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### **NEWS** United Learning refuses any more PFI schools

#### JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

One of the largest academy chains in England has refused to take on any new schools with costly PFI contracts because it has "barely any control" over the buildings.

Exclusive

The 51-school United Learning has declined to adopt the struggling Sedgehill School in Lewisham, south-east London, which council documents show has a debt of over £1 million per year.

UL's boss Jon Coles has also insisted that any similar request to take PFI-laden schools over will also be rejected, unless a "more reasonable" deal is on offer.

PFI deals involve private companies stumping up capital funds for public buildings. The cash is paid back, often with considerable interest, over many years.

Under Sedgehill's particular contract, £1.09 million was owed to Lewisham Schools for the Future Ltd last year, a private company with links to Costain Pension Scheme Trustee Limited, the pension fund of the construction firm Costain, which was involved in the construction of the Channel Tunnel.

Dominic Herrington, the local regional schools commissioner, approached several trusts when Sedgehill fell into special measures two years ago, but they all refused to take on the PFI contract.

United Learning stepped in to provide support services to the school but the trust



does not want to take on the school without a contribution to the PFI costs or a "cap" on the repayments.

PFI schools often have escalating fees built into their contracts. As *Schools Week* has previously reported, schools in Stoke-on-Trent see their repayments grow at around £30,000 per year, and the fee is pegged to pupil numbers estimated over a decade ago, and which cannot be flexed to take into account falling rolls.

United Learning has had "difficult" experiences with two PFI schools in the past:

Nova Hreod in Swindon, which was subcontracted to Carillion, and the John Smeaton Academy in Leeds, which is financed by a number of European banks.

Not only are the repayments extensive but the PFI buildings remain owned by the original company and can therefore come with onerous conditions regarding their upkeep, including non-negotiable costs for routine maintenance jobs, such as repainting or changing bulbs.

"Getting anything done is incredibly difficult."

said Coles. "You have to deal with companies that have various agreements with the banks, so you end up in extremely long and complicated conversations."

The school in Swindon needed new light bulbs in the sports hall, but the contractor was slow to sort it and the school had been powerless to install new ones, he said. Other practical issues included the fact the headteacher did not actually have keys to the school.

The PFI provider would also not be

persuaded to bring services in-house, even when it would be cheaper to do so, said Coles.

As a result, "we're not going to do any more PFIs because the cost is too high and the day-to-day management is just too difficult". If a contract is "less unmanageable", United Learning might still consider them.

Lewisham council has five separate PFI contracts for 10 of its schools. A spokesperson said none of the schools except Sedgehill are currently seeking new academy trusts.

Malcolm Trobe, the deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, and a former headteacher of a PFI school, warned the contracts are leaving schools "in limbo" across the whole schools sector.

The National Audit Office has said that more than half (63 per cent) of the schools recently placed in special measures had not found new homes within nine months, and regional schools commissioners will be rated on the percentage of failing maintained schools they convert in that time.

School leaders are "majorly concerned" about PFI repayments and the government has an "obligation" to find a financial solution if schools wished to join trusts, Trobe added.

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said its priority was that Sedgehill pupils' educations are not disrupted. The school's new sponsor will be announced by September 2020, with the new academy open by January 2021.

#### SEND PUPILS WAIT UP TO TWO YEARS FOR NEW CARE PLANS

Pupils with special educational needs are waiting up to 90 weeks to be transferred from the old statements system to new education and health care plans (EHCPs), according to an investigation which found "worrying patterns of delay".

SEND pupils are all supposed to be moved onto new EHCPs – the new way of identifying pupils' support needs – by April. These replace statements of special educational needs, which the government started to phase out in 2014.

But the local government and social care ombudsman has found many local authorities are struggling to meet the deadline, and revealed that around 80 per cent of the 140 complaints about councils' handling of the transfer process have been upheld.

Schools rely on EHCPs to tell them about pupils' support needs and to access additional funding for them.

But ombudsman Michael King found some councils are not gathering sufficient evidence to inform decisions and have been failing to plan properly for pupils steps up between "key educational stages".

"We know many authorities are struggling to meet the April deadline for transferring statements, and I want to stress they need to ensure provision remains in place if transfers to EHCPs have not occurred by the deadline," King told delegates at this week's SEN Law Conference.

"In the cases that come to us, we are seeing worrying patterns of delay, inadequate evidence-gathering and poor administration, and this is having a significant impact on the children and families the new plans were designed to help."

### £1.6m annual PFI bill holds up Yorkshire academy transfer

#### JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

#### Exclusive

A private finance initiative contract costing more than £1 million a year has stopped one of the last schools left from the collapsed Wakefield City Academies Trust from finding a new home.

Mexborough Academy is one of the last two of WCAT's 21 schools left without a new sponsor since the trust's collapse in September.

A hefty £1.6 million-a-year PFI deal was struck in 2009 between Doncaster council with Vinci, a French construction company, and it is set to run for another 16 years.

The school is currently paying £600,000 a year towards the contract and the council covers the rest.

Delta Academies Trust is the government's preferred sponsor – but negotiations have dragged on for almost half a year as the trust tries to persuade the Department for Education to contribute to the annual PFI costs until the contract runs out, according to the school's chair of governors.

Sean Gibbons, who is also chair at the nearby Montagu Academy, a former WCAT school which Delta already now owns, confirmed that the contract was the root of the delay.

"Sadly, nobody will touch it with a barge pole until that PFI contract has been subsidised and renegotiated," he told *Schools Week*.

The contract should never have been



signed, he added. The school roll was already too low a decade ago to have paid it back, and there are now only 655 pupils attending a school that should hold 1,300.

Mexborough is also currently grappling with persistent absenteeism of around 30 per cent, while its sixth form closed in the summer in an effort to cut costs.

The school was given an 'inadequate' grade in September, and Ofsted singled WCAT out for particular criticism. The trust had "failed to give school leaders the consistent and targeted support they needed", and presided over low expectations and poor results.

Joe Scaife, a senior academies partner at the law firm Bishop Fleming, said one of the least appealing aspects of PFI schools for sponsor trusts is their hugely reduced capacity to raise revenue.

"PFI schools don't have the same

opportunity for generating more income, say by letting out the sports halls for conferences, because there are strict rules in the contract," he said.

Instead, a PFI school would need a "strong educational offer" if its financials were lacking. A talented staff body could share expertise at their new trust, while a good reputation and upward trajectory in results would calm a potential sponsor's nerves.

"But if a PFI school is in special measures, it's going to struggle," he said.

The government might deploy "emergency money" to sweeten the deal for well-regarded trusts, he added. However, the highest amount of emergency funding given out in the last year was about £200,000 – only a third of Mexborough's PFI annual requirements.

PFI contracts are coming under increasing scrutiny from MPs, following the collapse of the management and services firm Carillion in January which left cleaning, catering and maintenance services at risk in hundreds of schools.

One other WCAT school is awaiting a confirmed sponsor, Balby Carr Academy, which is meant to be heading to Astrea academy trust. Delta has already taken three other WCAT schools: Montagu, Goole and Morley Place academies.

A spokesperson for Delta said the trust is "working with Mexborough academy, WCAT, the Department and the local authority" and is "fully committed to supporting the academy". **Exclusive** 

### **NEWS: ASCL PREVIEW**

#### PUT THE PEOPLE IN CONTROL, SAYS CBI PRESIDENT

#### PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA\_AK

The president of Britain's largest business lobbying organisation will today attack the government's "parade" of education reforms and its "fixation" on exams, and demand that a new education commission take control of the sector.

Paul Drechsler (pictured), the president of the Confederation of British Industry, will tell the annual conference of school leaders' union ASCL that curriculum reform should be driven not just by the government, but by a group made up of education leaders, businesses, politicians, young people and parents.

Dreschler will warn that the current debate over education "isn't serving anyone", and that politicians are too "entrenched" in ideological commitments.

Poor funding for the education sector, coupled with years of governments "moving the goalposts" in public policy has led to pupils missing out.

"Let's dump the ideology – no more fixation on school structures and exam reform," Dreschler will tell the conference in Birmingham. "Let's start basing decisions in education on the evidence. To create consensus on what we want from our schools and colleges and to give them the support, encouragement and resources they need to deliver.

"And let the examination system accredit this – not drive it. Get this right, and we can help our young people thrive, our economy grow and our society prosper."

Dreschler will also call for an end to "the parade of government announcements that make a good headline but don't make a jot of difference on the big issues".

He will warn that children are "missing out" by being made to memorise facts, and argue that there should be more focus on "wider preparation for adult life".

Britain should take inspiration from schools in Singapore, Finland and America on using schools to develop the "whole person", he will say.

"They've had a healthy, open conversation about what they want from their education systems," he will say. "Not a debilitating culturewar-of-attrition dragging on since the 1970s."

The CBI represents 190,000 businesses with nearly seven million employees across the UK, making it Britain's largest business lobbying organisation.



### LABOUR PROMISES FURTHER ACTION ON ACADEMIES

#### **FREDDIE WHITTAKER** @FCDWHITTAKER

Labour MPs will hold an inquiry into school improvement and accountability in an attempt to "flesh out" the party's education policies, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal.

Lucy Powell, the former shadow education secretary, will tell delegates at the Association of School and College Leaders annual conference today that the "unchecked explosion" in academies has led to increasing problems with transparency, financial probity and accountability.

Powell, a member of the parliamentary education committee, will explain that the probe by the parliamentary Labour party has been prompted by concerns about a crisis in school places caused by "ever-increasing centralisation". MPs are also worried about the lack of local knowledge about teacher supply

issues at the Department for Education. The inquiry will be an "opportunity for

a discussion" of the principles of "what Labour's oversight and accountability policy should be", and the direction of travel the party could take to "flesh out" its 2017 manifesto commitments ahead of the next general election.

The Manchester Central MP was appointed shadow education secretary when Jeremy Corbyn won the Labour leadership in September 2015, but resigned the following June in that month's failed leadership coup.

However, she remains a vocal campaigner on education issues, and will express the concerns of the PLP – the collective body of the party's 259 MPs – as she seeks to promote her leader's flagship National Education Service proposals during her speech in Birmingham.

"The government's approach to school structures has left weak oversight in a fragmented, divisive schools landscape, so that serious problems in schools are going unnoticed and unchallenged for far too long," she will say.

"There is a complete lack of localism, which is affecting basic responsibilities such as delivering enough good school places, and



there is limited capacity in school leadership, which we know is crucial for school improvement."

The issue of school structures and accountability has become increasingly difficult for Labour in recent years, as more and more schools have become academies. Although the party initially wanted

academies returned to local authority oversight, the rapid growth of the programme and the subsequent downsizing of town-hall education departments has forced Labour to admit that returning to a council-led system is unviable.

The party also changed tack on the issue several times in the run-up to last year's general election. Jeremy Corbyn initially told *Schools Week* that a Labour government would allow councils to open and run new schools and take over academies.

The proposal – minus the takeover element - was also set out in a draft version of the party's election manifesto, which was leaked to *Schools Week* in May, but was dropped from the final version, which instead focused on opposition to forced academisation.

In September, Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, told *Schools Week* her party needed to "move on" from the debate over academies and focus on campaigning



for greater controls over the way they are run.

Powell will say tomorrow that Labour's guiding principle for the school system is that "every pupil, whatever school they attend, wherever they live and whatever their background, should have an entitlement to a world-class education".

She will describe the party's plans for a National Education Service, Labour's umbrella term for a raft of reforms including increases in school funding, free adult education and the return of the education maintenance allowance for 16- to 19-year-olds - as a means to achieve this principle.

Labour is not alone in its concerns about school accountability. Investigations by the National Audit Office and the parliamentary education committee have also highlighted problems with academy oversight, and both the current Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman and her predecessor Sir Michael Wilshaw have demanded greater powers to inspect academy trusts.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, will address headteachers and other school leaders at the ASCL conference on Saturday. His predecessor Justine Greening was heckled last year when she spoke about the government's now-defunct plans to open more grammar schools.

### **ASCL: Give the DfE an ethics committee**

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA\_AK

ASCL's ethical leadership commission has concluded.

This ethics committee would consider the "emerging system-wide issues" in education – including the "unintended consequences and perverse incentives" created by recent changes in policy.

While it wouldn't operate as a regulator, a body like this would be "beneficial to the stability of our system", the commission concluded in its first report. Firm proposals will be presented to the government and the wider teaching profession in September. ASCL has also written an "ethical framework" for school leaders, a draft of

which will be presented to the union's annual

; conference today.

