent withdrawal of Bright Tribe Trust as sponsor of Haydon Bridge has the potential to have a significant impact on the area. This has prompted us to look at a long term sustainable education provision for the west of the county,” she said.

“We feel this is the right time to identify an education solution for the west of Northumberland that is fit for the future.”

The council is also investigating other options, including providing capital investment and an annual subsidy to the school, and at next week’s meeting will decide whether to launch a consultation in January.

NEWS: Ofsted Annual Report

Remaining 'requires improvement' schools will be hard to fix

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The smallest ever number of requires improvement schools have improved this year, according to Ofsted, apparently because the easiest to fix have already been remedied.

A third of primary schools and 58 per cent of secondary schools currently rated 'requires improvement' did not get better this year, the lowest rate of improvement since the grade was introduced in 2012 as a replacement for the 'satisfactory' category.

Many schools improved rapidly in the first few years after the new gradation was brought in, Sean Harford, Ofsted's director of education, said.

"Clearly, the first tranche of schools identified by the RI grade will have gone through the system, and the vast majority of those have improved," he added.

These schools were the "lower-hanging fruit", most of them primary schools. Secondary schools struggle more because they are "bigger ships to turn around".

"We're now getting into those schools that have been graded RI in successive inspections," he said.

Harford also warned some of these more difficult schools have become what his boss Amanda Spielman described in her speech as "intractable": schools not rated at least 'good' for more than a decade.

Her team has identified 130 schools which have been continuously rated less than 'good' since 2005, though the real number may



Sean Harford

be higher, as *Schools Week* has previously revealed that data for more than 700 schools is absent from Ofsted's statistics. This is because the records of numerous poorly graded schools were wiped when they converted to academy status.

The report also reveals that 500 primary schools and 200 secondary schools have been rated 'requires improvement' (or, before 2012, 'satisfactory') in their last two inspections.

A decade of less-than-good provision is unacceptable, Harford told *Schools Week*. He blamed numerous factors for recalcitrant schools, including

unstable leadership, the difficulty they find in recruiting and retaining teachers, and tough socioeconomic circumstances.

Spielman made an emphatic point in her speech as she launched the inspectorate's annual report, that she would not let schools off the hook because they have a high intake of poor or demotivated pupils. She pointed to what she described as unhealthy "disadvantage one-upmanship" between school leaders, in which teachers told inspectors how difficult or unengaged local parents could be.

"We should be wary of using the make-up of a school community as an excuse for school performance," she said. "It doesn't make sense for there to be communities that can't have good schools."

The inspectorate and the government both need to be "ruthless" about improving schools through an inspection regime that is intelligent, responsible, fair and focused, she continued.

Spielman also requested extra investment for "intractable" schools, though she acknowledged that the government's opportunity area initiatives are "a welcome move in the right direction".

Overall, she claimed that the life chances of pupils in 2017 were the best they've ever been. Ofsted's report found 90 per cent of primaries and 79 per cent of secondaries now held the inspectorate's top two grades.



Amanda Spielman

HUNDREDS OF 'INADEQUATE' SCHOOLS REMAIN UNCONVERTED

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Over 60 schools branded 'inadequate' by Ofsted more than a year ago have still not been taken over by any academy trust, in spite of new laws obliging the government to do just that.

Ofsted's annual report reveals that of 170 local authority-maintained schools that were languishing at the lowest rating in April last year, when the new rules on academy conversion came into force, 65 have still not converted.

Both Labour and the Local Government Association are using the situation to demand more resources and powers for councils, amid concerns that schools are being left in the lurch.

The laws compel the government to forcibly convert LA-maintained schools which have been placed in special measures by Ofsted or which are found to be "coasting".

They were introduced after a campaign by education secretary Nicky Morgan, who said during an interview in 2015 that even a single day a pupil spends at a failing school was "a day too long". She claimed the new rules would diminish the length of time it took to turn around a school's fortunes.

According to Ofsted's report, 113 more maintained schools have become eligible in the last nine months for an academy order as a result of their low performance, but which



Angela Rayner

are still maintained. Twenty-two have no date slated for conversion.

Over the past year, 1,120 schools converted, while the number of multi-academy trusts registered to take over schools has increased from 800 to around 1,000.

However, the inability to find sponsors for some persistently failing schools is becoming a source of contention for the government. Dubbed "schools no one wants" by the parliamentary education committee earlier this year, some trusts are now receiving around £7 million in additional funds as an incentive to take over such challenging schools.

In some cases, issues such as repayments to councils for school buildings created under private financial incentives (PFI) are holding up academisation. In Newham, several schools have been campaigning to become academies, but are unable to agree

on a settlement for the repayments.

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, said schools and councils should receive more funding to address underperformance.

"After telling local authorities time and time again that multi-academy trusts are a magic bullet for improving school standards, the government is left looking over a fractured school system in which schools and local authorities are left in the lurch," she said.

Ofsted is now working with regional schools commissioners to "understand when" the schools are likely to become academies and consider whether its inspectors ought to "carry out monitoring visits in the meantime".

Richard Watts, the leader of Islington Council and the chair of the Local Government Association's children and young people board, has responded to the report by asking the government to allow councils to set up their own academy trusts so they can help "orphaned schools forced into becoming an academy if they cannot find a willing sponsor".

"91 per cent of maintained schools are now rated either 'outstanding' or 'good', which is a great achievement that must now be acknowledged by central government," he said. "Councils must now be recognised as improvement partners, and be allowed to help all schools improve where necessary, including academies and free schools."

TOUGHER KS2 SATS WIDEN GAP BETWEEN POOR AND WEALTHY

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

The harder key stage 2 SATs have caused a wider attainment gap between children on free meals and their peers.

The new SATs are directly blamed for widening results in reading, writing and maths in Ofsted's annual report, published this week – a gap that has now widened to 21 points.

The inspectorate noted the "more demanding key stage 2 SATs and new measures have resulted in a gap of 21 percentage points in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers. This is wider than the gap previous measures showed."

However, the authors do expect "faster improvements in the coming years" based on the past performance of pupils, although they poured scorn on schools which stopped the broader curriculum as early as Christmas to cram pupils for the test.

In July 2016 *Schools Week* reported that half of year 6 pupils had met the expected standard in the new "tougher" key stage 2 SATs tests, according to provisional figures from the Department for Education.

However, that figure (53 per cent) is not comparable with 2015, when 80 per cent of pupils met the standard, because of changes in the national curriculum. The new metrics were designed so that only around half of pupils would initially meet the target.

Nicky Morgan, who was education secretary at the time, said the government had raised the bar to a more "rigorous system" and that said she "knew" it was "asking more".

In July, *Schools Week* reported an increase in the percentage of pupils reaching the government's expected standard of at least 100 marks in their scaled scores in the key stage two tests for reading, writing and maths – up from 53 to 61 per cent.

In reading, 71 per cent achieved the standard, compared with 66 per cent in 2016, while 75 per cent met the standard in maths, up from 70 per cent.

In spelling, punctuation and grammar tests, 77 per cent of pupils met the expected standard, up from 73 per cent, and the proportion meeting the standard in writing was 76 per cent, up from 74 per cent.

Schools minister Nick Gibb claimed the results showed "sustained progress in reading, writing and maths" and were a "testament to the hard work of teachers and pupils across England".

NEWS

Baby steps towards flexible working in schools

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Businesses and education organisations have made over 60 pledges to encourage more flexible working in schools, the Department for Education has announced today.

Teacher recruitment and retention are pinch points for the government, now that it has failed to meet teacher training targets for five years in a row.

A flexible working summit held in October asked organisations to promise to take at least one action to improve part-time working in the profession. Sixty-seven pledges have been received so far.

The summit was held shortly after a report from the National Foundation for Educational Research argued that better part-time working conditions are urgently needed to prevent the increasing number of older teachers leaving the sector.

Other commitments made by the government at the summit include sharing best practice on flexible working, updating guidance on flexible working in schools and promoting flexible working opportunities via the new teacher vacancy service.

The education secretary, who is also minister for women and equalities, Justine Greening, described the pledges as “really encouraging” and said flexible working will help to “make the best of all the talent and dedication already in the profession”.

“Flexible working is already happening in many other sectors – it’s vital we ensure it is happening in our schools too so we continue to attract the best and brightest into teaching,” she continued.

“And, given this disproportionality affects women, it’s a smart way to help close the gender pay-gap.”

The gender pay-gap, which stands at 18.4 per cent nationally, is 4.8 per cent for secondary school staff and 1.9 per cent for primary school and nursery staff.

For the full list of pledges, go to <http://bit.ly/2Cag8ax>



PLEDGES

THE PLEDGES INCLUDE:

- The **Chartered College of Teaching** will create a model for school leaders on how to implement flexible working
- The **National Education Union** will promote the advantages of flexible working and encourage schools to extend its availability using social media
- The **Teaching Schools Council** will work with teaching networks to address barriers to flexible working
- **Edval Timetables** will offer free basic timetable audits to UK schools and give advice on incorporating flexible working into timetables
- The **British Educational Suppliers Association** will incorporate flexible working practices for staff and trustees, and issue best practice guidance to the 400 companies it works with
- The **Association of School and College Leaders** will endorse and encourage flexible working options to its members
- **Barclays** will showcase its Dynamic Working Campaign – which aids its staff with work/life balance – at an event for school governors, senior staff and the Department for Education
- **Teach First** will use its Innovation Series to explore how to introduce more flexible working
- **Microsoft** will extend its partnership with WomenED to share best practice on flexible working online
- **WomenEd** will develop case studies of successful working practices
- **Southwark Teaching Schools Alliance** and **Reach2** will identify and share best practice
- **Matrix Academy Trust** will review its recruitment strategy by August 2018 to make sure teachers are supported to work flexibly
- **The Laurus Trust, Marsh Green Primary School** and **Kings School Winchester** will make sure job adverts and promotional material explicitly state posts are open to flexible or part-time working

OFQUAL SEEKS ANSWERS ON TEACHER-EXAMINER CHEATING

Ofqual will consult on how to reduce the risk of cheating when teachers write exam papers, including monitoring social media and pupil work in the run-up to a test.

The exams watchdog announced in September that it would review the risks and benefits of teachers contributing questions to exams they also teach, after a series of high-profile cheating allegations at some of the country’s most prestigious schools, including Eton and Winchester College.

Approximately 1,300 teachers are involved in writing the main exams taken in England and the watchdog wants to ensure they are not tempted to give their pupils or colleagues any hints on what will appear.

Ofqual will finalise its “preferred package of safeguards” in January before releasing a full consultation. It had considered prohibiting teachers from writing exams if they also taught them, but warned it could cause recruitment problems by preventing teachers from moving jobs.

It has also investigated developing more exam papers to ensure teachers do not know which materials will be used, but warned the extra costs may be transferred to schools.

Other proposals include routine reviews of pupils’ work to look for unusual patterns and sampling teaching plans to see if teachers are narrowing their teaching in the run-up to exams. Monitoring social media to check for the circulation of information was also mooted.

GCSE GRADE CHANGES INCREASE BY 52%

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The number of GCSE grades changed at a marking review this year has increased by 52 per cent, with over 25,000 more changes than in 2016.

This year, 73,840 GCSE grades were changed as opposed to 48,430 last year. Only three per cent more GCSE exams were sat this year.

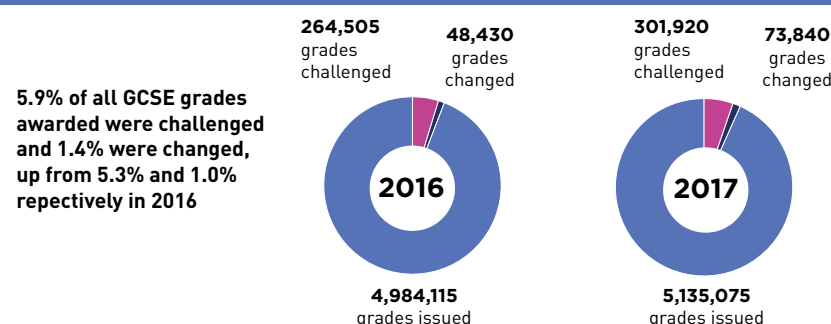
Ofqual said the rise “stemmed principally from an increase in the number of successful review requests in new and legacy versions of GCSE English language and English literature”.

It was also partly ascribed to the increase in entries to GCSE English this year, which happened because fewer students took alternative qualifications like BTECs.

The majority of changes were by one grade, and just half a per cent, or 1,846 of all challenges resulted in a change of two grades or more. This is, however, five times last year’s figure, when just 0.1 per cent, or 347, skipped upwards by two grades.

Sally Collier, Ofqual’s chief regulator, said that some of the exam boards had “not done enough” to change older practices and “meet new rules around reviews of marking” this year.

GCSE grades challenged and grades changed



“We expect all exam boards to comply with our rules at all times. We are currently looking at where more could and should be done and will consider what form of regulatory action may be appropriate,” she confirmed.

“We will not require exam boards to reconsider the outcomes of the reviews they have undertaken this year, so students’ awards following review will stand.”

If a candidate is concerned that an error has occurred during the marking process, they can ask an exam board to review the marking. This applies to any assessment, but does not necessarily lead to any change in marks.

The total number of reviews for GCSE, AS and A-level qualifications in the summer exams this year rose by

93,820, from 427,100 in summer 2016 to 520,920 in summer 2017.

Overall, 55 per cent of reviews resulted in no change to the marks awarded. The grade most commonly challenged was D, which made up 30 per cent of the grades challenged between A* and G. Thirty-two per cent of the new 9 to 1 grades challenged were grade 3.

At GCSE, 425,075 reviews were requested, an increase of 44 per cent from 2016, and at AS and A-level, 95,845 reviews were requested, a drop of eight per cent from 2016.

The regulator said this reflects changes in assessment entries, which are down 12 per cent at AS and A-level, “mainly due to a drop in the number of AS entries”.

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NEWS

DIOCESE OF ELY GETS POSITIVE INSPECTION REPORT FROM OFSTED

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Exclusive

A large academy trust has been praised for its “journey of systematic improvement” after a focused Ofsted inspection at seven of its schools.

The Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT), which has 27 primary schools across Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Peterborough and Suffolk, was commended for its “wholehearted commitment to improving the life chances of pupils”.

Of the seven schools inspected in October, three were rated ‘good’, three ‘requires improvement’ and one ‘inadequate’. In five of the schools, leadership and management were ‘good’.

The trust was established in 2013 and had grown from one school to 18 by the end of 2015, but according to Ofsted, “weaknesses in the diligence process” and a “lack of central capacity” meant that it struggled to meet the different needs of growing numbers of schools.

In 2016, pupils’ attainment was below national figures at key stages 1 and 2, persistent absences were higher than average and disadvantaged students “did not perform well”.

However, the focused inspection report, seen by *Schools Week*, said Ofsted’s recent inspections and provisional 2017 pupil achievement information show “much needed improvements” across those areas, although the regulator warned that more could be done to address pupil absences.

At 10 of the 13 schools inspected since they joined the trust, leadership and management is judged to be ‘good’.

The trust appointed chief executive Andrew Read in 2016, who was praised for his “candid reflection, decisive leadership and clarity of purpose” in helping the trust improve.

He said the “encouraging” report reflected the “hard work” of staff and pupils across the trust.

“The many positive statements about the leadership team are well deserved, but we also recognise the helpful areas for further improvement identified by Ofsted, many of which mirror the national challenges we face within the education system for which we all share responsibility,” he said.

The trust also received praise for promoting “the distinctive characteristics of each school” and providing for the “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development” of pupils, as well as effective quality-assurance and safeguarding systems.

However, Ofsted warned that more needs to be done to make sure local governing bodies are operating effectively and that school-to-school support, including sharing good practice, should be strengthened.

Peter Maxwell, the chair of the trust’s board, said he was “delighted with the positive findings by the inspectors”.

“It is a real credit to our leadership team, and to all those who work so hard in all our schools,” he said.

Pearson launches first virtual A-level for £1k per year

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

An exam board will launch its first “virtual” language A-level so pupils can earn their qualifications online despite the shortage of teachers of modern foreign languages.

Pearson will offer an online Spanish A-level from next September, in which pupils get access to tutors, resources and tests online. There are more languages to follow, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal.

Other virtual learning groups have reported a rise in schools signing up their pupils, and one such company has enjoyed a hike of more than 800 per cent.

Pupils are entered for various reasons: to improve their grades, if they are struggling with a phobia of school, or to study languages their schools can’t fund.

A spokesperson for Pearson said it is offering the Spanish course in the wake of its success in teaching 70,000 pupils via online courses in the USA.

The A-level will also tackle the “sincere challenges some schools are facing in finding MFL teachers”.

The government only filled 93 per cent of its places for MFL teacher-training this year, and is expected to need another 3,500 teachers to meet its targets in coming years.

But Rene Koglbauer, chair of trustees at the Association of Language Learning, said the main issue was not so much shortages of teachers as budget cuts, which mean classes



need more pupils to be viable.

“That’s why a lot of schools can’t offer some languages – they can’t financially justify it any longer,” he said.

Pearson will offer its virtual course for £1,000 per pupil per year, and £900 if five or more students enter from the same school, trust or federation

Wey Education, another UK company which delivers online learning, has a network of online “schools” including Interhigh, which offers GCSEs and A-levels in French, Spanish and German.

Pupils taking these qualifications increased by 16 per cent this year, said a spokesperson. Meanwhile, the number of schools and local authorities signing pupils up for online qualifications at Wey has risen by more than 800 per cent – from five in 2015-16, to 46 this year.

Paula Reynolds, a business development manager at Wey Ecademy, the arm of the company that sells its courses to schools, said school-refusing pupils were a “massive”

factor in the rise.

Schools are using online qualifications as a way of ensuring anxious pupils keep learning at home while they remain on their school roll, she said.

A pupil in this situation gets a timetable of online lessons and must log in to watch and interact with a tutor. They need a headset and microphone to talk, and can type responses. Teachers at their schools also have an observer account to check their pupils are doing the lessons.

“We can’t make a child log in,” admitted Reynolds.

To do a language A-level with Wey costs £2,700, while the GCSE is about £1,000.

The Goethe Institute in London, which promotes cultural exchange with Germany, has twice as many pupils taking its online German GCSE this year than last, because “increasingly schools don’t offer German anymore”, according to a spokesperson. About 30 pupils are taking the GCSE, and 11 pupils are taking A-level.

Karl Pfeiffer, the institute’s director of educational links, said many schools don’t “have the time for extra tuition” but want to boost a pupil’s grade. In other cases, parents pay the £360 for the A-level or GCSE.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary for the Association of School and College Leaders, welcomed helping pupils to learn languages, but warned pupils could be disadvantaged by not having face-to-face interactions with a teacher.

40 HOURS OF COMPUTING TRAINING IS ‘THREE YEARS TOO LATE’

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

The government has promised 40 hours of training for computing teachers who are not qualified in their subject – even though they have already been expected to teach the new computing curriculum for over three years.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, announced the training opportunity on December 12, shedding more light on the government’s plans to “upskill” 8,000 computer science teachers through a £84 million programme revealed in the autumn budget.

But the funding comes three years too late for the transition from the ICT curriculum to a more recent, “rigorous” computing curriculum, which took place in September 2014.

Bob Harrison, who chaired an advisory group to the Department for Education on computing in 2013, said this week’s announcement was “too little too late”.

“This is three years into the implementation of a new curriculum. We told the government that there was a massive skills gap – the teachers on the advisory board were saying this at the time,” he said.

The move from teaching ICT to computing involved a “massive” change of around 75 per cent of the curriculum content.

“To me this is an absolute indictment



of the mistakes made in the first place,” he added. “We predicted all this and it is too little too late.”

In a written answer to a question from Labour shadow minister Chi Onwurah, Gibb said the new package would include a “national, intensive” CPD programme of at least 40 hours, which would treble the number of teachers trained to deliver the computing curriculum to 12,000 by 2022 – “enough for there to be at least one in every secondary school” – a total of eight years after the new curriculum arrived.

The programme will be designed for current computing teachers who don’t have a post-A-level qualification in computer science, to ensure that existing computing teachers “have the knowledge needed to teach the new computer science GCSE”.

The money allocated by the Treasury will also pay for the establishment of a new National Centre for Computing, which will produce training material and support schools.

Schools Week spoke to a former computer science teacher who wished to

remain anonymous, who said many ICT teachers had felt “uncomfortable” about the transition to teaching computing.

“The basic problem is that the course requires students to learn how to programme – if you don’t know how to programme you can’t teach it. If there’s not the expertise it’s really difficult,” they said.

“What they are asking ICT teachers to do is learn at least two programming languages, it’s as complicated as learning a foreign language.”

Dr Bill Mitchell, head of the British Computing Society, also acknowledged that teachers were struggling to deliver the computing curriculum, speaking at a Westminster Education Forum in December 2015.

Mitchell said at the time that it could take a further five years for teachers to feel confident enough to successfully teach computing science.

“We need them to get a lot more help,” he said.

BCS was previously handed £3 million by the government to train 400 “master teachers” by March last year. But the organisation fell well short of its target, with only 350 trained by this June, reaching just 18 per cent of schools.

In January, the shortage of computing teachers was officially recognised when the subject was added to the “shortage occupation list” by the Migration Advisory Committee. This lifted restrictions on hiring subject specialists from outside the EU.

NEWS

Do teachers need TWO years of induction? Tell Justine...

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

A consultation on lengthening the time it takes teachers to fully qualify into the profession is set to launch today and will run over Christmas.

Justine Greening told MPs on Monday that long-awaited proposals on teacher qualification and career-long training would be unveiled before the end of the week.

The proposals are expected to include a requirement for teachers to complete two years of additional in-school training after receiving their initial "qualified teacher status".

At present, teachers are only required to complete one induction year.