This is based on the seven principles of public life, set out by Lord Nolan for holders of public office: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

It also sets out what the commission expects from school leaders, with emphasis on trust, wisdom, kindness, justice, service, courage and optimism.

The ethical leadership commission counts among its members industry leaders like Ofsted chief Amanda Spielman, the Chartered College of Teaching's chief executive Dame Alison Peacock, and Professor Becky Francis, the director of the UCL Institute of Education. Carolyn Roberts, ASCL's honorary secretary and headteacher of Thomas Tallis School in Greenwich, chaired the commission, and said the framework is designed to work as a "clear set of ethical principles to help guide our own decision-making and support us in challenging poor behaviour".

"The purpose of this exercise is not to point fingers but to support one another in standing up for what is right, whatever the circumstances," she added.

"Our commitment as school leaders is to serve the best interests of young people and our communities first, foremost and always, and these considerations are inviolable regardless of accountability pressures."

The commission insists that the framework is not a code of conduct, checklist or set of performance indicators, but that it should rather be seen as guidelines worth continuous discussion. The ASCL said it will adopt the framework once it is completed, as will the International Confederation of Principals.

### **NEWS** Ofsted's illegal schools team gets another £1 million

#### FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

Ofsted will get another £1 million for its illegal schools taskforce, as it comes under increasing pressure to root out extremism in unregistered schools.

The watchdog told *Schools Week* it expects to receive the same level of funding as in 2016 and 2017 for the next financial year.

The team has identified 359 possible illegal settings and conducted 192 inspections since January 2016. Fifty warning notices have been issued, and 38 schools have ceased to operate illegally or closed. A further 12 schools are currently under criminal investigation.

However, not one case has made it to court, and 82 of the bodies identified are part-time or out-of-school settings, which Ofsted has no powers to inspect. This is a bone of contention for Ofsted's chief inspector, who wants greater powers for the inspectorate.

In fact, Amanda Spielman recently told the BBC that her "hands are tied", and criticised the Department for Education for failing to put cases forward to the Crown Prosecution Service. She believes the law in its current form is not strong enough.

"We can't even pick up evidence that we find," she said. "If we find some unsuitable teaching material we can't even take that away, we have to let the proprietors of the school walk out of the door with it."

Pressure is mounting on Ofsted after a

#### £40k bursaries for veterans to replace doomed £10m Troops to Teachers scheme

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA\_AK

Armed forces veterans will receive bursaries of £40,000 to attend university in the hope they will go on to train as teachers, under a new scheme designed to replace the doomed Troops to Teachers programme.

But officials admit they have no way of getting the money back if veterans complete their studies and choose to shun the profession.

The new bursary scheme signals the end of Troops to Teachers, which has so far created just 106 qualified teachers in its five years of existence, despite costing an estimated £10.7 million.

Another 96 former soldiers are currently training under the short-lived scheme, but the course will not recruit any new trainees in September, and will come to an end next year when the current cohort finishes.

The government's new bursary will be open to non-graduates who have left full-time employment in the army, the Royal Air Force or the Royal Navy in the last five years.

They will be able to claim the bursary if they study a degree in the DfE's "priority" subjects: biology, chemistry, computing, maths and modern foreign languages.

The bursary will be paid to participants in their second and third years of university and



teacher at an east London independent school was convicted of attempting to radicalise children at a mosque.

Despite having no teaching qualifications, Umar Haque had taught an Islamic studies class and was allowed to supervise pupils aged between 11 and 14 at the Lantern of Knowledge Islamic School.

Haque, 25, was recently convicted of a range of terrorism offences at the Old Bailey.

Although jurors could not agree on one count of disseminating a terrorist document from his time at the school, Haque did admit to another count of disseminating a terrorist document in relation to his attempts to radicalise children at the Ripple Road mosque in Barking.



can be spent on anything.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, said armed forces veterans have "a wealth of experience and expertise that can be shared in the classroom, teaching pupils the knowledge they need to succeed alongside vital skills such as leadership and selfdiscipline".

But the school leaders' union NAHT has warned the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention would be better solved by addressing issues with low pay, heavy workloads, work-life balance and low levels of professional development.

"Teacher recruitment is currently a pipeline leaking at both ends. There are insufficient numbers of newly qualified teachers coming into the system, but there are also too many experienced teachers leaving prematurely," a representative said.

Nansi Ellis, an assistant general secretary of the National Education Union, said Troops to Teachers had "got almost nowhere", and warned such "one-off, small-scale" initiatives are "not the solution to the deep problems faced by schools".

"What teachers need to see is a fundamental change to their working lives, not one-off incentives such as this." Ofsted faces questions over why the Lantern of Knowledge was rated 'outstanding' after an inspection that took place in 2015 while Haque was a teacher there. The school has since been re-rated 'requires improvement'.

The imminent funding has been welcomed by Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, who told *Schools Week* he shared Spielman's concerns "that

the law as it stands is not strong enough and that Ofsted should have more investigatory powers".

"Ofsted is not even allowed to seize evidence, and the process that it must go through to prosecute the proprietors of unregistered schools is labyrinthine and not fit for purpose," he said. "It is essential that all schools are properly regulated and inspected, and this is an area of the law that badly and urgently needs revisiting."

However, the Department for Education continues to insist that the relevant authorities already have sufficient powers to tackle the issue.

"No child should be placed at risk and where a school is operating illegally action must be taken," a spokesperson said. "We fund a joint team with Ofsted to target these organisations. There are clear powers in place for authorities to intervene where children are being put at risk and we will continue to work with our partners to look at how we can tackle this issue most effectively."

Spielman faced questions about unregistered schools from MPs when she appeared in front of the parliamentary education committee on Wednesday. For more, see page 10.

#### ILLEGAL SCHOOLS: OFSTED CRACK TEAM'S RECORD SO FAR

- **359** POSSIBLE ILLEGAL SCHOOLS IDENTIFIED
- **192** INSPECTIONS COMPLETED
- **50** WARNING NOTICES ISSUED
- 38 SCHOOLS CLOSED OR CEASED TO OPERATE ILLEGALLY
- 12 SCHOOLS UNDER CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
- 82 PART-TIME SETTINGS THAT CAN'T BE INSPECTED
- **0** SCHOOLS PROSECUTED



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### NEWS

#### CUMBRIA EDUCATION TRUST LINED UP AS NEW WHITEHAVEN ACADEMY SPONSOR

#### FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

The Cumbria Education Trust is the government's preferred sponsor for the struggling Whitehaven Academy.

However, Cumbria's largest chain, which already has four primary schools and two secondaries on its books, has said there are "many issues to review" before its board approves the takeover.

The future of Whitehaven has been uncertain since November, when the troubled Bright Tribe Trust announced its intention to walk away from the school.

The academy has been at the centre of a row over Bright Tribe's activities in the north of England, which came to a head last autumn when Trudy Harrison, the local MP, was escorted from the school's site as she tried to inspect flood damage to its dilapidated buildings.

Mary McKeeman, Bright Tribe's chief operating officer at the time, resigned a few days later after just nine months in the role, and the trust has since announced it will walk away from all but one of its northern schools.

"We are excited to have been selected by the DfE as preferred sponsor of the Whitehaven Academy, but it is early days and there are many issues to review before the CET board of trustees can reach any firm decision about taking up this opportunity," said Lorrayne Hughes, the chief executive of the Cumbria Education Trust.

"We have begun the due-diligence process and we are undertaking risk assessments which will examine a range of operational matters including current and future capital and revenue funding."

Whitehaven was under local authority oversight until January 2014, when it was taken over by Bright Tribe. By October 2016, it was in special measures.

In an open letter published late last year, staff claimed that two thirds of the school site is now so dilapidated it has had to be closed. The remaining third is described as having "declined to the extent that the slightest rainfall means that large areas of the building we are in are out of action".

Whitehaven was one of hundreds of schools that had planned renovations cancelled when the 'Building schools for the future' scheme was scrapped by the coalition government in 2010.

During bad weather last year, teachers said water had been pouring through windows and into electrical sockets, and even onto pupils' food as they lined up for lunch.

There are complaints of "minimal budgets" for textbooks, poor outcomes for learners, broken windows, constant changes in leadership, a lack of teaching assistants and poor support from the trust itself, which they say rarely visits the school.

Bright Tribe said in November that it was ending its sponsorship of Whitehaven after its plans to "develop a hub of schools in Cumbria" had failed to materialise and it now believed "alternative sponsorship" is the "most appropriate route for the school's continued improvement journey", although it warned that it may "take some time" before the process is complete.

#### PROGRESS 8 'IS FORCING SCHOOLS TO ASK FOR MORE PRU PLACES'

SCHOOLS WEEK

#### FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

Schools are asking for more places in pupil referral units for excluded pupils as a result of new accountability measures, a senior council official has claimed.

MPs on the parliamentary education committee have heard evidence from headteachers and local authority officers, who warned that vulnerable pupils are being forced out of mainstream schools due to "cliff-edge" accountability measures and a narrowing of the school curriculum.

Ralph Holloway, a SEN services manager at Essex county council, told committee members that the government needs to "redefine what success looks like for the school system", to focus on holistic outcomes for pupils.

"I've even had schools say to me you need to build more PRU places because of Progress 8, and for me that's completely missing the point," Holloway warned.

Progress 8 is a new measure that gives schools a score based on their improvement in eight subjects between key stage 2 and key stage 4. Its critics say it penalises vulnerable pupils, and forces schools to exclude them for fear of reprisals.

The government has come under increasing pressure to tackle a rise in exclusions and address concerns that schools are pushing out troublesome pupils to boost their own league table standing.



The the number of pupils attending PRUs has risen dramatically since 2013, and a *Schools Week* investigation last year found multi-academy trusts specialising in AP are under increased pressure to expand to cope with demand.

Government data shows the proportion of pupils who were permanently excluded from school rose to 0.8 per cent in 2015-16, up from 0.7 per cent in 2014-15 and 0.6 per cent in 2013-14.

Justine Greening, the former education secretary, told *Schools Week* last year that she was unhappy with the "varying outcomes" for pupils in AP, and the education committee's own investigation was prompted by direct pleas from schools to Robert Halfon, its chair, for a probe.

In an attempt to help the government understand why pupils end up in alternative provision, councils have started collecting more data about pupils in PRUs and other such institutions. In particular, the government wants to know the reasons why pupils end up in AP. Ofsted has also launched an investigation into exclusions practices in the north east of England.

Dave Whitaker (pictured), an alternative academies principal and founding member of the Headteachers' Roundtable, told MPs that schools "need to be rewarded for being inclusive".

He even suggested that schools be denied an Ofsted 'outstanding' rating unless they have a "measure in place for the number of SEN, the number of free school meals, and the number of children they take into the school".

"They'd have to be satisfied with good and live with that and they could never be elevated to that 'outstanding'," he said. "And until we've got a reward, for want of a better phrase, for headteachers to be genuinely inclusive without the cliff-edge accountability that they face, then actually this in my view is going to continue to happen."

He said headteachers also need additional funding to help keep children in mainstream schools.

Claire George, head of service at the Peterborough Pupil Referral Service, warned that the narrower school curriculum had created a situation in which schools focus too much on how many pupils pass English and maths and their Progress 8 scores.

"You get to this point where as a head in a mainstream you have to be fixated, because horrible things can happen to you, on those 4s and 5s in English, and those children who can't do that struggle," she said.

### OCR fined £125k after GCSE answers found in textbooks

#### **FREDDIE WHITTAKER** @FCDWHITTAKER

OCR will be fined £125,000 by Ofqual after partial answers to GCSE computing exam questions were found in textbooks it had endorsed.

The regulator's investigation has found the exam board had failed to "identify and monitor conflicts of interest", when the authors of some GCSE computing controlled assessments had also written the textbooks. These included partial answers that were similar, and in one case identical, to some test answers used in the 2016 and 2017

assessments, Ofqual found. OCR had "failed to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the confidentiality of controlled assessment tasks was not compromised in circumstances where those tasks were prepared by persons who had created training materials, specifically textbooks", it concluded.

OCR has apologised, but insisted the errors had "no impact on students or on exam results".

The fine also relates to OCR's failures to report suspected malpractice in its tests, and to incorrect guidance given to schools about the level of supervision needed during the exams.