The two-year phase is likely to come with an "entitlement to support" – which could be given by accredited external providers, as well as in-school mentors – and would mean teachers only fully qualify as a teacher at the end of the process.

In February, Greening said a strengthened QTS would come into effect from September 2019. She also pledged to keep a "high bar for entry" to the profession.

Since then, the Department for Education has set out proposals for new teaching apprenticeships, but has stayed relatively quiet about its vision for QTS.

Headteachers and training providers involved in writing the consultation said on social media this week that the consultation is a "genuine" attempt by the government to



seek ideas.

In recent years, cynicism has grown over consultations as responses have been delayed or largely ignored.

The results of a consultation into selective schools, which closed in December 2016, are yet to materialise. A consultation on the English Baccalaureate took over 18 months before publication and the policy was under way.

Schools Week understands, however, that Greening is intent on changing the qualification system and is searching for answers on how to do it most effectively.

The consultation is also likely to include proposals for increasing career pathways for teachers who do not wish to go into leadership or management.

An "advanced teacher role" was created by David Blunkett during Labour's time in government, and became popular due to the high salaries attached the roles – in some cases upwards of £50,000 in London. However, it fell out of favour when funding was reduced after 2010.

It is unlikely the consultation will reinvigorate the advanced roles, but could offer teachers onward qualifications in assessment or curriculum expertise.

The timing of the release of the consultation means it will run over Christmas, even though the government was criticised for publishing the second national funding formula consultation at the same time last year.

It is set to run for at least 12 weeks.

SIX TIMES THE CHARM: OFSTED'S WAR WITH A PRIVATE SCHOOL

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Ofsted has been persuaded to change an inspection report six times during a costly, year-long argument with a small private school.

Maple Hayes Hall School, an independent special educational needs school in Staffordshire, had always been rated 'good' until an inspection in September last year said it failed the independent school standards over its handling of a safeguarding complaint.

Its headteacher, Dr Daryl Brown, the Ofsted report claimed, had failed to follow proper procedures when the complaint was made.

But the school challenged the draft report, causing it to be altered twice, and also unsuccessfully tried to get an injunction to prevent the report being published.

When Ofsted published the report more than three months later in January, the school complained about "prominent inaccuracies" four more times, forcing the inspectorate to republish it each time, according to the school's spokesperson.

In October, another inspection rated the school 'outstanding' in all categories, and decided it did meet the independent school standards.

This report praised the school's success including the "vision, expertise, determination and hard work of the proprietors and headteacher" and their "ceaseless efforts ensure the independent school standards are met".

Brown insisted the "vast" difference between the two reports was "not within the normal bounds of rule changes", and showed the school had been right to challenge the initial report a year ago.

"We believe that the Ofsted inspection conducted in September last year was flawed and particularly heavy-handed", he told *Schools Week*.

Last week a judge refused the school's request for a judicial review into removing the first report for good. It was not awarded any costs and had to cover the application fees itself.

However, in a response to a Freedom of Information request, seen by *Schools Week*, Ofsted was seen wrongly claiming the school had complained about an 'inadequate' rating, rather than failed standards.

A spokesperson for Ofsted admitted that mistake, and said the dispute had concerned pupil welfare and leadership and management standards.

The inspectorate is "pleased that the recent inspection found that lessons had been learned about previous failings and pupils are now safe at the school", they added.

This is not the first time small private schools have fallen foul of Ofsted's rules around safeguarding.

The Rudolf Steiner School Kings Langley in Hertfordshire is currently fighting an order to close from the Department for Education after inspections were critical about child welfare.

A statement on the school's website says the new headteacher and trustees are "determined" to learn from the "important lessons of past complaints" rather than be forced to shut.

'MARK AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE' GETS DFE THUMBS-UP

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

A school which gave teachers a "carte blanche" to mark pupils' work "however they like" has been picked out by the government as an example of good practice.

Barr Beacon School, near Birmingham, has halved the time staff spend grading homework by lifting all marking requirements and allowing them to give pupils written feedback twice every half-term, though this is a rule it may scrap.

David Lowbridge-Ellis, the school's deputy headteacher and its head of marking, said the new approach was implemented after an Ofsted inspection in 2014 told the 'outstanding'-rated school that it needed to "ensure that work is marked and assessed accurately, and that written feedback" was clear for pupils.

Even though Sean Harford, Ofsted's director of education, has since reminded inspectors that they must not judge the type or frequency of marking, the school changed its approach after some staff admitted they could not manage their marking workload.

Teachers use a range of methods, and Lowbridge-Ellis is now seeking to halve individual teacher marking time yet again, to just a quarter of where it was three years ago.

Teachers are trusted to provide feedback as they wish, on the condition that pupils can answer two questions: what their strengths and weaknesses in each subject



are. Teachers and senior leaders ask these questions, and if pupils are unable to answer, or if they identify the wrong weaknesses, only then is the feedback considered to be in need of review.

Parents were informed of the approach in a letter sent out last September, and "not one has complained", according to Lowbridge-Ellis, who claims that even the school's lowest-attaining pupils "can all articulate what they need to do in those subjects, and they're doing it".

"Schools doubt the ability of the pupils to articulate that – but they absolutely can," he added.

The school runs lesson observations but the emphasis is on trusting the teachers. Workload is also reduced by writing letter codes on pupils' work instead of written commentary – such as an A for apostrophes or a Z for needing to "zoom" in closer on words in English lessons.

If the majority of the class are struggling with a problem, some of the lesson is dedicated to teaching that issue.



Barr Beacon School pupils

Now three of the four schools in the Matrix Academy Trust, to which Barr Beacon belongs, use a version of the marking method. Lowbridge-Ellis has even written about his methods for the Department for Education, and was recently asked to speak at an event, addressing headteachers about reducing marking time.

Perhaps more importantly, Harford has tweeted Lowbridge-Ellis to say his efforts are "especially interesting".

Tim Oates, the group director of assessment research and development at Cambridge Assessment, said the school's methods replicated his own upcoming research which will show teachers are "relieved" and better their understanding of pupils' learning when "neurotic, bureaucratic marking processes" are removed.

But he did not believe "every school should necessarily be able to do its own thing", and instead a national strategy about marking and assessment backed by research needed to be centrally disseminated, he said.



EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

Goodbye from 2017, & from me...

Now the end of 2017 is near, I too face a final curtain. Dear readers, this is my last edition as editor of *Schools Week*.

It's not a complete swansong from me, as I shall be continuing as contributing editor, writing columns and popping up every now and then with a profile interview. But, from the New Year, I shall step down and Shane Mann will take over as interim Managing Editor.

Three years ago this week I was called into the office and asked if I would take over the paper from its 14th edition (and the first with the '*Schools Week*' title). Since then this job has been an utter privilege. Working every day with a small group of incredibly bright, hard-working, determined reporters to get answers to the questions you wanted to have asked has been thrilling.

We built the paper from nothing to its current status as a practical must-mention for MPs in parliamentary committees. We were laughed at for some of our ideas, and told by industry experts that we shouldn't do profile interviews ("there aren't enough interesting people in education"), or book reviews ("there aren't enough books"), or write stories about regional commissioners ("no-one cares"), or multi-academy trusts ("it's too personal, it'll upset people"). And yet, three

and a half years on, these things are commonplace across education media.

In some ways, that's why it's now time to move on. Yesterday, the education secretary set out her vision for the next few years of education policy and it shows a real break with the past. The word "academy" is practically absent from the document. As one analogy I heard this week goes: if Michael Gove were the man who broke the windows of education policy, Justine Greening is the woman figuring out how to piece it back together again.

Likewise, *Schools Week* has shaken things up and, along the way, secured great scoops and great policies. I will forever be tickled that we were the first newspaper to publish a story on a leaked manifesto of a major political party during a general election. I will forever be proud of our reporting on the census data last year, which secured a change in the law meaning that children whose parents would otherwise have risked their safety by putting them into illegal schools are still in state education.

But, however proud I am of the past, it is time for the paper to start putting the windows back together and becoming a more grown-up paper. Don't worry! This doesn't mean we will become safe. A *Schools Week* story will be what it

always has been: determined, curious, smart. However, we also need to become slicker in our online presence to keep up with technological shifts, as well as updated the look and feel of the paper, all of which are things that Shane will be much more adept at than me.

As for regrets, I have a few. In the same way that no teacher ever finishes a lesson thinking they nailed everything perfectly, never once did I finish the paper thinking it was a supreme version of what might have been. Small things niggle. Was the emphasis on that piece right? Did we use the quotes fairly? Sometimes, we messed up. Taking my cue from Jeremy Paxman, who took a handwritten apology letter to Peter Mandelson's house after accidentally outing him on live television, I've even delivered my own notes when I've trodden over lines.

Like the people in our stories each week, we err and we struggle and we don't always get things right. That doesn't make us bad people, and I've always implored our newsroom to remember that most

people working in schools are not bad either. Everyone is doing their own version of trying to help the cause.

What I can also say, with some certainty, is that the support of incredible colleagues and people across the sector means I've always felt able to speak my mind and do things my way.

So folks, in a week where Ofsted, Ofqual and the education secretary have all released huge datasets and policy documents, I'm now feeling guilty that I've spent 662 words talking about the paper rather than analysing their actions. But, the truth is, you don't need me to guide you. The information is there in the news pages, just like it will be in the next edition. The determined,

fearless part of *Schools Week* has never been me. It has always been you: the reporters, the design team who pushed me to take risks with the front pages, the bosses who put their money into building this endeavour, and the readers who sign up to read this zany, challenging newspaper.

Happy Christmas, you lovely people. It has been quite the ride.



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Amy Douglas

Education Consultant

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Headteacher

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www.chetrust.co.uk @CHETeducation **Closing date: Noon, 12th January 2018** **Interviews: 22nd and 23rd January 2018**

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READERS' REPLY



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Ofsted hopes to move away from safeguarding 'compliance' checks



Nick Hassey // @nickhassey

In a crowded field of terrible education ideas this week this is a really, really bad one.

David Stinson // @StinsonTheatre

Yes, Ofsted! Safeguarding is not checked properly in schools. Merely ensuring that all the boxes are ticked does not ensure that our schools are keeping children safe.

How the Hillsborough disaster can teach critical thought



Julia Muir // @JuliaHMuir

Critical thinking skills and looking at "who stands to gain" are increasingly important now.

Lizzie Smith // @MadgiePodge

The most important aspect of GCSE history is asking students to think critically about what they are reading – who is saying it and why. If they can do that they've passed in my book. A good grade is icing on the cake.

Teachers must abandon rote learning, says top neuropsychologist



Jasper Kain // @jasperkain1

How we initially engage with information increases the chances of remembering it later on.
We should make learning meaningful.

NumberNagar // @number_nagar

I disagree. There are few students who need to memorise before understanding the ideas and concepts. It is the responsibility of teachers to know what helps their students.

John Lancaster // @johnallancaster

Well, rote learning taught me my tables and they have served me well!

Cotswold Teacher // @cotswoldteacher

Hmm, not sure if I agree or disagree. The research quoted is interesting but is the study quoted large enough to be significant?

Ian Yorston // @IanYorston

Too simplistic. Particularly as a headline. Strategies for memorising "bald facts" are obviously a good idea, but we need to recognise that many facts have no real logic to which they can be tied, eg names, dates and irregular verbs.



Lou Doyle

In some cases a bit of rhyming is great, but mostly, multi-level learning is far more successful.

Lance Deaves

I'm an instructor and trainer. I've also worked in secondary, cadet units and special-needs schools. Repetition works really well. I found with most kids, patience is the most important thing. And giving them time, understanding and care.

Use young staff to push strict behaviour rules



Samantha Alley-Mohindra

Trying to keep young teachers at the school is the challenge.



Teacher Farm // @teacher_farm

The dictatorial leadership style can be great to start with but it makes a caustic working environment after a while. But it's up to the people who work there to decide what they want.

Kristy Turner // @doc_kristy

"But the young team have enabled him to lay down behaviour and other policies without resistance..." I find that very troubling. Older staff aren't just thorns in heads' sides. They bring a wealth of experience from many settings, and confidence to question.

It's time to put an end to ability setting at all ages



Sarah Hewitt-Clarkson // @Sazhewitt

We haven't set for years at my school. We don't talk about ability. It's not fixed and it causes a toxic mindset.

Andy Cartwright // @AndyCart2531

I wholeheartedly agree. However, until the current Ofsted-inspired, accountability-focused and results-at-all-costs system changes, we will have no choice other than to set by ability. Change the rules of the game and let the players play.

It's time to put an end to ability setting at all ages

REPLY OF THE WEEK



John Bald, address supplied

I've heard this argument since I started in the seventies, and it is fallacious. What holds lower-attaining pupils back is not the grouping, but the lack of basic literacy skills that prevents them from tackling the more demanding work. See Jean Chall's *The Reading Crisis, Why Poor Children Fall Behind*, for evidence of the new challenges posed on transfer to secondary school that these children can't meet. In mixed-ability classes, their needs are not addressed and they fall farther behind. The one valid argument against setting is that lower-attaining sets do not usually get their share of the best teaching. In some subjects, notably languages, mixed ability has been disastrous, and setting is leading to higher grades, notably at Mossbourne, but also in other schools. There has never been any evidence in a UK context that mixed ability is effective, and evidence to the contrary has been systematically ignored.

Reply of the week receives..



A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!

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YEAR IN REVIEW: OPINIONS

GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Naureen Khalid

Trustee. Chair of governors at two London academies: primary and secondary



Twelve thoughts for Christmas

There has been plenty to consider for school governors in 2017. Naureen Khalid walks us through the year's highlights (and the lowlights!)

Another year has flown by and it's time to review 2017. As Christmas is almost upon us, I've looked back at twelve things which stood out for me. So, in no particular order:

- The DfE continued to place its emphasis on skills required to get involved in governance. This process started with the competency framework and was followed by another framework for clerks.
- A major amendment to school governance regulations in England meant that governing bodies at maintained schools now have the power to remove elected parent or staff governors by a majority decision. From May this year, any elected governor removed from a governing body during their term of office will be disqualified from serving or continuing to serve as a school governor for five years from the date of their removal.
- School funding (or the lack thereof) continued to make headlines. Over 20 school governing boards in West Sussex announced that they would strike in response to fears over funding this year. But although the funding crisis is real and governors have to make difficult decisions to balance budgets, striking, to me, feels to be the wrong reaction when schools need us more than ever.
- After the general election, there were several new faces as old ones departed. One MP who lost his seat was Neil Carmichael, the chair of the education select committee and the all-party parliamentary group for governance.

- Some regional school commissioners changed too, notably Dr Tim Coulson and Rebecca Clark. The fact that RSCs resign and then go onto join academy trusts came under select committee scrutiny. Sir David Carter assured the MPs that any real or perceived conflicts of interest are, and would be, managed.
 - Another change of interest to governors was Lord Nash stepping down as parliamentary undersecretary of state for the school system, who had responsibility for school governance. Lord Theodore Agnew took over his responsibilities.
 - There were changes at Ofsted too. Amanda Spielman took up her post as HMCI. She has announced that she would like Ofsted to be able to inspect multi-academy trusts. Carter and Agnew were not keen on the idea during their recent appearance before the select committee. Trustees will be watching this space with interest...
 - 'Who governs our schools? Trends, tensions and opportunities', a report by Dr Tony Breslin, was published by the Royal Society of Arts. This is an important piece of research and it has been well received: governance is hugely important and research into this field should be encouraged.
 - Those of us who govern in MATs should read 'Quantitative analysis of the characteristics and performance of multi-academy trusts', a report produced by the Education Policy Institute, looking into the characteristics and performance of MATs.
 - Executive pay or, more exactly, high levels of executive pay, also made headlines this year. The Association of School and College Leaders published a guidance paper called 'Setting pay for executive heads/principals and chief executive officers'. The Education and Skills Funding Agency meanwhile has a new chief executive, Eileen Milner, who wants to address excessive executive salaries at trusts with only one academy. Trustees need to take on board the concerns which are being raised over pay.
 - Education Datalab warned that a minority of "pupils are being 'managed out' of mainstream schools... with the effect of boosting the league table performance of the school". As governors and trustees we need to assure ourselves that this doesn't happen at our schools.
 - MATs such as the Wakefield Academy Trust made headlines for the wrong reasons. As trustees we have a great responsibility for the education of our children and for spending of public money. Ethical governance and the Nolan principles should be our guiding force.
- Santa travels around the world in one night and I've reviewed the year in 12 steps. All that remains for me is to wish you all a happy Christmas and a wonderful 2018.

BUSINESS LEADER REVIEW

Stephen Morales

Chief executive, Institute of School Business Leadership



Little in the way of glad tidings

Following a relative period of stability, Stephen Morales is anticipating much-needed change in 2018

From a policy perspective, 2017 could be characterised more by what hasn't been achieved than what has.

Following her appointment as secretary of state for education, Justine Greening moved to scrap a number of policies, including forced SATs resits for 11-year-olds and proposals to force schools to academise.

The vulnerability of the PM and the dominating nature of Brexit have left little room for Greening to push forward her own reform agenda, and she has been limited to administering existing reforms and ensuring limited turbulence across the sector. Gone are the multiple bold initiatives from the Gove era, and even Nicky Morgan's white paper has been significantly diluted.

On the upside, a period of stability without constant reform and change is probably being well received by school leaders.

Here's a quick canter through 2017:

January

The DfE was forced to respond to issues raised in an NAO report on financial sustainability published in December. The report was sceptical about the government's capacity to meet efficiency targets for the education sector within this parliament.

Where there are some efficiencies to be made, in some cases the challenge will be enormous. It will depend on the starting point, the appetite for change and the school or trust's capacity to be innovative.

March

Philip Hammond's spring budget has nothing for schools beyond a commitment to the National Funding Formula.

June

The slim Tory victory at the snap general election signals the end of some of their bolder policy ambitions, including forced academisation and the reintroduction of grammar schools.

September

In response to the electorate's disquiet over austerity, Justine Greening secures £1.3 billion in additional funding for schools, and launches a National Funding Formula with a commitment that no school will lose out. This is achieved by increasing funding to lowest-funded schools and protecting more generously-funded schools from any losses.

November

The autumn budget passes with no consideration for, or comment on, schools.

- So, we might conclude that in 2017 our government gave to us:
1. Brexit dominating everything
 2. An election car-crash
 3. A weakened government
 4. Stalled policies
 5. A partially reformed school support and oversight system
 6. Positive steps towards a NFF, but the government still needs to grasp the nettle of redistribution
 7. Continued austerity
 8. No sector-wide efficiency approach
 9. A vacuum in leadership development
 10. Teacher retention challenges
 11. No clear vision for operational excellence and organisational design
 12. Lack of clarity on sector oversight

Never mind a partridge in a pair tree. But the good news is...

The government has had no real choice but to reassess school funding, following increasing pressure from school leaders and education stakeholder groups. This has put school business professionals front and centre in the approach used to address the challenges of school financial health, resource management, organisational design and strategic procurement.

The DfE has acknowledged the unique skills of the school business leader community, as well as their experience and knowledge, and will be deploying practitioners to support vulnerable schools and academies under the guidance of ISBL in the New Year.

The opportunities for forward thinking and innovative school business leaders are now enormous, not only operating on the front line, but also informing the wider system reform debate. Roll on 2018!

HEADTEACHER REVIEW

Two headteachers take their cue from Dylan Thomas in describing the Christmas gifts they would like to see for schools

In his poem 'A child's Christmas in Wales', Dylan Thomas compares useful presents and useless ones. This year perhaps more than ever, this has resonance as Justine Greening announces the birth of 12 opportunity areas, and the "wise men" arrive with their gifts of the strategic school improvement fund, the teaching and leadership innovation, and emergency funding.

With our scarce but valuable resources, we could perhaps end the year by reflecting on what really does make a difference to children, young people, teachers and leaders. What would make a really useful present for teachers to warm our hearts and minds, like Thomas's "engulfing mufflers of the old coach days, and mittens made for giant sloths"?

There is hard and fast evidence that quality teaching for all has the highest impact. While we compare ourselves to other high-performing countries, many do not have the same amount of direct teaching hours. The gift of release time would allow teachers to collaborate both in and between schools on teaching sequences and curriculum design. Free to develop the craft of teaching, the ultimate present would be the retention of autonomous and empowered teachers with a passion for their profession.

Caroline Barlow

Secondary headteacher,
Heathfield Community College,
East Sussex



Binks Neate-Evans

Primary headteacher, West
Earlham Infant and Nursery
School, Norwich



What heads really want to see in 2018

Thomas's story offers a memory of collective carol singing: "One, two three, and we began to sing, our voices high and seemingly distant in the snow-felted darkness." School leaders would certainly welcome some singing from the same hymn sheet in terms of accountability. The clarity offered by streamlining the high-stakes accountability demanded by Ofsted, the DfE, the regional schools commissioners and local authorities would be welcome. Schools and trusts can feel bombarded, which destabilises the system. Reducing the stakes would help eradicate some of the perverse incentives that result in a narrowing curriculum and more exclusions.

An increase in peer-to-peer review of school evaluation, and greater consistency in inspection judgments would help schools thrive and not just survive.

Thomas's story tells us that "years and years ago, when I was a boy, when there were wolves in Wales" and we could certainly do with some help this Christmas keeping the wolves from the door financially. Too many heads and business managers are counting the pennies like Bob Cratchit, wondering about how to make ends meet. Will it be even bigger class sizes, fewer options at GCSE or A-Level and the resultant staffing reductions, or will it be the pastoral support that sustains

our students' wellbeing? We need the equivalent of a gift voucher to address the inequities of funding and makes up for the cuts that have eroded our balances since 2010. That would be the most useful of presents.

As we move towards New Year, it is also a time to think of new habits. West Earlham Infant and Nursery School recently was proud to report the most positive responses to a countywide wellbeing survey. This is because leaders recognise the value of professional supervision to reflect on non-teaching aspects of the job.