In April 2016, Ofqual was notified by OCR that a textbook, *OCR Computing for GCSE*, published in August 2012, appeared to include a solution to two parts of its 2016



controlled assessment tasks.

The issue was flagged up by a teacher who had noticed similarities between pupils' responses and identified the solution in the textbook. The error made headlines at the time, and was shared widely on social media. Ofqual found that a code set out in the textbook was identical to the "mystery code" that formed part of the controlled assessment, and found that pupils with access to the textbook, which sold almost 50,000 copies, would have had an advantage in the test.

Later in 2016, Ofqual was informed that another textbook, *OCR GCSE (9-1) Computer Science*, which had been published in May 2016 and which was also endorsed by OCR, appeared to contain a solution in a 2017 controlled assessment.

Again, Ofqual's experts found that pupils would have been advantaged in the test if they had had access to the textbook, which sold more than 5,000 copies.

The authors of the textbooks were also the principal moderators of the controlled assessment units, and had devised the tests. They had declared an interest to OCR, which did not however have a "clear or sufficient process in place to follow-up declarations made by persons who had been invited to write assessment materials".

OCR said in its own report on the matter that it had found "no assurances to confirm that OCR's controls to manage conflicts of interest of its assessor personnel are sufficient".

It additionally failed to refer 72 instances of suspected malpractice from the 2015 exam series, 12 of which related to GCSE computing, to its compliance team for investigation.

Ofqual found that OCR had breached 15 conditions relating to the assessments, and decided to fine the board £125,000.

### NEWS 71% of UTCs get Ofsted's lower two grades

#### **BILLY CAMDEN** @SCHOOLSWEEK

Exclusive

More than two thirds of the university technical colleges visited by Ofsted in the last year are 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate', according to Schools Week analysis.

But the organisation that oversees UTCs claims the watchdog's inspection regime is not designed to measure their performance in the most accurate way possible.

Of the 14 UTCs inspected by Ofsted between February 2017 and February 2018, just four, or 29 per cent, were rated 'good'. None at all were rated 'outstanding'.

Meanwhile, 10, or 71 per cent, were 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'.

The Baker Dearing Trust told Schools Week that UTCs are "new and innovative" colleges which are inspected "before many of them have a settled position in the local education landscape".

Its spokesperson claimed that the trust hopes that "over time", the "outstanding destinations" found at UTCs will "carry more weight" in Ofsted reports.

A total of 29 of the 14-to-19 technical institutions - including several which have since closed - have now been inspected, of which 17 (59 per cent) had the lowest two grades. This is compared to just 11.6 per cent of schools.

Baker Dearing pointed out that if only the 23 UTCs that are still open and have had inspections are taken into account, 52 per cent are at grades one or two.

The organisation, which seeks to champion and promote UTCs, said its objective is to have every UTC rated 'good' or 'outstanding', and claimed ord Baker

it works "closely and constructively" with those that have yet to reach the benchmark. The brainchild of former

education secretary Lord Baker, the UTCs programme was launched in 2011 by the theneducation secretary Michael Gove.

However, it has recently emerged that Gove was forced to create the institutions by George Osborne and David Cameron, David Laws, who served as schools minister in the coalition government from 2012 to 2015, told Schools Week last month that Gove had "never liked" the policy, but had it "imposed" on him by the former chancellor and prime minister.

UTCs have attracted strong criticism over the years as many have struggled to recruit the right number of pupils at the age of 14.

Many of the scheme's critics, especially those in the schools community, say that pupils are not ready or inclined to move to a different school at the end of year nine.

In response, some UTCs have since sought to admit 13-year-olds, while eight have either closed completely or become 11-to-18 schools

> The most recent inspection reports into UTCs, at the institutions in South Devon and Buckinghamshire, both produced 'requires improvement' ratings. For Buckinghamshire, it was the second 'requires improvement' in a row. The college had just 147 students on roll, despite a capacity of 600, in the last academic year.

Inspectors who visited in January said that overall progress in English, maths and science has been "well below" the national average for the last three years, and the quality of teaching is "inconsistent".

South Devon UTC was inspected for the first time in January. The college currently has just over 200 pupils, but senior leaders were criticised because they have "not secured consistently effective" teaching as it has grown in size.

An investigation in January by FE Week revealed that almost every UTC missed their recruitment targets last year, leaving them with combined debts of over £11 million.

The ESFA is trying to retrieve cash from 39 of 44 UTCs still open in 2016/17.

#### SCHOOLS MUST NOW SUPPORT SPECIFIC NEEDS OF KIDS IN CARE

#### JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

Schools must appoint and train a member of staff to spot the mental health needs of pupils who have been in the care system, according to new statutory guidance.

Under the new rules, school governors must ensure they have a "designated teacher" trained to "understand trauma and attachment" issues, as well as spot special educational needs among children now in care or who were previously.

Official data shows that over half (57 per cent) of looked-after children had a special educational need in 2016, compared with 14 per cent of all children. Thirty-seven per cent had a social, emotional or mental health need

Laws passed last year required every school to appoint a qualified teacher to oversee the academic progress of lookedafter and formerly looked-after pupils.

But the updated guidance makes this the first time schools have been told specifically to retain a teacher who considers the mental health and special educational needs of looked-after and previously looked-after children, according to Jane Pickthall, the chair of the National Association of Virtual School Heads (NAVSH), whose members are responsible for the education of looked-after children.

The guidance states that the teachers must "identify signs of potential mental health issues" as well as special educational needs,



and must ensure other staff understand the way emotional issues can continue affecting pupils.

Designated teachers must also know how to access further support for the child, and check their patterns of attendance and exclusion.

Where children are at risk of being excluded, schools should deploy "rapid interventions" such as one-to-one mentoring and counselling, the guidance states.

Looked-after children are five times more likely to be temporarily suspended from school and twice as likely to be permanently excluded, according to official figures.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said designated teachers are "already very

good" at identifying mental health issues and believes the greater issue is funding cuts limited counselling services.

He also wants money for local NHS services to they could support schools.

Pickthall doesn't believe the statutory guidance goes far enough. She wants schools to be banned from using funding for previously looked-after pupils on other pupils.

The 'pupil premium plus' money, which schools get to help previously looked-after children, ought to be "ring-fenced" so it's not lumped in with pupil premium money for children on free school meals, she said.

Pupil premium cash for looked-after children is overseen by local authorities, but schools choose what to do with the £1.900 they get every year for each previously looked-after pupil.

"Very few schools separate the pupil premium plus and pupil premium," said Sally Kelly, the headteacher of the Greenwich Virtual School in south London.

"Heads will say it's all gone into the general pot for pupil premium pupils," she added, meaning previously-looked after pupils are not getting the resources they need.

Data on exclusions and attainment for adopted pupils should also be collected, so that their outcomes can be tracked as with looked-after pupils.

However the DfE left it up to schools to decide how to spend the total grant of pupil premium money, including the pupil premium plus.

#### **IN** brief

**BBC REFOCUSES EDUCATION STRATEGY ON LITERACY AND MENTAL HEALTH** 

The BBC's new education strategy will focus on improving literacy rates and pupil wellbeing

The broadcaster will partner with organisations including the National Literacy Trust to raise the communication and literacy skills of a million children under the age of five. The strategy aims to improve social mobility across the UK.

Other priorities include supporting mental health and building self-esteem in pupils, exploring opportunities for retraining adults and improving careers advice.

The BBC has also pledged to overhaul its Bitesize service to offer personalised career advice, and wants to work with organisations including the Open University to explore helping people gain new skills to increase employment prospects.

James Purnell, the director of BBC radio and education, said the new approach, which launched on Thursday, would aim to have a "positive impact on people's lives, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds".

#### **NEU DEMANDS ACTION ON** TEACHING'S GENDER PAY GAP

The country's largest education union wants to make teaching a "genuinely equal" profession for women.

To mark International Women's Day on Thursday, the National Education Union challenged the government to address the fact that while teaching is a predominantly female job, women teachers are still paid less on average than men, on top of the burdens of unpaid overtime and the public sector pay cap.

The average pay for women teachers is £2,900 less than for men (£37,700 compared with £40,660), according to Department for Education data.

The pay gap is even worse in leadership positions, where women heads earn on average £5,700 less than men in equivalent roles.

An NEU pay survey last year also found a third of teachers who were eligible for progression but who had been absent for all or part of the 2016-17 school year due to pregnancy or maternity leave had been denied a new position.

#### PRIVATE SCHOOL INSPECTORS CAUGHT RUBBER-STAMPING FAILING LEADERS

Private school inspectors are passing certain school leaders even if in their own reports note they are failing, Ofsted has warned.

The watchdog has delivered a mixed verdict on the Independent Schools Inspectorate, the inspection body for members of the Independent Schools Council, after its annual sample check of its reports.

Of 11 ISI reports sampled by Ofsted, two "regulatory compliance reports", which simply check whether schools meet the independent school standards, found that the schools in question had failed on certain standards.

But rather than failing the school's leadership for not meeting those standards, the inspectors still signed them off as meeting leadership and management standards. In each case, inspectors found "failings which indicated that leadership and

management were not compliant", but this did not appear in their assessments of the school leaders.

This practice goes against the ISI's own regulatory requirements, Ofsted warned.

### NEWS

#### LIB DEMS WANT TO DITCH OFSTED AND LEAGUE TABLES

#### FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

The Liberal Democrats have pledged to scrap Ofsted and school league tables, in favour of a less "high-stakes" school accountability system that assesses teacher and pupil wellbeing.

In a set of proposals due to be put to members at the party's spring conference in Southport this weekend, the Lib Dem leadership calls for Ofsted to be replaced with a "reformed independent schools inspectorate system".

This would "assess teacher and pupil wellbeing, as well as results", and focus on "whether school leaders can deliver future improvement".

Party leaders also want school league tables replaced by a "broader set of indicators, including qualitative data on pupil wellbeing". This data would come from pupil and parent feedback on how schools are doing, as well as figures on how many pupils obtain university places.

"The over-emphasis on high stakes testing has meant the system has overlooked so many other elements of the development of the child," said Layla Moran, the party's education spokesperson.

"Parents want to know their children's wellbeing is looked after and that they are taught lessons for life, such as first aid and financial literacy, and have the prospects to succeed."

Ofsted's head of corporate strategy has hit back, however, describing the plans as "disappointing".

At a Westminster Education Forum event, Luke Tryl accused the party of basing its new policy on "outdated information about the way we operate and what we do", and warned delegates that "results go down" when school accountability is removed.

"We're not closing our eyes to the criticism," added Tryl, a former adviser to education secretary Nicky Morgan, "but I think the diagnosis is outdated and the solution is the wrong one."

They also want to scrap compulsory SATs at key stages 1 and 2, replacing them with moderated teacher assessments and "lighter-touch testing".

The party, which has 12 MPs, is proposing a so-called "curriculum for life" that includes relationships and sex education, financial literacy and first aid. Proposals for a "specific individual responsible for mental health in schools" have also been set out.

The Lib Dems also want to end cuts to education by protecting per-pupil spending "in real terms, including in further education".

Sir Vince Cable, the party leader, said children "must have a well-rounded education and our systems should not just be tick-box exercises". He accused what he called the "Gove revolution" of producing "a Dickensian approach to education".

"We need to take account of information from teachers, parents and children views as part of improved qualitative and quantitative assessments of our schools," he said.

#### NEW CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MOST LIKELY TO RISE AGAIN IN LONDON

JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

New Catholic schools are most likely to open in London and the east of England if

the cap on faith-based schools is lifted. The highest levels of immigration from Catholic countries are to the capital and East Anglia – so the Catholic Education Service expects the demand for new faith schools will be most acute there.

Figures obtained by *Schools Week* show the capital already contains the most Catholic schools at which a majority of the pupils are Catholic, indicating the Church would seek to open more schools here.

About one fifth of English Catholic schools – 425 out of the nation's 2,007 – have Catholic pupils at a rate of 90 per cent or more, but they cluster in London, which has 147.

The figures also show that almost 40 per cent of the schools where more than three-quarters of pupils are Catholic are in just four dioceses in the south-east: Westminster and Southwark in London, as well as Arundel and Brighton in Sussex, and Brentwood in Essex.

The small Catholic population in East Anglia has swelled in recent years due to arrivals from eastern Europe, driving up demands for faith schools.

Cities with Catholic heritage such as Liverpool are less likely to see faith schools expand, as there is comparative little new immigration to them. Liverpool has 23

CATHOLIC PUPILS AS %	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	% OF ALL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS		
100%	18	1%		
99-90%	407	20%		
89-80%	287	14%		
79-70%	270	13%		
69-60%	275	14%		
59-50%	262	13%		
49-40%	200	10%		
39-30%	162	8%		
29-20%	90	4%		
19-10%	31	2%		
9-0%	5	0.2%		

schools where 90 per cent or more pupils are Catholic.

The Church is currently restricted on the number of free schools it can open because Canon Law prevents it from turning away Catholic pupils. However, the new education secretary Damian Hinds has said he will get rid of the 50-per-cent cap on faith-based admissions to oversubscribed free schools.

Plans to ditch the cap were announced in 2016, but were put on hold after last year's general election. They've only resurfaced since Justine Greening was sacked as education secretary and replaced by Hinds, who was himself educated at a Catholic school.

Eighteen Catholic schools in England have no pupils of any other faith, the data shows – and campaigners against faith schools have blasted what they say is a lack of religious diversity. Jay Harman, the education campaigns manager at Humanists UK, which opposes faith schools, said the revelation was "appalling".

"A child should not be raised in a situation which leads them to conclude the whole country must be Catholic," he said. "It distorts their view of diversity."

The Church "can say they are ethnically diverse", he added, but "religious diversity is just as important".

Only two per cent of Catholic schools have 20 per cent or fewer pupils who share the faith.

But the CES spokesperson said Church schools educate more than 300,000 non-Catholics, and "are the most ethnically and socially diverse schools in the country".

"What this data shows is it would be Catholic families who would inevitably lose out because of the 50-per-cent cap," he said.

### Faith leaders and politicians beg Hinds not to drop the cap

### ALIX ROBERTSON

Faith leaders, politicians and education experts have signed a joint letter asking the education secretary to reconsider his plans to remove the 50-per-cent cap on faith-based admissions to oversubscribed free schools.

The letter, which argues that the "divisive policy" is a threat to "social cohesion and respect", is backed by 71 signatories, including the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, Professor Richard Dawkins, and the joint heads of the National Education Union, Dr Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney.

Conservative MP Sarah Wollaston, who said she would vote against plans to lift the cap last time it was mooted, has also signed the letter to Damian Hinds.

Plans to stop forcing new religious free schools to keep at least half of their places open to all local children, irrespective of religion or belief, were first announced in the last government's 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation in 2016. The idea was put on hold after last year's general election, and the Department for Education has yet to provide a formal response to its consultation.

However, Catholic school-educated Hinds, a long-standing critic of the cap, told The Sunday Times last month that he

> intends to get rid of it. Organised by Humanists UK, the letter states that removing

the cap on religious selection betrays schools' duty to emphasise "the common values that we all share". "We are all in agreement that our state schools, of whatever

character, should be open, inclusive, diverse, and integrated, and never exclusive, monocultural, or segregated," it says. It also claims that the plan to scrap the cap is "opposed by 80 per cent of the public, including 67 per cent of Catholics and 71 per cent of Christians overall".

"People from across the political spectrum, representing a range of different religions

and beliefs, are united on this one point: whatever your views on faith schools themselves, it cannot be right for taxpayerfunded schools to divide and discriminate against children," said Humanists UK chief executive Andrew Copson.

"That is the principle that underpins this letter, and it ought to be the principle that underpins our education system too."

Other faith leaders to have signed the letter include the Reverend Stephen Terry and Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, the chair and president of the Accord Coalition, Derek McAuley from the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Rabia Mirza, the director of British Muslims for Secular Democracy and the Reverend Iain McDonald.

Other notable signatories include Liberal Democrat education spokesperson Lord Storey, the former government whip Lorely Burt, Green Party coleaders Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley, and the campaigner Peter Tatchell.

Authors Philip Pullman and Ian McEwan also signed, as have academics AC Grayling, Steve Jones and Alice Roberts.

Exclusive

### **NEWS** CQC: Rate schools on how they meet mental health needs

#### PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA\_AK

Ofsted should inspect how effectively schools respond to the mental health needs of their pupils, the Care Quality Commission has said.

The CQC's review of children and young people's mental health services has also found that many schools rely on volunteers to treat mental ill-health, and wants basic support training for everyone who works with children.

There are also concerns about the slow pace of reforms to policy, and delays to treatment caused by poor collaboration across public services.

Ofsted inspectors already consider how school leaders "ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare" when they visit schools, but the CQC wants them to go further.

The inspectorate should "strengthen its assessments of schools and academies to consider how effectively they respond to pupils' mental health". It should also take into account the impact that "school life and the curriculum" have on pupils' mental health when it develops its new inspection framework, which is due to be in place from September 2019.

This should include looking at how effective the new senior leads for mental health, set out in the government's mental health green paper at the end of last year, have been. "This would provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness of schools and academies in supporting children and young people's wellbeing and, in doing so, help to drive improvement," the report said.

"Schools and academies have such an important role to play in supporting children and young people's wellbeing, so they must be supported and encouraged to take a whole-school approach that promotes mental wellbeing in all aspects of school life

- and they must be held to account for their efforts."

A spokesperson for Ofsted said it will "consider how inspection can take into account the impact that school life and the curriculum have on pupils' mental health and well-being" as it develops the new framework.

The CQC, which is the main regulator of healthcare services, examined how different services worked together in 10 areas of England and conducted 1,300 interviews. It's worried that many schools no longer fund counsellors, and rely instead on nurses or trainees working for free to provide care.

Education, health care and other public services are not "working together as effectively as they could" to support young



people with mental health issues including through data sharing. This causes confusion and delays to treatment, and improved collaboration is urgently needed.

Dr Paul Lelliott (pictured), the CQC's lead for mental health, said the wellbeing of young people should be "put at the heart of every decision, be that planning, commissioning or resourcing".

"We all need to act now and to act together. If we do not, we risk letting

down children and young people across the country and undermining their potential in adult life," he added.

Although the regulator welcomes plans to strengthen mental health support in schools, it warned that "unless the pace of delivery is accelerated, these commitments will not be enough to achieve the scale of change that is required to protect children and young people from unnecessary distress and avoidable deterioration in their mental health".

The government's green paper on mental health in schools, published in December, pledged more than £300 million to pay for "thousands" of new staff including designated senior mental health leads and support teams.

#### NAHT PARTNERS WITH POLICE TO BEAT RECRUITMENT FRAUD

#### ALIX ROBERTSON @ALIXROBERTSON4

**Exclusive** 

The NAHT union is teaming up with a Metropolitan Police website to tackle recruitment fraud.

Schools will be told about, an organisation providing free advice about job scams to which leaders can report any fraud problems.

A Schools Week investigation last march found hundreds of schools are using apps to employ supply teachers, but union leaders warned that ineffective safety checks could see fake teachers enter the classroom.

SAFERjobs, a non-profit created by the police, publishes a list of verified organisations which signpost jobseekers and employers to reputable companies. It is free to check the site, and free to sign up as a recognised body once you can show you meet the necessary standards.

The website works across several sectors, and recently partnered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to combat fraudsters who coerce jobseekers and employers to pay for certificates that never materialise.

Ian Hartwright, senior policy adviser for the NAHT, told *Schools Week* that in a "massive recruitment and retention crisis", working with SAFERjobs was "a really good opportunity to help protect our members".

An NAHT report from November 2017 found school leaders were struggling to fill 63 per cent of their open posts.

Hartwright said the shortage of suitable recruits is forcing schools to pay additional fees just to fill their vacancies, and that there are "lots of illegitimate and bogus recruitment companies" taking cash from schools.

"Leadership time is getting limited in some schools, particularly smaller schools where budget cuts have really started to bite," he said. "If leaders are under pressure a service like this is really useful."

Keith Rosser, the chair of SAFERjobs, said he regularly sees cases of workers charged for police checks or training they do not need.

"We also see staff provided to schools without police checks and other relevant documentation," he added.

"Our mission is to raise awareness amongst schools, workers, and the recruitment sector. We urge all schools to ensure any recruitment organisations they currently work with are partnered with SAFERjobs," he said.

Schools Week recently revealed that one online training company had published a job advert on *The Guardian's* jobs site untruthfully telling teaching assistants that they "required" a non-regulated qualification in order to take on the role. It offered to provide a course leading to the certification for "as little as £40 per week".

### SEND PUPILS FACE 45-MILE TRIP TO SCHOOL

#### ALIX ROBERTSON @ALIXROBERTSON4

Staff and pupils from a special school in Cambridgeshire will have to travel 45 miles to a new location if plans to close their current site are approved.

Investigates

The TBAP multi-academy trust wants to close the Unity Academy – Fenland in Wisbech, which has just 24 pupils, and transfer them to another site it owns in St Neots.

The Education Policy Institute claims that special-school pupils travel three times further on average to school than those in mainstream education, meaning that some Unity pupils are already likely to be travelling considerable distances.

TBAP apparently has safety concerns at the Wisbech site, which is on an industrial estate and "not fit for purpose". The St Neots site also "provides better outcomes for learners", the trust claimed.

In total 17 pupils would be moved to St Neots, with the local council responsible for transport. Seven pupils are due to move into further education.

Cambridgeshire county council said its officers met TBAP and Department for Education officials in February to address concerns about the plan and its consequences for pupils and staff – including increased journey times and

#### transport costs for the council. TBAP initially wanted to relocate at the start of the summer term, but this was postponed after a consultation revealed opposition to the

plans. Niamh Sweeney (pictured) of the National Education

Union said there had been "a lot of confusion around who is responsible for what and who makes what decision".

"I think TBAP were of the understanding that they could make the decision and they would just get it passed," she said. "The county council has now intervened to remind them that discussions need to take place."

Her union has "grave concerns" about the move.

"It would appear that they have little understanding of the local geography, road system or the needs of the children and young people affected by these changes," she said.

"I don't see how an organisation that is based in urban London can make snap decisions about the education of vulnerable rural kids."

Angela Tempany, the executive headteacher of TBAP East, said the trust will meet the regional commissioner, Sue Baldwin, and council representatives next week. "We want to work cooperatively with everyone," she said.

The trust will then make any changes to the proposal that result from this meeting. It expects to submit a business case, including an outline of the consultation, to the local headteacher board in April, who will then make a

decision on the final outcome. The earliest date changes can be implemented will be September.

Baldwin's headteacher board is made up of four elected headteachers, two who have been appointed, and two co-opted. None of the trusts these heads represent are primarily based in Cambridgeshire.

Tempany told *Schools Week* that one family had accepted the move to the St Neots site so far, and that four others have concerns about journey lengths.

Staff are also worried about increased commuting time, she said, though TBAP will address this by reimbursing additional travel costs for one year and adjusting working hours to account for extended travel time.

Merging the sites would also help staff who attend continuing professional development sessions every week, she added.



### NEWS

### AN INSPECTOR CALLS: OFSTED MAKES PRIVATE SCHOOLS POWER GRAB

#### FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

The chief inspector of schools recently faced questions about Ofsted's efforts to tackle illegal schools from MPs.

Amanda Spielman had quite bit to say at a hearing of the parliamentary education committee on Wednesday. Here's what we learned.

### 1. Inspectors can't link extremism in schools and terrorism

Its lack of investigative powers is preventing Ofsted inspectors from identifying links between extremism in unregistered schools and terrorism.

Spielman said establishing a link between extremism and terrorism is "something that is extremely hard for us to have an opinion on" because Ofsted only has powers to inspect, not investigate schools.

In particular, the inspectorate has no right to enter uncooperative unregistered schools or seize evidence.

Spielman said the current legislative framework was designed at a time when "nobody really contemplated there being schools that simply would not want to comply with the law", and wants a tougher approach to regulatory enforcement.

### 2. Ofsted won't inspect people's private lives

Spielman was asked if her desire for greater powers is "mission creep by the state".

Conservative MP Michelle Donelan asked if Spielman was confusing alternative provision with out-of-school settings like clubs and sports sessions, and wanted to know if she was comfortable with scenario where "we're



constantly subjected to inspection in our private lives".

"I don't think I've said anything that says this is about inspection in people's private lives," Spielman replied, admitting it is important to work out exactly what settings should be inspected.

"The last thing I want to see is troops of inspectors descending into every Sunday school and sports club in the country," she said, arguing that a "broader category" for certain out-of-school settings is needed.