At a time with increasing pressures on schools to provide services once delivered through CAMHS, NHS or Children's Services, it is vital we create spaces to develop these pastoral aspects of school life. At Heathfield Community College, investment in pastoral staff and training means intervention is swift; peer mentoring and structured student leadership schemes show our young people that they can have the skills they need. Managing wellbeing and leading healthy lives would be a genuine gift for us all.

Dylan Thomas's poem speaks warmly of the relatives who populated his youthful Christmas and the "tall tales now that we told by the fire". If we are to galvanise the real power of our profession, we must embrace all members of our eclectic family to work together to tell our own tale.

As part of our work with Headteachers Roundtable, we will continue to work across all phases and types of school to influence policy so that practice is the best it can be, not just for Christmas but for all of our futures.

SUMMIT



Headteachers' Roundtable

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YEAR IN REVIEW: OPINIONS

SEND REVIEW

Adam Boddison

Chief executive,
nasen



Five reasons to be a little cheerful

We all know that special educational needs provision is nowhere near where we need it to be, but that's not to say there haven't been moments to celebrate, writes Adam Boddison

It would be easy to write a review of SEND (special educational needs and/or disabilities) in 2017 by listing all of the challenges we have faced. Most people are aware of the problems:

- Insufficient funding
 - The government's SEND and inclusion policies are not aligned to wider policy
 - Exclusion rates are too high and illegal exclusions are all too common
 - Schools can end up punished for being more inclusive because of narrow accountability and assessment measures, and because they become overwhelmed with demand
 - Too many families have to go to a tribunal to get the support their child is entitled to
 - The extensive waiting lists for pupil places in special schools
- The list could continue, but instead I would like to share five aspects of SEND from 2017 that are worth celebrating.

1) Fluid provision in MATs

A number of multi-academy trusts, particularly those where there are both mainstream and special settings on the same site, have been demonstrating the way that fluid provision can work for learners with SEND. In practice, this may mean that a learner attends a special school and a mainstream school for different aspects of their curriculum, rather than having to make a choice between one or the other. This set-up also allows the expertise in special schools to be shared with staff in mainstream schools, so they can meet a broader range of needs.

2) LA innovation and joint commissioning

The local area inspections that have been carried out jointly by Ofsted and the Care

Quality Commission have identified pockets of excellent practice across the country. I am encouraged that some local authorities are investing now to ensure that provision in their area is cost-effective and high-quality in the future. York is building a centre of excellence to help disabled children and their families stay in their home communities. The centre will provide innovative approaches to support, as well as assessments, therapies and short breaks. This is a good example of how joint commissioning across education, health and social care can truly work.

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This is a good example of how joint commissioning can truly work

3) National SENCO award

The National SENCO award provides an accredited professional development for thousands of SENCOs every year. Behind the scenes, this group of 30+ universities and private providers that deliver this course are working collaboratively to constantly improve it and to share best practice across the sector. Highly qualified SENCOs can have a significant positive impact on the quality of provision in their settings. The great work

of this group is particularly important when you consider that only two roles are legally required in a school: a headteacher and a SENCO, but only the SENCO is required to be a qualified teacher.

4) The SEND review and the SEND gateway

This strategic review tool was developed by the London leadership strategy and made available at scale via the Whole-school SEND consortium. It allows schools to review their SEND provision across eight strategic areas and form an improvement plan. Schools have also been submitting examples of effective SEND provision across each of the eight areas on the DfE-funded SEND Gateway (www.sendgateway.org.uk) to share with the wider community of practice.

5) National SENCO Forum

The National SENCO Forum celebrated its 21st birthday this year and it continues to be an active community of practice for SENCOs across England. It is a place to independently share thoughts, concerns and questions. A dedicated volunteer steering group keeps the forum running and it is a valuable resource for many SENCOs.

In 2018, we will be celebrating 40 years since the 1978 Warnock Report. It will be a time for reflecting on where we have come from, where we are now and where we want to go next. Wherever that is, I hope it builds on some the positive work that we know exists within the SEND community.

POLITICS REVIEW

Natalie Perera

Executive director, Education
Policy Institute



Education always comes down to money in the end

It's been a less eventful year for education than 2016, but according to Natalie Perera it's the same old story: we need more money to back the policies

Last year, my review of 2016 reflected on the political transformation that brought us the Brexit vote, a new prime

minister and education secretary, a new chief inspector, and a debate on grammar schools. While there have been fewer leadership changes this year, the political context still continues to influence education policy.

At the beginning of the year, grammar schools were still firmly on the government's agenda, despite two EPI reports and countless other experts explaining how bad it would be for social mobility, and there was no planned increase to the schools budget, despite fears of a funding crisis.

All of that quickly changed, however, after the general election in June. The Tories' loss of their majority meant that the prime minister had to abandon plans to create more grammar schools, while a concerted school funding campaign meant that Justine Greening soon announced an additional £1.3 billion would be added to the core schools budget over the next two years.

Rather than quieting their funding cries, the unions called for a five-per-cent pay increase for teachers ahead of last month's budget. While those of us with less ambitious expectations might instead have predicted more money to support the government's forthcoming social mobility action plan, the chancellor actually announced new incentives to boost take up of post-16 maths (a subject which isn't particularly suffering from a lack of entrants).

The collapse of two multi-academy

trusts this year was a reminder that school autonomy can lead to bad decisions as much as it can innovation, especially when a MAT grows too rapidly. The role and effectiveness of regional school commissioners is also

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Schools aren't equipped to run as mini local authorities

still up for debate. There is little difference in performance between MATs and local authorities, but we've seen no appetite from the DfE to allow Ofsted to inspect MATs.

While much of the department's energy this year seems to have been spent fire-fighting, some good policies have emerged from Sanctuary Buildings. We will have a national funding formula for schools from April 2018, something which no other government or secretary of state has been able to address. The careful architecture of the new formula bears the hallmarks of Justine Greening's accountancy background.

Extra funding for teacher training

and professional development in underperforming schools, and the recently announced new funding for mental health training in schools, are also welcome. The new green paper on this issue represents a real step-change in how we think about young people's mental health. But we also need to guard against throwing new responsibilities at schools with modest, disparate pots of money. Schools aren't equipped to run as mini local authorities.

And what of the social mobility action plan? We can expect more free schools in underperforming areas, and confirmation of initiatives announced earlier this year including funding for literacy hubs and parenting support. It's unlikely that we will see any new opportunity areas announced though, despite there being none in the north-east as yet.

The political context will, inevitably, shape public policy, irrespective of who is in government. But the balance between reactive announcements of poorly thought-through initiatives and evidence-led, intelligent policymaking needs to shift if the government is going to make real progress in improving educational outcomes across the country. The resignation of the entire Social Mobility Commission was a sad but predictable end to the year, and it remains to be seen whether the government will appoint new and credible commissioners.

RESEARCH REVIEW 2017

Stuart Kime Director, Evidence-Based Education



The diamonds in the rough of research

Having scoured the international academic journals for the best research applicable to schools in England, Stuart Kime shares his top five treasures

Making decisions means engaging with information, either consciously or not. As I set about finding the shining jewels of rigour in methodological research and substantive brilliance in 2017, I couldn't help but think of the mis- and disinformation currently buzzing about our daily lives, and how the importance of high-quality research evidence grows with each poorly phrased tweet and propagandist blog post. We need good information in our schools now more than ever.

So what caught my eye in 2017?

Draining the swamp

The Michigan School Program Information Project, Z Neal and JW Neal

Who do you trust to answer an important question? And to whom does that person turn to answer their question? What's the provenance of the advice you're given?

In amongst the cloying swamp of competing school improvement priorities and a host of other bit-champing needs, school leaders face a challenge: how do they identify robust programmes which respond to students' needs, and how do they evaluate the effectiveness of each?

This is where my first pick, the Michigan School Program Information Project, comes in.

MiSPI as it is known is not a covert

auto-surveillance system, so don't worry. Rather, it is a ground-breaking social network analysis project which seeks to bridge the gap between research and practice. It focuses on understanding the ways in which school leaders find and use information to make decisions about interventions and programs to use in their local contexts.

It's a US-based project, but watch this space. I'm hopeful that we will be able to bring it to the UK soon and trial it here.

A paper entitled 'What makes research useful for public school educators?' and written by the MiSPI coordinators is also available at <https://rdcu.be/yfAy>.

Does schooling contribute to learning?

'The contribution of schooling to learning gains of pupils in years 1 to 6', H Luyten et al

It seems like a silly question to ask, but let's do it: is going to school better than not going to school?

To answer the question, Hans Luyten, Christine Merrell and Peter Tymms brought us the gem that is 'The contribution of schooling to learning gains of pupils in years 1 to 6', a paper which indicates that schooling – thankfully – has a positive effect on learning (accounting for about 40 per cent of total learning gains). Interestingly, the authors also show that, as children get older, the effect of school decreases.

Hans told me that he was prompted to write the paper because "the bulk of studies on educational effectiveness focuses on differences between school and teachers; our paper addresses what the educational sector in general contributes to the cognitive development of children".

This is a paper that goes where value-added data cannot go, and that's why it made this year's list.

Fake news

'Educating for democracy in a partisan age: Confronting the challenges of motivated reasoning and misinformation', J Kahne and B Bowyer

In an era of fake news, research which seeks to understand how young people judge the accuracy of truth claims related to current affairs is prescient, to say the least. In February this year, Joseph Kahne from the University of California, Riverside and Benjamin Bowyer of Santa Clara University emerged with 'Educating for

democracy in a partisan age'.

Kahne and Bowyer found that young people's accuracy judgements depended, in part, on the alignment of the new truth claim with their prior viewpoints (a form of bias known as "the anchoring effect"). Now there's an argument for robust education, if ever there was one.

Interestingly, the authors also observed, perhaps somewhat counter-intuitively, that simply knowing more about politics doesn't improve accuracy of judgements, but that media literacy education did. For me, this is the kind of finding that sets off my thinking. What kind of media literacy? What would it look like? How could we trial it? It's timely and thought-provoking, so it makes the cut.

Is education neuroscience the next big thing?