### 3. Lack of data on pupils is making things difficult

It is "extremely hard" to get a handle on where children are if they are not in the national pupil database, Spielman said. Ofsted has been looking into cases where pupils disappear from the NPD from one year to the next, but the numbers are "concerningly large, and growing".

She also described an "unusually permissive" system which does not require parents to register children who don't attend school, and warned that some parents are claiming to keep children at home but are in fact putting them into unregistered schools "often with a very particular religious slant".

 Ofsted can't 'selectively dis-apply the law' Spielman said some faith schools have asked Ofsted to ignore equalities law during inspections.

Some orthodox Jewish schools specifically have "a problem with particular aspects of equalities law, especially the parts around protected characteristics".

Last year, Ofsted was highly critical of the Vishnitz Girls School in north London, which it claimed did not "pay enough regard to developing respect and

tolerance for those who may have protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Equality Act".

In the same month, Yesodey Hatorah School in Stamford Hill was branded 'inadequate' in a report that criticised its "weak" promotion of fundamental British values, "particularly in relation to tolerance of people who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act".

Ofsted can't "selectively disapply the law", Spielman said, claiming her organisation had also had similar requests from Muslim schools.

5. Ofsted hopes for a 'more determined' regime on independent schools Responding to Conservative MP Trudy Harrison, who said she was "incredulous" to find out there is no process to close independent schools at which inappropriate reading materials or "squalid conditions" are found, Spielman revealed that she too had been "astonished" to learn about the issue.

However, she said Ofsted has had more "constructive" conversations with the DfE, which regulates independent schools, in recent weeks, and is hoping to see a "more determined regime in the coming months".

"I just find it incredulous that there is not already a process in place to shut these schools down and remove the materials when squalid environments are found. That wouldn't happen in a business, why can it happen in a school?" the MP asked.

### Ofsted and DfE vow to engage with NAHT on accountability

#### PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA\_AK

The way schools are held to account will be investigated by a new independent commission that seeks to find a "credible alternative" to the system of inspections and league tables – and Ofsted and the DfE have promised to get involved.

The commission, which will propose an "alternative vision for the future" of school accountability and look at how Ofsted inspections could be improved, was launched by the school leaders' union NAHT at a Westminster Education Forum event on Tuesday.

Nick Brook, the NAHT's deputy general secretary, claimed there is a consensus that the current accountability system is not "quite working the way it should", and said the commission wanted to address the current "vacuum" of "credible alternatives".

"My intention is that this is a report which can be used by government and all political parties," he told *Schools Week*. "It's something to spark debate and thought as to where we go in the future.

"We've got the right people in the room to help us come up with something that will



be credible. Everyone recognises that the system isn't working as well as it should. The onus is on us now to come up with something to get behind and believe in." Both the Department for Education and Ofsted have now indicated to *Schools Week* that they intend to engage with the commission, whose board includes former Ofsted director Sir Robin Bosher, the director of UCL's Institute of Education Professor Becky Allen, Alison Peacock from the Chartered College of Teaching, and National Governance Association chief executive Emma Knights.

A spokesperson for the DfE said the



government had been "engaging" with NAHT on the commission and "will continue to do so as its work progresses", while Ofsted said it "looks forward to engaging with the NAHT and others involved in this work when it gets underway".

"Accountability and scrutiny in education are vital, both for raising standards and for parents, who have a right to know how pupils and schools are performing," a spokesperson said. "Ofsted understands the pressures that come along with this, and is committed to working with the teaching profession to help relieve unnecessary workload and promote staff wellbeing." The commission has identified seven guiding principles, including ensuring the system is fair to teachers at all schools, identifying signs of decline earlier, incentivising collective responsibility for pupil outcomes and accepting the "inherent limitations of data" in making judgements about schools.

The commission also has the backing of the Association of School and College Leaders, another school leaders' union.

"We must have an accountability system which is more sensible, balanced and proportionate and recognises the breadth of what our schools achieve," said ASCL's general secretary Geoff Barton.

The commission aims to publish interim findings in the summer term and a full report in September.

### NEWS **#WOMENED: BRAVING THE FIRST LEAP TO LEADERSHIP**

### **ROBERTSON IN CONVERSATION AT** WOMENED

ALIX ROBERTSON @ALIXROBERTSON4

Schools Week's Alix Robertson attended the WomenEd conference last saturday. While she was there she caught up with Vicky Paver to discuss her whirlwind year from teacher to head

When Vicky Payer mustered the courage to run a session at a WomenEd conference in London last year, she had no idea how much her career would have changed by the time she returned to the same event a year later.

Then a teacher at Kaizen Primary School in the London borough of Newham, she had been working on her leadership skills through a distributed leadership model, in which she acted as a trainee headteacher.

This allowed her "lots of autonomy over areas and year groups, as if it were a mini school", but it also provided the security of knowing that accountability rested with the senior leadership team.



Paver had completed a national professional gualification for headship two months earlier, but was hesitant about the next steps.

"I didn't feel particularly confident about leading a school on my own," she told Schools Week at the 2018 WomenEd conference in London on March 3.

Leading a workshop at the 2017 WomenEd London conference with Kate

> Fallan, director of teaching schools at East London Early Years and Schools Partnership and a former colleague from Kaizen, helped Paver to feel positive about new challenges.

> > "It's helped me to know that I've got something to share with other people, and skills that I can pass on to other people," she said. Paver's head

at Kaizen also happened to be one of WomenEd's regional leaders for the capital, Rebekah Iivambo.

With Iiyambo's encouragement, she set up some online alerts for headships around Newham and in special education.

"I am dyslexic and I am passionate about helping kids who have different sorts of challenges to help break those down," she explained.

That same evening, an alert came up for a head of school position at West Lea School, a four-to-19 special school in Enfield. She went for it - and got the job.

West Lea has five sites and Paver has been head of its primary campus since September. She has an all-female leadership team in assistant headteacher Sarah James and middle leader Hannah Alldis.

She was forced to start the school year on a building site, as newly expanded facilities were still taking shape, and also made it through an Ofsted inspection just six months after she arrived.

"That start could have really developed negativity amongst the staff because we weren't ready, but I took the time to make sure I met them all," she recalled.

"I was really conscious about building those relationships and then mucking in with them. I feel now we've got a real culture of supportiveness."

The new site's grand opening happened just two days after Ofsted's visit and she managed to give an interview for a

promotional video as well as writing and delivering a speech to attendees - "one thing with my dyslexia I don't like".

"I had a real week of being 10 per cent braver," she said, quoting the #WomenEd motto.

Paver has big plans for the future and is working towards "a massive outdoor project" that will allow students to tend an allotment. She is also committed to helping other to achieve their leadership goals.

"Because I had support and coaching from Rebecca and other people around me I feel like part of my role is to support and coach and mentor others." she said.

Her advice other women who are thinking about own leadership is to "make a plan".

"Think about your skillset, where are your areas of strength? What other experiences have you got? Seek ways to develop those things. You've got to be open with people too, be true to yourself. If there is something you don't know, be honest in that," she added.

Sometimes it helps to have encouragement, she continued, but she advised people to find motivation within themselves.

"I needed someone else there to go 'ok. what are you doing next?' But equally you just have to be brave."

She has a postcard on the wall of her office now that says "eat the frog" – to remind her not to hide from the things she doesn't want to deal with

"If you've got a list of ten things you need to do - do the one you don't want to do first."

### UTC told to join 'strong' MAT amid financial investigation

Vicky Paver

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA AK

A struggling UTC must join a "strong" multiacademy trust and improve its finances, after reports from a whistleblower forced government funding bosses to investigate.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency said ministers would pick out a list of potential new trusts for the 'inadequate'rated Bolton UTC to join this September, after issuing the 14-to-19 institution with a financial notice to improve.

ESFA officials visited last summer after they received "anonymous allegations" of financial mismanagement and poor governance. The college has struggled to recruit pupils, and owes the government a substantial sum after it overestimated pupil numbers.

They found evidence that financial decisions had gone unchallenged, and that the lack of an audit committee or any financial checks had caused "inadequate" financial controls and management of conflicts of interest, including around an estimated £920,152 in related-party transactions

The investigation started last July, but details have only just come to light after the notice to improve was issued last month.

The UTC, which is currently run by an interim management board, has had most of its spending powers suspended until the notice is lifted. It has also been told it must get agreement from ministers to join a "strong" multi-academy trust in September 2018.



"This MAT will be from a selection determined by the department," the notice read.

The UTC must also develop an action plan to make sure that its contracts are all compliant with procurement law, avoid conflicts of interests, "accounting irregularities" and "novel and contentious payments", ensuring clear lines of accountability among senior figures.

A financial management and governance review meanwhile reveals that of six suppliers

reviewed by the ESFA during its procurement investigation, three were classed as connected or "related parties".

There was "no evidence of any formal procurement exercise" for any of the six

suppliers, and five did not have a signed contract in place. The one existing contract was described as "brief" and without "adequate detail".

For the three related parties - the University of Bolton, Bright Tribe Education Services and Greater Manchester UTC the trust was unable to show adequate management evidence of complying with

Since September 2015, the UTC has paid £658,922 to the University of Bolton, £209,862 to Bright Tribe and £51,368 to Greater Manchester UTC.

Between September 2015 and December 2016, the UTC, which was less than half full, had a chief executive officer and a principal, but also bought in support from the principal at Greater Manchester UTC at a cost of £297,507. Officials were unable to explain why all three were needed.

Other issues highlighted included relocation expenses of almost £6,500 paid to someone moving around 20 miles away, and a compensation payment of £45,000 made without any proof of a business case or professional advice for doing so, and no evidence of board evidence or approval.

#### **DEVON-BASED BAY** EDUCATION TRUST HIT WITH FINANCIAL NOTICE

A multi-academy trust in the south-west has been handed a financial notice to improve by the Education and Skills Funding agency.

Bay Education Trust has had many of its spending powers suspended, and has been warned it faces closure if it does not address concerns about its financial management.

The notice was issued because the trust had failed to improve its position enough after an initial warning last September.

It runs two primary schools, Curledge Street Academy and Kings Ash Academy, and one secondary, Paignton Community and Sports College, Set up in November 2014, it educates around 2,000 children in Paignton.

Mike Pettifer from the ESFA wrote to the trust on February 23 to highlight concerns about "the weak financial position and financial management of the trust".

Pettifer acknowledged that after receiving a warning notice in September the trust had cooperated and held "extensive discussions" with the ESFA, as well as making changes to try to "strengthen accounting and internal financial controls".

However, its position has not improved enough, and it is now obliged to commission "external reviews into governance and financial management", including a review of the effectiveness of the trust's head office and an audit of governance skills, by April 27.

Each month Bay Education Trust will also have to submit an income and expenditure report, a balance sheet and a detailed monthly cash flow forecast.

If the requirements are not met the trust could have its funding agreement terminated.

of conflicts of interest or a policy that related-party transactions must only be "at cost".

### NEWS





#### EDITORIAL

### PFI is an omnishambles – and it's still unfolding

Almost exactly two years ago to the day, Schools Week published an investigation called 'Who will pick up the tab for PFI?' In painstaking detail, our chief reporter John Dickens (who is currently swanning around the world on sabbatical) warned that takeovers of failing schools were hitting the buffers as academy chains baulked at the lengthy repayment contracts.

The stories on page 3 of this edition are simply a small extension of that investigation, 24 months on. But there have been a few changes since then. Back then we only had the National Audit Office's 2011 report that suggested PFI was not really the best value for money, and asked the government to be a "more demanding and intelligent customer".

Now, after the collapse of Carillion, January brought a new NAO report that concluded, in withering detail, that the country has incurred billions of pounds in extra costs for no clear benefit by using private finance initiatives.

Take the Parklands High School in Liverpool. It cost £24 million to build, was shut after 12 years owing to poor teaching, but Liverpool city council must still pay a further £47 million in fees. And now we learn of situation where schools are left to float around until a new MAT is flush with enough cash to absorb another PFI debt bomb.

What a set-up. What a scandal. What a shame for pupils. Looking through the history of PFI decisions, first dreamed up under New Labour and continued under Tory leadership, two key defences are routinely rolled out.

First, the private sector is better at delivering projects cost-effectively and on time than the public sector (this also sounds rather like the argument for academies, but that's for another editorial).

Secondly, PFI was the "only show in town" for capital funds. Carillion's disgrace has blown the first argument apart, but should it have taken so long? PFI is crippling our schools. New buildings and state-of-the-art facilities are of course a dream for many, but this must not be at the cost of front-line services.

It would take a bold and brave secretary of state to admit that PFI has been bad value for money. It would be heroic for one to release schools from the PFI debt bomb and free funds up for the front line.

#### Well they or won't they? Heckle Damian Hinds, that is...

The joys of union conference season are upon us, and the big question on everybody's lips is this: will it be thirdtime lucky for Damian Hinds?

In each of the last two years, his predecessors have been heckled and jeered by headteachers.

In 2016, Nicky Morgan faced shouts of "rubbish" and "you're not listening" at the NAHT's conference, while Justine Greening got a similar response when she addressed ASCL's conference last year.

Hinds' speech at the ASCL's annual jamboree this weekend is his first major school conference speech as

#### An apology and clarification

Readers may recall a story in last week's edition of this newspaper, about the Diocese of Truro's seemingly heavy-handed tactics, when it summarily order its entire team of trustees to resign because of a drop in some schools' Ofsted grades.

The ensuing editorial grappled with the ethical problem of just what is reasonable action for a diocese or members of a trust to take over a perceived lack of outcomes. However, within it we suggested the executive education secretary.

He would be wise to use it as an opportunity to free the shackles from leaders and teachers. Motivate the workforce to seize an opportunity and get on with innovating in their schools without waiting for permission.

This was the underpinning theme of the recent Headteachers' Roundtable Summit – "we don't need permission". A good leader allows and motivates their workforce to innovate, create and get on with the job at hand.

Hinds is education's leader, but will he be a good one?

headteacher was fleeing the scene without experiencing the sorts of consequences meted out on the trustees.

We did this without first checking with the headteacher what their reason were for doing so, which was remiss of us. We are therefore happy to clarify that this person will stay in post until Easter, and that their reasons for leaving are not related to the trust or diocese.

@schoolsweek

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### Headteacher

Marlborough Centre, Hoo St. Werburgh Primary School Leadership Scale L18 – 24 FT

Are you a dynamic, passionate, and progressive leader? Do you have the skills and drive to lead a fantastic Primary School from 'Good' to 'Outstanding'? Are you passionate about achieving outstanding teaching and learning in every classroom? Do you want to inspire children through an engaging curriculum? Do you excel at developing your teaching and support staff to be the best they can possibly be? If so, then this could be the role for you!

We have an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, experienced and skilled individual to take on the role of Headteacher at Hoo St Werburgh Primary School, part of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust.

The ideal candidate will be expected to have a continuous presence within the school, be responsible for leading and supporting staff as well as collaborate with the Head of the Marlborough Centre which shares the site. Responsibilities will include the development of staff, relevant policies, training and the management of data as well as innovative leadership and being an outstanding practitioner.

Hoo St Werburgh Primary School & Marlborough Centre share the inclusive ethos of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust. We firmly believe that every child has a right to an education, no matter what barriers they have to learning. We aim to instil in our pupils an enthusiasm for learning and an interest in the world around them. We have high expectations of our pupils and staff and strive to provide a learning environment that ensures our pupils are challenged and make good or better progress in all aspects of their school life. We celebrate every aspect of our pupils' learning from their social and emotional development and life skills acquisition to the national curriculum subjects of reading, writing, maths and more.

There are over 500 children on roll, organised into 24 classes, with two classes per year group in the main school as well as 3 mixed age provisions for children with additional needs. The Marlborough Centre has 6 classes catering for 65 children within the secure specialist setting. We also have a newly established nursery class attached to the school.

At a recent external inspection, the school secured 'Good' with several elements of outstanding. The drive for the new headteacher will be to secure 'Outstanding' across the school.

Visits to Hoo St Werburgh Primary School are highly recommended. Please email **hr@rivermeadinclusivetrust.com** for an application form or contact **Karen Watkin**, HR Manager: **01634 338348** if you would like to have an informal discussion with either the Director of School Improvement or the CEO.

Closing date: 14th March 2018 noon

Interviews: Week beginning 19th March 2018

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. All postholders are subject to enhanced DBS checks

#### Deliver a world-class education as Principal of a David Ross Education Trust Academy

The David Ross Education Trust is a leading multi-academy trust. We're committed to giving every child attending one of our schools a world-class education that creates academically gifted, confident, well-rounded young people in the classroom, in the workplace and in their communities.

We pride ourselves on our academic rigour, driven by talented, dedicated and inspiring teachers who help our students fulfil their true potential.

We believe in opening our students' eyes to the world around them. Our academy-wide enrichment programme is the only one of its kind within the state education sector.

If you're looking for a compellingly different home for your talents, why not get in touch today?



Charnwood College Loughborough www.lead-charnwood.co.uk Closing date: 21 March 2018





Humberston Academy Grimsby www.lead-humberston.co.uk Closing date: 9 April 2018



Lodge Park Academy Corby www.lead-lodgepark.co.uk Closing date: 12 April 2018





# Headteacher - Nansen Primary School

As part of CORE Education Trust's new plans for September, we are pleased to announce an opportunity for an exceptional leader to join our new team as Headteacher of Nansen Primary School.

As leader of this dynamic school in the heart of Alum Rock, you will have the opportunity to shape our new vision ensuring pupils come first, receiving personalised provision enabling each child to meet their full potential in a safe and caring environment. Nansen Primary School is community focussed, driven by the positive relationships of hard working staff and supportive parents.

CORE Education Trust's mission is to provide children with a high quality educational experience through its four CORE Values of Collaboration; Opportunity; Respect and Excellence.

CORE was acknowledged last year by the National Governance Association in its annual award category of outstanding Multi Academy Trust and was hailed by Ofsted for its "powerful moral commitment to ensuring that pupils succeed not only academically but also to become responsible citizens" when it successfully removed two Birmingham Schools from Special Measures in 2016. One of those schools, Rockwood Academy, featured in the top 2 percent highest performing Schools in the country against the national Progress 8 headline measure in 2017.

Apply by: 12 noon Monday 19th March 2018 Job start: September 2018 School Visits: 13th / 14th March Contract term: Permanent

Interview: 26th and 27th March Salary: competitive

Following the shortlisting of applicants, if you are selected to attend an interview you will be contacted by CORE Education Trust by email.

The Interview will be held across two days and will consist of an Assessment on the first day with a Panel interview and Media exercise to be undertaken on the following day.

For further enquiries please contact Maxine Whyte, Executive Assistant to Adrian Packer CBE, CEO on 0121 794 8558 or email recruitment@core-education.co.uk.

We are also inviting applications from other senior and middle leaders, teachers and support staff for all our Schools. Specific vacancies can be found on our website.



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### **Headteacher**

### **Howard Community**

**Primary School** 

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP32 6SA





#### Start: September 2018 Salary: £46,799-£63,799 (negotiable) Roll: 205

We are looking for a strong, capable and inspiring leader to be the new Headteacher for Howard Community Primary School in Bury St. Edmunds. Having experienced a significant amount of change and turbulence prior to and since being placed in Special Measures in July 2017, the school requires a dynamic, passionate and committed individual to lead the school to success.

Applicants for this role will have a genuine aspiration for all children to thrive, flourish and achieve, regardless of their background, will be passionate about teaching and learning, and committed to working effectively with staff, parents/carers and the local community to raise standards.

The successful candidate will embrace challenge and be ambitious for the school and its children. They will have a positive track record for school improvement and leadership impact. Supported as part of a vibrant, cross-phase multi-academy trust (CHET), they will join a team of energetic and driven professionals committed to inclusive and inspiring education.

We welcome applications from colleagues that share our passion for and commitment to exceptional, holistic education and that are keen to make a positive and lasting difference to the children and families of the Howard community.

Howard Community Primary School has an enviable, expansive site and facilities and is ideally situated in the heart of its community. Bury St. Edmunds is a beautiful town with a great deal of opportunities for curricular enrichment. Positioned close to Cambridge and Newmarket with excellent transport links across Suffolk and Norfolk, we are keen for Howard to become a centre for educational excellence and a hub for the Cambridge and Suffolk Teaching School Alliance (CASSA).

We welcome informal school visits and conversations. Please contact Headteacher Recruitment at Headships@suffolk.gov.uk or telephone 01473 263943 to arrange a visit or request an application pack.

Closing date: 13th April 2018

Interviews: 26th/27th April 2018

Suffolk County Council and CHET are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all employees to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to enhanced DBS checks.

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Taking the next step in your career and making your mark in 16-19 education, you will set stretching but realistic SMART targets for your team and manage all aspects of the learning journey from recruitment through course delivery, support, retention, attainment and progressior Whilst focusing on a specific area of cross-college responsibility - English and Maths, 16-19 Study Programmes, Value Added, Work-Based Learning, Progression/Destination or Employability (including Social Action and Work Experience) - you will enjoy real impact on the progression of every student, as well as our bottom line. Equally importantly, you will act as designated inspection lead in your specialist area and will secure significant funding, whilst driving our Quality Improvement Plan and coaching your colleagues to reach their full potential

With expert understanding of at least one of the specialist areas above, you will combine a relevant degree or vocational certification with a formal teaching qualification. Needless to say, you will be highly experienced in managing curriculum areas and leading teams to achieve income and student outcome targets, and you will be passionate about innovative teaching and learning. A structured yet creative problem solver, you will bring a demonstrable record of raising

performance, participation and retention, and you will be ready to introduce some exciting new courses and pathways. Finally, leadership, management and assessor qualifications would be very useful, as would familiarity with developing business plans, but it's your sharp strategic mindset and hands-on approach that will matter most.

To find out more about this unique opportunity, please visit: www.sussexcoast.ac.uk > About Us > Vacancies. Closing date: 19th March 2018.









## CORE Education Trust is Proud and Happy to Welcome our New Schools













# Headteacher - City Academy Birmingham

We became the sponsor of these well established Schools on March 1st this year. As part of our new plans from September, we are pleased to announce an opportunity for an exceptional leader to join our new team as Headteacher of City Academy Birmingham.

As leader of this dynamic, city centre School, you will have the opportunity to shape our new vision which will include a major strategic partnership with Birmingham City Football Club. You will also have access to our impressive network of national and regional partners.

CORE Education Trust's mission is to provide children with a high quality educational experience through its four CORE Values of Collaboration, Opportunity, Respect and Excellence.

CORE was acknowledged last year by the National Governance Association in its annual award category of outstanding Multi Academy Trust and was hailed by Ofsted for its "powerful moral commitment to ensuring that pupils succeed not only academically but also to become responsible citizens" when it successfully removed two Birmingham Schools from Special Measures in 2016. One of those schools, Rockwood Academy, featured in the top 2 percent highest performing Schools in the country against the national Progress 8 headline measure in 2017.

Apply by: 12 noon Thursday 15 March 2018 Job start: September 2018 School Visits: 6/13 March 2018 Contract term: Permanent Interview: 21and 22 March 2018 Salary: L30 – L36

Following the shortlisting of applicants, if you are selected to attend an interview you will be contacted by CORE Education Trust by email.

The Interview will be held across two days and will consist of an Assessment on the first day with a Panel interview and Media exercise to be undertaken on the following day.

For further enquiries please contact Maxine Whyte, Executive Assistant to Adrian Packer CBE, CEO on 0121 794 8558.

We are also inviting applications from other senior and middle leaders, teachers and support staff for all our Schools. Specific vacancies can be found on our website.



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EDITION 132

**FACEBOOK** 

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#### Ofsted boss calls for teachers to prove subject knowledge

Susan Coles // @theartcriminal Blimey, but they're not even allowed out on professional development courses these days. What a very silly thing to say.

#### Jahangir Akbar // @JahangirAkbar99

Teachers have enough on. Good school leaders would naturally promote staff CPD and the acquisition of new and modern knowledge. These chair-sitting leaders have nothing but ideas and theories. We need older teachers and those most experienced. Don't frighten them.

### Men are paid 8% more and get 20% larger bonuses at Ofsted

Nicola Gouldstone // @nikkifayego Come on Ofsted, you are the education watchdog. Learn, demonstrate leadership and teach by example.

### DfE doubles advanced maths premium to £1,200

🕋 D Gill // @Gill\_Physics

This has got more damn holes than a golf course. Schools could limit numbers one year and then get a bumper number next year to claim thousands. And if you ARE going to introduce it, then maybe the money should go to the teachers.