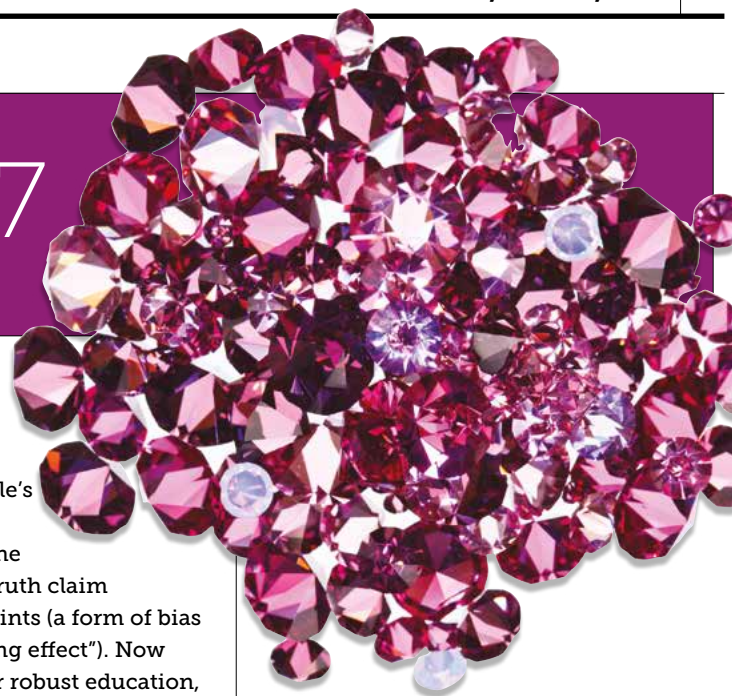
'Online EEG-based workload adaptation of an arithmetic learning environment', C Walter et al

Neuroscientific research was still all the rage in 2017, the next big thing in education and, while I'm optimistic for what it can offer, I'd challenge the use of the words "next" and "big". I concede that it's probably a thing, but let's not go changing lesson plans just yet.

As the thing grew this year, though, Carina Walter and her colleagues in Germany used EEG (think of the cap with wires coming out all over it) to study the effects of a computer program which



adapts learning material online in an attempt to improve students' arithmetic outcomes. With a small sample, they found that they could measure cognitive workload unobtrusively. I've tried doing EEG-based experiments myself and can concur that you get over the cap's presence pretty quickly, and use it to adapt the content delivered to students.



None of this is going to change what happens in classrooms tomorrow (imagine a class of 30 children each wearing a 28-lead EEG), but it will help us understand more about cognitive load, and that, I am convinced, will be an important element of how we design teaching and learning activities and experiences in years to come.

Can schools reduce bullying?

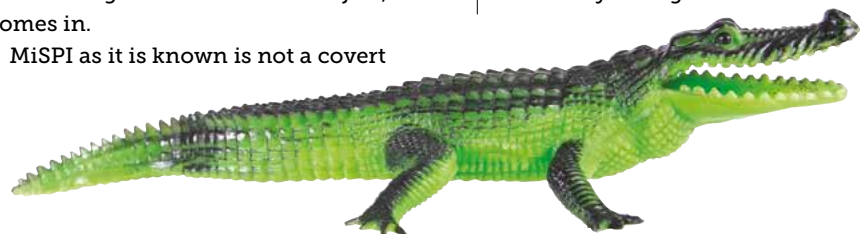
'Can schools reduce bullying? The relationship between school characteristics and the prevalence of bullying behaviours', D Muijs

Why is the relationship between schools' policies and bullying not a more studied area? Bullying has been, is and will continue to be an insidious problem until we understand more about it and address it in an evidence-informed manner.

Daniel Muijs' study began with the hypothesis that school size, policies and processes (such as quality of teaching) are related in some way to the prevalence of bullying. By surveying 1,411 year 6 pupils at 35 primary schools, Muijs found a substantial effect of both the school as a whole, and the individual classroom on the prevalence of bullying, but also found that these were mitigated by effective school policies.

I chose to include this study because it shines a light on the importance of school-level policy and practice decisions pertaining to bullying. In a school system that has become increasingly obsessed with a very narrow range of valued outcomes, acknowledging other factors in the life-course development of young people – especially those related to mental health – is critical.

Stuart Kime is a director at Evidence-Based Education, an organisation which trains teachers to be assessment leads and research leads in order to improve school decision-making and student outcomes. Stuart is the developer of three IEE/EEF research schools in East Anglia.



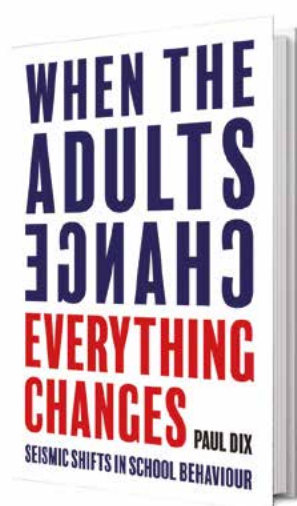
REVIEWS

BOOKS OF THE YEAR

Chosen by *Schools Week* features editor Cath Murray**FOR VISIONARIES AND DREAMERS**

When the adults change, everything changes: Seismic shifts in school behaviour
By Paul Dix

Relationships matter. People matter. As educators, we are not dealing with faceless statistics, we are dealing with brilliant, funny, smart, infuriating, imperfect human beings. Hundreds of them, every day. People respond best to people, not to rules, and pupils are no exception.



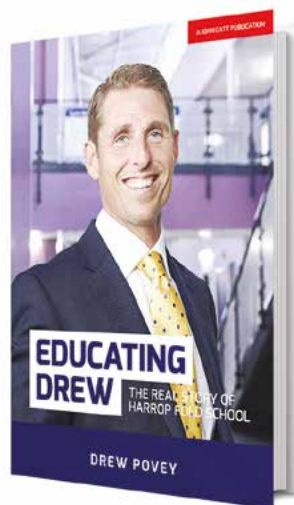
This is the message of a book full of humour and quirky concepts such as "deliberate botheredness".

It's recommended not only for school leaders, but anyone working in schools, and designed to nudge readers away from a myopic focus on policies and tactics and onto people and relationships.

Educating Drew: The real story of Harrop Fold School

By Drew Povey

Drew Povey's book has a compelling backstory: it's the tale of an improving school shackled by a punishing PFI contract that makes academy trusts reluctant to take it on.



In this context, this young headteacher of Educating Greater Manchester fame has written a book about his vision and how he has seen it through – working to engender a sense of hope, possibility and ambition within a deprived community. In turning around the school, he took inspiration from the post-9/11 architects, he recounts, who sought to reimagine, not simply rebuild, the World Trade Centre.

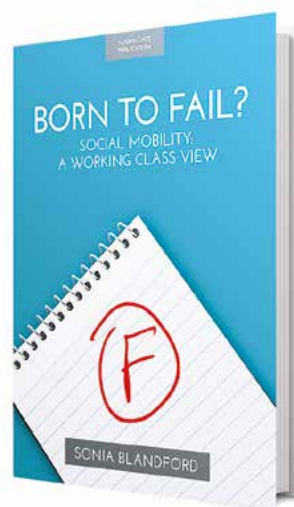
All sales of the book are going to pay off the school's debt – so this is a proper feel-good Christmas purchase (not to mention a meaty conversation starter for when you tire of festive TV).

FOR SOCIAL CAMPAIGNERS

Born to fail? Social mobility: A working-class view

By Sonia Blandford

This formidable university professor of working-class origins is frustrated with our tendency to equate social mobility with physical mobility. In other words, the assumption that "social mobility" is about giving working-class people a route to escape their communities – namely through university, after which they will be whisked away into a middle-class existence and live comfortably ever after.



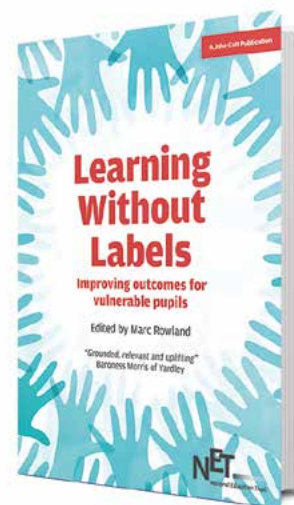
Instead of obsessing uniquely about university entry as a measure of social mobility, says Blandford, we should focus instead on creating meaningful opportunities for working-class people to be educated, develop and work and live well within their communities – if they choose to stay.

The book is packed with advice for schools to support her approach.

Learning without labels. Improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils

Edited by Marc Rowland

When we limit our thinking to the label (low ability; on the spectrum; the TA's table) rather than the learner, we also lower expectations for that pupil, argues Marc



Rowland. And when the labels become excuses for poor outcomes, they constrain to a point of uselessness.

The book, made up of 26 essays from different contributors, aims to outline the culture needed to support this shift in perspective, through school leadership and practical classroom strategies.

One contributor describes the challenge to training fleas. Apparently, fleas only jump as high as the lid of the jar they are in. After three days, they can't jump any higher, even with the lid removed. Sound familiar?

FOR DATA GEEKS

Making good progress: The future of Assessment for learning

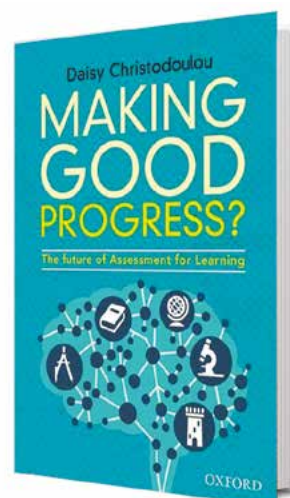
By Daisy Christodoulou

If the idea of banishing meaningless data-crunching from schools gets you excited, this may be the book for you.

Christodoulou very clearly lays out the difference between formative and summative assessment – explaining what each is good for, and what inferences can and can't be made.

Summative tests, like GCSEs (and their mark schemes) are not designed to shape learning, we are told: progress will NOT be made by turning every lesson into an exam and doing a gap analysis (wait, what, really?).

Not the easiest Christmas read, but definitely one for all the school assessment leads out there.

**The global education race: Taking the measure of PISA and international testing**

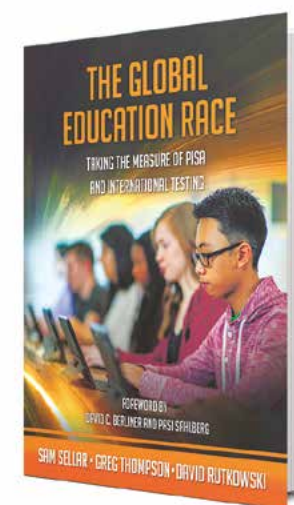
By Sam Stellar, Greg Thompson, David Rutkowski

We've all seen the headlines: "The UK lags behind in global school rankings" scream the broadsheets on PISA results day.

This book is for the discerning, data-savvy edu-nerd who likes to respond to such claims with "yes, but even if we're 10 places below, the size of the error associated with the rank means that you can't actually say for sure whether we're worse than Germany".

It's also for all those who have torn out their hair at the spurious claims politicians make, based on tangentially related test data.

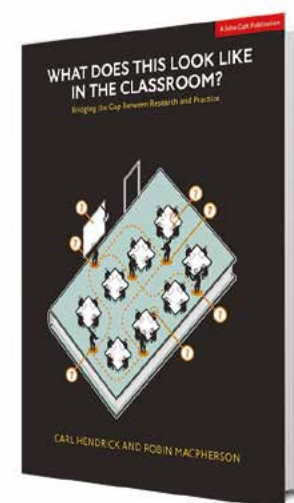
The book aims to tell us which data from the triennial PISA international tests should actually form the basis for policy decisions. And it even includes bullet points for discussion, in case you ever get stuck in a lift with Justine Greening – what's not to love?