### Special-school pupils travel three times further to school

**Rob Butler // @cleverfiend** We had students that might spend an hour in a taxi coming to us (I can only guess how massive the LA transport bill must be). I know of rural locations where special-school students have an even longer journey because of lack of local provision.

#### **Profile: Claudia Harris**

Nicholas Marshall // @Nick5307 They've done nothing. Achieved nothing and had no impact whatsoever. Where is the evidence to support any assertion that they have achieved anything? Just a Tory front to cover up the fact that they have emasculated careers provision.

### Five ways the DfE could improve governance

Stephen Foster // @MrSRFoster You mean all the things that should have been in place before the DfE launched into the dash for academies?

### Report schools that don't let you talk to pupils, minister tells colleges

# REPLY OF THE WEEK

TWEET

EMAIL

Whole-school assemblies by employers, training providers, recruiters, etc are among the worst ways of giving info to pupils. They eat into teaching time and only interest the already interested. A far better way is for schools to have high-quality careers education and guidance in a generic work-related programme, something like an updated technical and vocational education initiative, perhaps. Imposing sanctions on schools that don't offer whole-cohort access to training providers will result only in lip service.

Reply of the week receives a Schools Week mug!

n marathon races, mile 20 is known as "the wall", the point when the energy in your muscles runs out and continuing on requires overcoming every psychological instinct to stop.

For schools, March is "the wall". It's the month when teachers' good intentions for their class are in tatters and when, if things are going badly, it's difficult to turn them around in the limited amount of time left. The first instinct is to give in, the second is to look for another job. The third, and most important, is to knuckle down.

Unfortunately, knuckling down is often ungratifying. "Maybe if I get the kids in every Tuesday after school, and use online quizzes, and send stern letters to parents, then we might make it," thinks the wall-fatigued teacher, only to find that like a marathon runner who tries to replenish by scoffing a bag of crisps at mile 20, things simply do not work that way.

Feeling the stress, teachers become snippier in March. Pupils wanting yet another lengthy chat about their unfathomable Minecraft projects are shooed away as Ms Panicked desperately tries to write a revision booklet, and Mr Worried replaces after-school football with punctuation club.

As senses are heightened, we can all succumb to the idea that children are also feeling exam stress more acutely. Indeed, parents will tell you that anxiety amps up from March.

Never deterred from his academic mission, Nick Gibb has helpfully suggested that, to tackle March madness, schools should just test



# Hitting the wall and how to get around it

children even more often throughout the year to get them used to the stress.

For a long time, I was cautiously with Gibb on this. If children put on plays and concerts, run races and play football matches – all of which are very stressful – then why worry about exams? Give them lots of practice and all will be well.

But I was stopped in my tracks by a recent discussion with the co-founders of the MeeTwo app: Dr Kerstyn Comley and Suzi Godson.

MeeTwo is a completely free app which allows young people to write their worries and get moderated responses from their peers. It's clever because it avoids the immediate medicalising of issues and recognises that young people sometimes just need an outlet for concerns. It also connects young people in a safe space rather than in unmoderated online forums, which can be dangerous. One thing they noticed since starting the app is that young people often have stressed responses to internal school tests which might seem fairly meaningless to adults.

At the start of September one wrote: "I have a science test tomorrow and I am really nervous! It's my fourth day of year 10 and we already have a test! I am really worried I am going to fail and everyone is going to be mean to me."

It's easy to sneer or shrug. Is it a mental health problem that a kid is worried everyone is going to be mean to them? Probably not. But it does remind us that children care deeply about their friends. Even if teachers never read out results, children share them after class. Admitting you did badly can be wounding if friends respond negatively. Then there's the trauma of your parents or siblings finding out the score – disappointing or delighting them depending on the results (often inversely).

HOU

Tests simply are stressful for lots of children. March is not their wall, however, when every test, however small, can feel that way.

Don't leap to conclusions here; I'm not a born-again exam-nihilist. Setting a test at the start of the year is critical for a teacher to gauge ability levels. Testing aids long-term memory. And never testing pupils until they are 16 seems bizarre: surprising children with a D grade at 16 isn't going to help their selfesteem either.

However, schools might at least recognise how testing plays out for some children and come up with solutions. Encouraging the use of apps like MeeTwo is one example, as is an internal peer-to-peer support programme. Given the much higher awareness young people have of mental health, encouraging them to help each other is a great way to empower them rather than merely paint young people as exam victims.

As March hits staff, I wonder whether teachers need their own version of MeeTwo. The Education Support Partnership already does great work – offering a free phoneline of trained counsellors (08000 562 561) and text support (07909 341229) that teachers can access all day every day, as well as other resources on its site.

Ultimately, the most important thing is that we all get over the academic year line safely and with our minds still intact. The wall is real, but it's also surmountable. Keep going folks – and take care as you do.

### PROFILE



#### Sue Jay, head of creative arts, Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School

Rain is lashing down outside the drama studio at the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School, but inside there's a cast of storm troopers, a school-uniformed Princess Leia, and Darth Vader (holding a fluffy unicorn), all prepping for Rock Challenge, a fiercely competitive annual dance contest featuring more than 330 schools.

Sue Jay, the school's head of creative arts, is blunt about the task ahead.

"This is not an easy event," she tells the students, who are focused on her every

word. "There will be 63 people on stage. There will be 85 of us in attendance. You are going to have to concentrate."

Jay reminds that the dance is a tribute to Carrie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds, "who died earlier this year, so you have to reflect the sadness, when you are supposed to be still and controlled, be still and controlled".

This serious version of Sue Jay is far removed from the exuberant one who burst onto the stage last year at the Pearson Teaching Awards giving a po-faced Jenny Agutter a squeeze and explaining with gusto why every child in her school takes part in a Shakespeare play every autumn term. "If they can't say a Shakespeare line, there are other ways to say things. Physically perhaps, or by bringing a letter in," she explains. "There are a whole stream of ways I've learned of communicating. There are some of our pupils who I tell a line to and they remember it right away, and they will still remember it five years later."

After conquering Shakespeare, she leads them into a term focused on dance. Jay's own children all attended Rock Challenge when they were at school. Seeing how much they loved it, she decided to enter her own pupils.

#### "PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS ARE SO LOW SOMETIMES. THAT'S WHY DOING THIS IS SO IMPORTANT"

"Can you imagine getting this group to theatre?" she asks. "We can get in, but they put lights in the wings, so you can't get a wheelchair in. It's a nightmare. There's toileting requirements. Then there's transporting the students over there. Some will have to come back after we first rehearse

and lie down. The day is from 10 in the morning

until 10 at night, and we perform between 6pm and 9pm.

"We don't know when: they draw it out of a hat. We could be first or last. We could argue that we want to know because we're not a mainstream school, but if we're in for a penny then in for a pound!"

Not everyone was supportive when she first brought her pupils over ten years ago; some feared disruption and others talked down to them.

"They would ask things like [she switches to a condescending tone] 'Oh children, do you know which side that is?' They all know! Of course they know! People's expectations are so low

sometimes. That's why doing this
is so important."

She is motivated in her work by the premature birth of her own son, who spent the start of his life on a ventilator.

"Ever since, I've thought 'this could be my son'. And if parents

want their children to do things, then I think it's our job to enable them. The world may not be ready yet, but if we can't do it, then they're not going to get to do it."

At the end of the first dress rehearsal, the students are happy. But Sue is unimpressed. There's not enough stillness. Did they practice all the moves? Why were some reflective armbands



facing the wrong way? The cast is sent to regroup and start again. This, we are told, is the last chance before the big day.

Among the storm troopers and stars are a number of staff members, blended to the point that it's not always possible to tell who is a pupil and who isn't. The school's specialist creative arts status means it tends to attract staff with drama, dance, art and music backgrounds. Quietly they mill about moving set-pieces, daubing make-up and sorting out slippery arm-reflectors.

"We can't do it unless everyone is on board," says Jay as she resets the lighting board. "It's a whole team effort and you can see my dependency on them. But on Tuesday, all this work will be worth it when you see the look on our students' faces and they know they are performing. They can't get an A in GCSE, but this is what they do. This is how they get to show off."

The set is all replaced. The lights go down. It's



#### show-time.

A sixth-former reads the story of tonight's tribute before Celine Dion's 'A mother's prayer' rings out, and pupils in long coats pushing prams, start interweaving rhythmically. A television set plays in the corner and Debbie Reynolds wearing a mackintosh sits a school-uniformed child with Princess Leia buns in front of it.

Three pupils suddenly burst into lip-synced song, dancing in imagined rain and twirling umbrellas. For a moment, Matthew – a young man with Down's syndrome, who will next year will start college – is, instead, Gene Kelly. His feet shimmying perfectly, his hat tilted at just the right angle. It is glorious, colourful, and happy, but then the dark undertones of John Williams' Star Wars theme begins and the stage is now filled with storm troopers. An older princess Leia has shed the uniform and is wearing white gowns. Darth Vader has left the unicorn behind. All are standing strong, sombre, still: just like Sue Jay said.

It goes on, interweaving cultural references and lip-syncing, with sombre dance points, until a climax in which the children playing the celebrity stars from Hollywood's Walk of Fame – with the stars attached to their wheelchairs – join the rest of the cast onstage, and the lights dim so that only the armbands and the fluorescent stars are visible – each light representing one of the 63 people on stage.

Lyrics to The Script's 'The world's gonna know your name' boom out: "You could be the greatest, you could be the best, you could be the King Kong banging on your chest. Do it for your people, do it for your pride, how you ever gonna know if you never even try?" Each child, in unison, motions exactly as they had been taught. Children who don't speak, children who can't: all communicating.

Applause erupts and everyone is smiling. "You did me proud," Jay tells them, "now let's do that again next week."

Later, in her broom cupboard-sized office, which is plastered floor to ceiling with movie posters, she explains, almost apologetically, that she has no official dance training. Educated at Haywards Heath Grammar School in Sussex, she didn't enjoy school ("I was a borderline failing person") but loved sport and continued turning up because it meant she could play hockey. Aiming to get a place on the England team, she went to Dartford PE College, barely went to lectures, and came out four years later with no place on the hockey side but a teaching qualification in hand.

For five years she taught at Court Lodge Comprehensive in Horley, where the children called her "bog brush" for her newly-permed hair ("It literally did look like a brush") but she stayed mostly because the school paid for her to attend its ski trip each year. After five trips, however, she felt a new challenge was in order and took a place to teach in a special school before coming to Elizabeth II as a nursery teacher.

One day in a staff meeting the headteacher asked if anyone fancied entering the pupils for a dance festival and she said she'd give it a go. That was 20 years ago.

"Also, please don't ask me anything about Shakespeare, I know nothing!"

What she does know is the remarkable transformation of the pupils who take part in the performances she leads.

"I've got a particular student who is a wheelchair user. Medically, she shouldn't be able to move her arms at all. At the end of the Rock Challenge last year, we've got photographs of the students and they all finished with their arms up in the air. In the photograph, she has her arm stretch up in the air. She knows we've finished. Medically, she can't do that. Dance has some sort of magic."

Seeing pupils make such progress through creative arts is why she is vicious about the government's cuts, particularly at mainstream schools, and the way league tables are constructed, which are pushing schools to reduce time for these subjects.

"It's so stupid. There's so much scientific

### **PROFILE:** SUE JAY

### "IF YOU DEPRIVE YOUR CREATIVE SIDE, EVERYTHING DROPS"

evidence if you search for it that a creative brain comes out in your maths and science. If you deprive your creative side, everything drops.

"So why would you strip a school of creative arts?" she asks. "Why do that? It's the nice bit of school! Can you imagine going to a school with none of that?

"Obviously other subjects are important. I'm not saying they're not but without the creative bit..." she trails off in despair. She has one more revelation: this year's Rock Challenge is to be her last. In July, she is leaving her job.

"It's time to get off the hamster wheel," she says in a subdued tone. "But I'll be freelance. I would be very interested in going to teacher training and maybe doing something like that. Or maybe workshops for people.

"The turnover in teachers is immense and I'm worried that new teachers are going to be taught by pretty inexperienced young people, and, you know, new teachers do come to us oldies sometimes just to talk to someone more experienced. So yes, freelance workshops, I think I'd like to do that."

Leaving the school, still covered by thunder-clapping skies, I go with a sense the golden Plato awards trophy meant a great deal to Jay and her pupils.

A few weeks later it is joined by something even more special: the Rock Challenge 2018 Perfomers' Choice Award.