**FOR INFORMATION JUNKIES**

What does this look like in the classroom? Bridging the gap between research and practice

By Carl Hendrick and Robin MacPherson

Here's one for the ambitious teacher who wants a guidebook for what's trendy, what's proven and what's junk. It's also for the middle or senior leader who wants to feel sure of themselves in conversations with



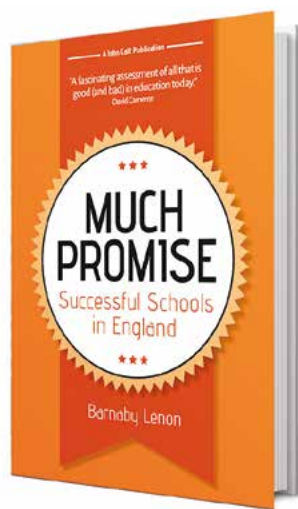
colleagues about best practice in behaviour management, literacy, retrieval practice or assessment.

Each topic features an interview with two respected professionals in the field, such as cognitive psychology scientists Yana Weinstein or Nick Rose, or education authors Dylan Wiliam and Doug Lemov. This format makes it perfect for staff book club or CPD leads looking for chapters to hand out for discussion.

Much promise: Successful schools in England

By Barnaby Lenon

Here's a magnum opus from a veteran school leader who's taught across the gamut



of schools, from comprehensives to Eton. It covers everything: schools, teachers, pupils, subjects, parents, exams and governors.

If you want to sound like you know it all, you might want to read this. It has history, research, case studies and anecdote, blended together in a "here's the stuff you need to know with a story that shows how real people relate to it" kind of way.

He covers technical topics such as comparable outcomes, grade inflation and curriculum review.

For those who take their school leadership career journey seriously.

FOR ASPIRING LEADERS

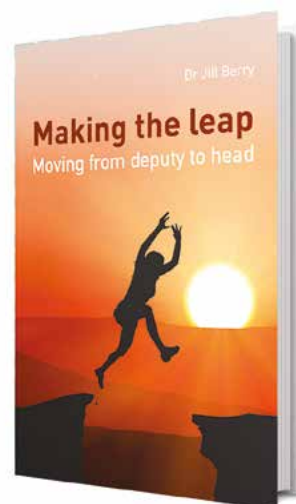
Making the leap: Moving from deputy to head

By Jill Berry

If your new year's resolution is to take that next step up to headship, this one might be for you. It runs through the whole process, from interview prep, through the handover period and even includes nuggets of advice for the first term in your new job: don't be too quick to judge, go to as many extracurricular activities as possible to build relationships, decide whether you will continue to teach, and so on.

One piece of *Schools Week* contributor Jill Berry's wisdom, to conclude: not getting a job is not the worst scenario. Somehow managing to secure a job which is not the

right job for you (and then having to try to do it) is definitely worse, and it is not good for the school either.



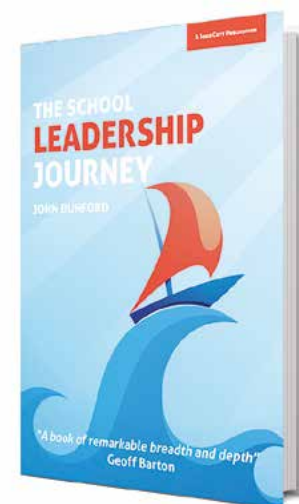
The school leadership journey

By John Dunford

This is less a manual for school leaders, more a memoir of a professional life woven into a discussion of the complexities of politics and educational impact. In the context of a "suffocating centrally directed policy climate", Dunford issues a rallying cry to

school leaders – urging them to reclaim the professional learning space rather than be dictated to.

But more than this, it contains deep knowledge and reflections based on personal experience, research, evidence, impact and education successes – as well as some failures.



Dunford's refreshingly honest claim that his points are "not particularly profound" and often borrowed from greater minds will no doubt endear some readers to him. If that's not you, we recommend Lenon's work, above.



Name James Wilding

Age 64

Occupation School principal

Location Maidenhead

Subscriber since

January 2015

Fly on the Wall is a chance for you, the subscriber, to tell us what you love (and hate) about *Schools Week*, who you'd like to spy on and, of course, what the world of education would look like if you were in charge...



FLY ON THE WALL

Where do you read your copy of *Schools Week*?

Online.

Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?

The news headlines, because they have an excellent sharp focus on accountability.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one education policy, which would it be?

The management of education, health and care plans. The will of parliament was entirely clear, but the reality is a visible failure of government to fund them properly.

What is your favourite story or investigation reported in *Schools Week*?

This time last year, education was going back to the 1950s with grammar schools as the idea in vogue. I liked the way *Schools Week* kept up the pressure on the Conservative party.

What do you do with your copy of *Schools Week* once you've read it?

Paper versions stay in the staff room, but the digital archive is just a click away.

What would you do if you were editor of *Schools Week* for a day?

A day's not long enough, but I would shine a light on the value of school nurses, who spend their working lives in one school, and who can handle so much in their line of duty.

Favourite memory of your school years?

At junior school, where the best time I had was through the creative English writing of adventure stories.

If you weren't working in education, what would you be doing?

I suspect I'd enter the prison service; I'd like to expose the complete failure in recent years to prioritise the provision of opportunities for prison inmates to study, learn and earn during the process.

Favourite book on education?

How children fail by John Holt, which should be compulsory reading for all politicians.

What new things would you like to see in *Schools Week*?

Please gather in the work of the Learning Scientists (Megan Smith, Yana Weinstein et al) while promoting the work of the How2s people, led by Ian Harris. The two are linked by the graphic artist Oliver Caviglioli, and for new teachers entering the profession, the manner in which they mix visuals and text to promote effective ways of supporting learning is outstanding.

If you could be a fly on the wall in anyone's office, whose would it be?

Any one of the regional school commissioners; it's quite obvious that the atomisation of state education has been one of the most disruptive and irresponsible actions of government this century, and frankly the RSCs have the job of exposing the current state of play, putting some of it right and exposing the worst excesses of those who have exploited education for their personal gain.

REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS OF THE YEAR



To view individual blogs visit
www.schoolswweek.co.uk/reviews



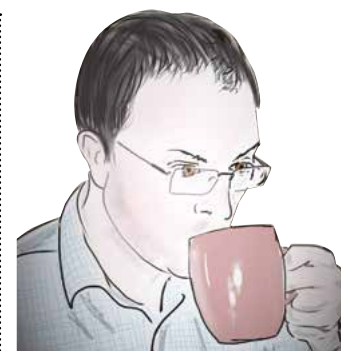
Jill Berry is a former head, now an educational consultant and Twitter addict @jillberry102



Harry Fletcher-Wood is associate dean at the Institute for Teaching @HFletcherWood



Iesha Small is an educational researcher, teacher and commentator @ieshasmall



Andrew Old is a teacher and blogger @oldandrewuk

This year the decision was taken to close the free blogging platform @staffrm, and I want to pay tribute to Peps and Emma McCrea and those who made it possible, launching many fledgling bloggers on their writing journeys. The #WomenEd initiative, committed to supporting serving and aspiring women leaders in education, began with early @staffrm posts and developed into a powerful movement, drawing in significant numbers of supporters, men and women, across the world. Thank you, @staffrm.

#WomenEd then launched their own blog, transferring some @staffrm posts and adding to them, and this is my top choice of blogs to follow this year. womenedblog.wordpress.com features a range of contributors who explore leadership, gender, professional fulfilment, and how we can effectively support and challenge others across the broad world of education. Many women share their stories, strong #HeForShe advocates add their voices, and the combined effect is a compelling, inspiring blog which is well worth visiting.

My second choice also features multiple writers: **Talking Heads** (talkingheads.blog) school leaders share their professional and personal journeys in such a way as to lift, encourage and motivate other aspiring leaders. The stories cover leadership of different phases and structures from writers of all genders and a variety of backgrounds. I know headship is not a pathway everyone might wish to take, but positive role models can help us to formulate our thoughts about whether, at some stage, it might be part of our future.

Finally my honourable mention goes to **Emma Bone** (@bo_ebone), who, at emmaboneblog.wordpress.com, examines the role of the executive principal, reflecting in an honest and forthright way on the challenges and rewards of leadership at this level.

Clare Sealy takes the evidence on how students think and learn, and shows how it applies in her school, offering a welcome primary perspective on key questions. She tackles key challenges bluntly and pithily. "Transferring learning is, quite simply, a bitch," she notes, describing her sons listening enthralled to the amusing anecdotes of her day. "Yes, I'm lying," she adds. "The sons are sticking pins in their eyes in a vain effort to MAKE IT STOP." Other highlights include her review of the use of knowledge organisers and curriculum design. My blogger of the year can be found at primarytimery.com

This Autumn, **Paula Lobo** wrote a series of fascinating posts, in which she took a piece of research as a stimulus and showed how she had adapted it to her classroom. Each post identified a problem: "But look Miss – here – I wrote down loads of facts", and an underlying issue, "helping year 12 to think about the quality of their knowledge", followed by how she has responded. Her posts reflect several years' thinking and experimentation and share the resources she has developed and used, such as a really useful collection of multiple-choice questions. You can find her at lobworth.com

James Theobald continues his quest to educate, inform and entertain, at othmarstrombone.wordpress.com. Highlights have included his guidance on 'tycche', "a Finnish word that is used when one has achieved the perfect work/life balance", with specific prescriptions about the consumption of cake, wine and email; an art history of back-to-school, including "the end of the first week back" in which "the clothed teacher is bathed in early morning light, showing that he has fallen asleep in his clothes, such was his fatigue"; and a tour of Stock Photos Academy in which students are streamed "depending on how photogenic they are".

I realized **Ben Newmark** was a blogger I found interesting when I read one of his posts and found myself reading several more in succession. Ben has a background as a history teacher. He writes thoughtfully about his own subject as well as teaching and education in general; a recent example is "where did text books go?". I've come to the belief that you can tell a lot about a person by the way they treat those they disagree with. Ben's Twitter bio says "we're not enemies, we just disagree" and I've noticed that Ben, who describes himself as politically left-leaning but pedagogically conservative, always treats his online detractors with respect and consideration. Blogging at bennewmark.wordpress.com, he receives my top blogger award for 2017.

Sue Cowley is a veteran blogger and writer, and many NQTs have turned to her book *Getting the buggers to behave* in frustration. I've included her as my runner-up because of the sheer variety of her blogging, at suecowley.wordpress.com. Her last four posts include a poem about boycotting baseline tests, a reminder that not all feedback is good and her thoughts about creativity. Sue is also a vocal champion of the Early Years Foundation Stage which can get overlooked in educational debates.

My honourable mention goes to **Amjad Ali**, who is passionate about teaching and learning and inclusion. He has a toolkit of ideas for teachers but it's his reflections about his day-to-day job as an assistant headteacher at newtothepost.wordpress.com that I find most interesting.

Lastly, since becoming a monthly blog reviewer, I've tried hard to amplify a range of voices. If you are reading this and don't see your views represented in the usual blogs, then start one – and more importantly write regularly. It's hard to be represented if you don't say anything.

My blogger of the year is veteran education blogger **Greg Ashman** who writes at gregashman.wordpress.com. He's been writing for years, and I'm sure I've recommended him before, but this year he's really had an impact. Some of the most prominent people in education, such as Dylan Wiliam and Nick Gibb, have been recommending his blog. He is a teacher and researcher and constantly does his best to explore what education research can tell us about teaching and what teaching can tell us about education research. He finds evidence out there that is relevant to some of the most heated debates in teaching, and he also challenges those educationalists who think they are above justifying their claims about teaching to teachers.

My runner-up is another veteran education blogger: **David Didau**, who writes at www.learningspy.co.uk. Another experienced, prolific and research-informed blogger, he is always thought-provoking and keen to find out about new ideas and new research relevant to education. This year he has written about literacy, English teaching, British values, racism, behaviour and more.

Finally, my honourable mention is **History Lover**, who has been writing at historylover.uk since earlier this year. This is a blog from a trainee teacher. I have to admit, she was going to be my first choice, but a lot of her more controversial posts have been removed, which perhaps tells us something about how difficult it is for new teachers to speak freely. However, there are still enough of her posts available to get a flavour of her insight into the value of history and the nature of teaching.



A Year in Westminster

Your seasonal guide to what went on in central government during 2017

WINTER



The abortive return of grammar schools may seem a distant memory now, but in early January, Justine Greening was still telling Andrew Marr that her plan for new selective schools was a key policy of Theresa May's "shared society".

Later that month, another abandoned policy came back to haunt her as the Treasury snatched back the £384 million that had been ring-fenced for the DfE's ill-fated forced academisation of all schools.

News also broke of some major changes in personnel: Russell Hobby of NAHT fame and Brett Wigdortz of Teach First both announced they would be leaving their jobs (you'll never guess what happened next), and then outspoken headteacher-in-chief Geoff Barton won a landslide victory to become the next general secretary of ASCL.

Ex-edu sec Michael Gove upset one of his predecessors, after he claimed in a newspaper column that Ken Baker's beloved University Technical College programme had "failed". It's almost as if Gove forgot that he was the education secretary actually in the hot seat when the policy came into force.

The National Citizen Service, a pet project of ex-PM David Cameron, also suffered a blow when plans to force schools to promote it were abandoned, significantly hampering any hope of improving its dismal recruitment figures.

SPRING



In his spring budget, Philip Hammond allocated millions for new grammar schools and free schools, a plan that, in retrospect, would not age well.

Greening then faced shouts of the word "rubbish" when she tried her best to sound enthusiastic about grammar schools at ASCL's conference in Birmingham.

Everything else about the spring was completely unremarkable until we were RUDELY INTERRUPTED BY A GENERAL ELECTION.

Greening responded by pulling out of the NAHT conference. Jeremy Corbyn went instead, receiving a hero's welcome in Telford of all places by pledging to let councils take over academies.

Further details of Labour's policies were inadvertently revealed when the party's draft manifesto was leaked to *Schools Week* on May 10th, shortly after Corbyn launched his National Education Service, whatever that is, in Leeds.

A shout-out goes to political reporter Freddie Whittaker who was the first in Britain to report on the leaked manifesto – well done that man!

The leaked document didn't leave us any the wiser about the National Education Service but it did include a plan to reintroduce national pay bargaining for teachers, which clearly went down well because it was unceremoniously dropped from the final version the following week.

SUMMER



Greening was reappointed, albeit with a reduced workload, after the government's grammar school expansion scheme was scrapped, along with its main architect, Nick Timothy, the PM's aide who "resigned" amid accusations that he personally lost the party its expected increased majority.

Nick Gibb remained in place as minister for maths, phonics, and phonics, a role he has occupied since 1874.

But the government had to find a new children's minister after Edward Timpson lost his Crewe and Nantwich seat to school funding campaigner Laura Smith. Embarrassingly, Timpson had been forced to campaign against his own department's cuts, and still lost.

Robert Goodwill replaced Timpson, but the government had to alter his brief slightly to avoid an inevitable clash with the LGBT community after realising it wasn't the best idea to let an opponent of gay marriage pilot the reforms to sex and relationships education.

Education committee chair Neil Carmichael was also given the boot by voters in Stroud, Gloucestershire, but landed a cushy job with education sector lobbyists PLMR. He was replaced at the helm of the committee by Robert Halfon, the sacked skills minister with a penchant for blaming the woes of the further education sector on schools.

AUTUMN



The UK became the proud owner of the largest education union in Europe on September 1 when the National Union of Teachers and the Association of Teachers and Lecturers officially merged to form the National Education Union, a terrifying prospect for a government already at odds with teachers on so many issues.

Greening announced the end of key stage 1 SATs to much rejoicing, but her department quietly admitted it wouldn't actually happen unless a new baseline test is a success, ie in 2022 at the earliest. Given that hardly any education policies even survived since January this year, it does not bode well.

Into party conference season, and Greening used an interview with *Schools Week* to announce that teaching would cease only to be the preserve of university graduates, which went down so well that the College of Teaching was forced into an attempt to row back on the government's behalf, leading to further confusion about what anyone actually wants.

All change in the House of Lords, as the millionaire businessman, academy chair and Tory donor Theodore Agnew replaced the millionaire businessman, academy chair and Tory donor John Nash as academies minister.

Schools Week also revealed that the DfE last changed its response to its grammar school consultation on election day in June, but is still refusing to publish it, which is completely normal and not at all worrying.

Cartoon of the year





Cold and smelly: A nativity with a twist

FEATURED

Year 6 pupils at a Berkshire school put on a nativity play with an incredible twist this year: they used real animals on stage – including camels!

Pupils at Holme Grange School performed with three camels, two sheep, four pygmy goats and a donkey.

Rehearsals have been taking place for the last four weeks, and the animals joined the human cast on the day of the performance, which took place in the school's grounds.

The idea to use real animals came from headteacher Claire Robinson, who saw a nativity performed with real animals whilst on a year 2 school trip to London Zoo.

"The trickiest aspect for year 6 was not being able to rehearse with the animals," said the school's head of religious studies and outreach, the impresario who helped coordinate the performance, but who wanted to remain anonymous. "Pupils who performed the nativity could experience what it would have actually been like – cold, smelly and difficult. They could see it from a whole different perspective."

The animal cast members came from a range of sources: the sheep were lent to the school by parents, the donkey came on loan from a local farm, the four goats are permanent residents of the school's farm, but the camels came from



Three wise... camels?



Follow that star

a specialist camel-for-hire company called Joseph's Amazing Camels.

"Contrary to local press, the camels were not flown in, and along with the sheep and donkey, were kindly delivered to the school by generous parents," added the mystery mastermind. "The children's enthusiasm and excitement was bursting when they met them, and they were especially amazed that the camels were so big and so hairy."



Mary, Joseph and their little donkey



John Hayes at the campaign launch

GOVERNMENT BUILDS 'A YEAR OF ENGINEERING'

The government wants to encourage more young people to pursue careers in the engineering industry, with a new campaign.

The 'Year of Engineering' will be launched in January and aims to offer at least one million engineering experiences, including school trips and the opportunity to meet industry professionals, to young people aged seven to 16.

The year-long campaign is intended to raise the profile of engineering among young people and teachers, and is planning activities to improve understanding of the industry, including connecting schools with local engineering employers.

"If we are going to create a country fit to meet all new challenges, we need to train the next generation of highly-skilled British workers," said John Hayes, the minister for transport skills. "New skills, new jobs and new prospects will turn vision to reality, if we show young people, their parents and their teachers what engineering can mean."

To keep up to date with the campaign, and find out how to get involved, visit www.dft.gov.uk/year-of-engineering-2018/



Malik Ducard speaks at the event



How to protect 'Generation U'

Educationalists from across the globe gathered to discuss the future of learning at the Children's Global Media Summit in Manchester last week.

Speakers included Malik Ducard, YouTube USA's global head of family and learning, Sugata Mitra, a professor at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University, and the finalist of the 2017 Global Teacher prize, Michael Wamaya.

Running between December 5 and 7, the event was curated by the BBC and explored how media might be redesigned for "Generation U". It touched on the themes of education, empowerment, entertainment, innovation and freedom.

Panel sessions covered ways technology

can help young people from all backgrounds access education, its role in helping teenagers navigate relationships, self-image and their studies, and how online content can assist teachers in the classroom.

"We are all very nervous about children with smartphones. The internet with social media enables them to know just about anything," said Mitra. "We must learn to understand that they are in their time, unlike any we have known."

Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, was also there, and suggested that youngsters need to become more "digitally literate".

"We need a change in the curriculum so we can prepare children for an incredibly complex modern world," he said.



Getting their hands dirty: the winners

One invention that just might wash

Four students from Merseyside have won a national competition with an invention that persuades children in developing countries to wash their hands.

The group of four 15- and 16-year-olds from Rainford High Technology College came up with the idea of a bar of soap with a game inside it, to help stop the spread of infectious diseases such as pneumonia and diarrhoea by getting children to wash their hands more frequently.

The team developed the invention for the national Youth Grand Challenges initiative, run by the British Science Association with the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates

Foundation, which asked 11- to 19-year-olds in schools across the UK to invent innovative ways to mitigate infectious diseases.

There were a total of four national winners, who received a video message from Bill Gates at a ceremony in London, offering words of support to the budding inventors.

"It is so encouraging to see the innovative and thought-provoking solutions the young people involved with the competition have come up with – it fills me with optimism about the future," said Katherine Mathieson, CEO of the British Science Association.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



KIT DAVIES

Interim CEO,
Hart Learning Group

START DATE: December 2017

PREVIOUS ROLE: Principal, North Hertfordshire College

INTERESTING FACT: Kit is an accomplished French horn player and adrenaline junkie, who practices extreme sports in his spare time.



GAVIN HORGAN

Headmaster,
Millfield School

START DATE: September 2018

PREVIOUS ROLE: Headmaster, Worksop College

INTERESTING FACT: Earlier in his career, Gavin spent time working internationally in schools in Sri Lanka and Argentina.



KAFILAT AGBOOLA

Director of Atlas (teacher development), Haberdashers' Aske's Federation

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS ROLE: Vice-principal, Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College

INTERESTING FACT: Kafilat has led several youth heritage, arts and international development projects in the UK and around the world, and helped draft the national youth policy for Kenya.



CLAIRE TAO

Headmistress, Merchant Taylors Girls' School

START DATE: April 2018

PREVIOUS ROLE: Deputy head, City of London School for Girls

INTERESTING FACT: Claire started her career in industry and has an MSc in personnel management and industrial relations.



DAVID WICKES

Headmaster, Merchant Taylors' Boys' School

START DATE: September 2018

PREVIOUS ROLE: Deputy headmaster, Warwick School

INTERESTING FACT: He enjoys travelling in Europe, visiting the theatre and watching most sports including following the ups and downs of Southampton FC.

Get in touch!

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your school, local authority or organisation please let us know by emailing news@schoolsweek.co.uk

future



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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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.