#### IT'S A PERSONAL THING

#### Which animal are you most like?

There're two sides to me. I love a lot of fun but I'm also quite strict, as you've seen. So whatever animal that is? Put a dog. I don't really know. But I love dogs.

#### If you were invisible for the day what would you do?

I'd love to go to the Oscars. Send me to the Oscars! I love film.

#### What's your favourite book?

*The pillars of the Earth* – I don't know who wrote it! [It was Ken Follett - ed]. It's amazing. It's really thick. I love history.

#### Where is your favourite place?

Salzburg. I learned to ski there when I was 21 so obviously I became an expert skier and at my second special school I decided to take a group skiing to Austria. Can you imagine! We went into the building to get boots and skis and we never came out that day! I hadn't factored in a lot of things. But by the end of the week some of them were quite good.



# DESO

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#### SCHOOLS WEEK

### **OPINION: FOCUS ON EXCLUSION**





### VAL GILLIES

Professor of social policy and criminology, the University of Westminster

### Pupil referral units are amazing places to work

Exclusions are in the national eye at the moment, but the narrative around pupil referral units is all too negative, says Kiran Gill

onversations about exclusions are all the rage among politicians, but they tend to focus on three groups: parents, pupils and the headteachers accused of pushing vulnerable students out of their schools.

So why does no one mention teachers in all this? Specifically, the talented teachers who choose to work in pupil referral units and other schools for excluded students. They're a shadow army dealing with the children most likely to have mental health problems, safeguarding concerns and who need a truly transformative education. And there's not even a collective name for this group.

Most teachers think of themselves as being secondary, primary or special needs; but teachers educating excluded children are too often lumped into the category of "other". It's not a respectful phrase, and not one that helps overturn stigma surrounding exclusion.

PRUs are still a reasonably modern invention, having started in 1994. It's therefore not surprising that many teachers don't know much about them. Most won't have visited one, let alone worked in one – until 2012 PRUs weren't a recognised placement as part of teacher training. A lack of knowledge can lead to rampant misconceptions.

Stories in the media often don't help. A few years ago Schools Week ran a front-page story about an alternative provision school that locked pupils into rooms, refusing to let them go to the toilet, and blocking fire exits.

Salacious details get good headlines but here's another great story: pupil referral units get higher Ofsted grades than mainstream secondary schools. While 21 per cent of secondary schools are 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate', that figure is only 18 per cent for PRUs. That's partly due to the different approach to ratios; with radically smaller class sizes, PRUs offer opportunity to really know a pupil's needs, and build relationships which reduce difficult or dangerous behaviour.

Yet PRUs struggle to recruit. And this isn't your regular everyone-needs-to-find-amaths-bod struggle. One in eight teachers in the sector is unqualified. Pupils are twice as likely to have a supply teacher. Ofsted points to leadership of teaching and learning as a consistent area for improvement in the sector; currently much of the CPD on offer in the sector focuses on physical restraint rather than learning needs.

Only a tiny crowd of people in England specialise in the skills needed to work in pupil referral units – trauma, mental health, reengagement, safeguarding – alongside the teaching and learning expertise to change long-term outcomes for pupils. Little research has been done on what makes a

Only a tiny crowd of people in England specialise in the skills needed to work in PRUs

difference for excluded pupil's educational outcomes. Let's be clear: currently only one per cent will get five core GCSEs, one in two are not in education, employment or training (NEET) immediately after school. Half of prisoners were formally excluded when they were at school, and many more were informally pushed out.

If all these facts feel like a bottomless pit of misery, then this is the part where the triumphant music starts playing, because amid all this difficulty lies huge opportunity. If it strikes you as a huge injustice that excluded children are twice as often taught by unqualified teachers, if you find yourself thinking we must be able to do better than seeing one pupil in 100 achieve the qualifications they need, and if you believe that we can figure out new interventions to break the link between pupil exclusion, mental illness and offending, then you will undoubtedly find the PRU sector an amazing place to work.

Challenging? Yes. Rewarding? Absolutely! Will there be days when you'll likely think the job is too hard? Possibly. But then, doesn't every teacher think that? As Tom Hanks famously says in the film A league of their own, "it's supposed to be hard – it's the hard that makes it good. If it wasn't hard, then anybody could do it."

### Stop siphoning children off into alternative provision

Val Gillies spent three years researching in-school alternative provision. We asked her what the best examples looked like

o be honest, I'm more than a little hesitant about endorsing any inschool alternative provision. I think it's an indictment of the current system that segregated education is now considered normal and necessary. What ever happened to the ideal of comprehensive education? Having spent three years researching the experiences of young people that end up in in-school alternative provision units, it seem clear to me that mainstream classrooms are not designed to meet the needs of a sizeable proportion of children and young people, especially the most disadvantaged.

We can treat this as a fact of life and discuss how best to segregate those who are struggling, or we can acknowledge that something is not working, if this is what we have to resort to. The fact that the UK has some of the lowest rates of literacy in the developed world might offer a clue as to what is going wrong. The best way government can address this is to relax the high-pressure accountability culture focused almost uniquely on exam results, and properly fund our education system. This would help retain good, experienced teachers and provide sufficient numbers of qualified support staff to address the issues underlying challenging behaviour

But for schools right now a narrow, unforgiving education agenda is a fact of life and has been for some time. Prevailing standards agendas and performativity cultures produce pressurized, inflexible institutions that can be experienced as hostile by children and young people who are struggling for whatever reason.

There are instances where young people's best interests can be advanced by a short period away from the mainstream classroom. Nurture groups, for example, can help those experiencing a difficult transition to or from primary school, although I'm less than convinced by the dependence on attachment as an underpinning theoretical model.

More specifically, many of the young people in my research would have benefited from regular contact with a skilled teacher experienced in working with challenging behaviour and a (part-time) space within a mainstream school that would allow them the opportunity to build good quality relationships with staff and catch up academically. This more dedicated pastoral support would mean social and educational factors that often contextualise difficult behaviour (unmet SEN, poverty, bereavement, etc) are at least better understood and addressed.

Many mainstream teachers have no idea what anxieties and adversities students are managing and no time to find out. And more significantly, this space could help to ensure that young people's basic needs are being met, from learning support to getting enough to eat. Sometimes students just need a member of staff that they can trust to be on their side and advocate for them when relationships with classroom teachers are deteriorating. Some of the young people in my research felt persecuted by mainstream teachers, for example.

### It is not in any student's interest to be deemed not ready to learn

Conversely, it is not in any student's interest to be deemed "not ready to learn" and siphoned off into a cabin at the other end of the playground to work on their social and emotional skills for months on end. I'm really concerned by the conditionality this places on education. All children are ready to learn. Surely the onus should be on schools to be ready to teach them.

More importantly, when units are set up apart from the mainstream school, it encourages hard-pressed teachers to view demanding students as belonging somewhere else. The gap between the unit and the classroom becomes ever more difficult to bridge as time passes, with some young people ending up marooned for years with inadequate educational support and no realistic route back in to mainstream education.

If we accept the need for alternative provision as inevitable and uncontroversial, we risk this situation becoming the norm. Even with an inclusive approach and a clear behaviour policy, permanent exclusion is sometimes necessary to protect staff or students, says Jacqueline Valin

upil exclusions are finally on the political radar, and it's heartening to see the issue being publicly examined. With permanent and fixed-term exclusion rates on the rise, the question of when, or indeed whether, to exclude needs addressing.

At present, schools are only going to become more likely to permanently exclude pupils who may affect their scores. As Amanda Spielman said in her first report as Ofsted chief inspector last year, children with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to "off-rolling", where they are pushed "out of sight and out of mind".

Other pupils fail to engage with mainstream education because their personal circumstances make it unmanageable: they may have lost parents or carers, suffered abuse at home, be struggling with mental illness, or balancing caring responsibilities with their own education.

Rather than moving to exclude these children, school leaders should be doing all we can to provide the support they need.

This doesn't mean tolerating behaviour that disrupts others' educations. School leaders must ensure that structures are in place to support good learning at all times. Every pupil must understand what is expected of them and what the behaviour policy is, instilled through assemblies, tutor time and



JACQUELINE VALIN

Executive principal, Southfields Academy

### **Headteachers sometimes** have to exclude children

parent communications, and this must be consistently applied by all staff.

Our school has three clear rules, displayed all over the building in language accessible to all: 1) keep your hands and feet to yourself. 2) follow instructions, and 3) treat everyone with respect. No one wants to see a child excluded, and if they follow those very simple rules, I guarantee this will never happen.

Fixed-term exclusions are unnecessary: in too many cases, children will simply end up on the street. With adequate in-school systems such as staggered timetables, it's possible to keep pupils separated from their peers but ensure they are keeping up with their classwork. Isolation is not sufficient: it's vital to have interventions to discuss and address the behaviour.

While most pupils will do whatever it takes to get back into their classes, there are always a few who don't. Persistent disruptive

behaviour was the reason for 35 per cent of all permanent exclusions at state-funded schools last vear.

### " … In some cases, what pupils really needed was more

In some of these cases, what pupils really needed was more personalised support. To this end, we have a separate building for the small number of pupils who aren't coping in the main school

personalised support

Within this centre, we can be more intensive

in our monitoring. We can call children each morning to make sure they come to school, for instance, and we are more adapted to manage issues like lateness that would disrupt the school day in the mainstream setting. We can have closer, more regular contact with parents and carers, and provide regular oneto-one mentoring.

All the students in this centre sit at least seven GCSEs, with a focus on progression to further education, apprenticeships or employment.

There are circumstances in which a school is left with no option, as when a pupil deliberately attacks a member of staff or brings a weapon into school.

Our local PRU acts as a kind of brokering centre for excluded children, working with them before sending them to us, initially for a 12-week trial period. This kind of arrangement can be very successful children need the chance to start afresh.

Managed moves are often criticised as exclusion by another name, but sometimes it's impossible to keep a child in a particular school. They may succeed with a fresh start at another school, however: a system which can be especially successful with a network of schools willing to work with the local authority to achieve the best outcomes.

The government can help reduce exclusions in two ways: by relaxing results-based pressures to encourage school leaders to focus on what is right for each child, and by improving schools' capacity for pastoral and mental health support through increased funding.



### RUSSELL HOLLAND

Barrister in the education team, Michelmores law firm

Are zero-tolerance behaviour policies even allowed by law?

With the parliamentary education committee considering exclusions at present, barrister Russell Holland explains schools' legal liabilities

he education select committee has been reviewing exclusions and recently heard evidence about the way zero tolerance behavior policies potentially reduce inclusion. Its hearings even raised the question of whether zero tolerance policies are legal, especially given the fact that schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate pupils' needs under the Equality Act 2010.

The topic of school discipline will always generate a range of opinion, but what are the legal realities?

While maintained schools and academies each have a separate legal framework for

disciplinary policy, they are both ultimately subject to general public concepts of acting lawfully, reasonably, rationally and in a procedurally fair way. Failing to meet any of these conditions are the traditional grounds on which a judicial review might be granted. In this context it is noteworthy that the exclusions guidance allows an independent review panel to direct a governing board to reconsider an exclusion if the decision failed to meet any of these criteria

For sanctions less severe than an exclusion then (unless the case alleges discrimination). the prospects of legal action seem unlikely. The cost need to bring such a claim may well be disproportionate to the issues. However, in the context of school discipline such a claim would raise the following questions: is there reasoned evidence to support a disciplinary policy, and does the disciplinary policy

properly include legal considerations such the school's duty of care to students?

Ultimately in order to succeed, a judge would need to conclude that the policy was so unreasonable that no reasonable school would have one like it. This is a very high threshold

The greater risk for schools on school discipline would be a claim made under the Equality Act. Claims for disability discrimination can be made at the first tier tribunal (FTT), which can be a useful forum for claimants because it is rare for the unsuccessful party to be ordered to pay costs. That said, the FTT can't order compensation for successful claimants, either. If compensation is sought for a disability discrimination claim or similar, then it might be made in the county court instead. If the claim is geared towards changing a policy, then a judicial review is the proper avenue - especially to obtain a declaration that a policy is unlawful.

Disability discrimination claims would generally be made on the basis of indirect discrimination, disability-related discrimination or for a failure to make reasonable adjustments. The key point for schools when disciplining a disabled student is to be able to demonstrate that their specific needs were specifically taken into account and to ensure that this is documented.

So for example, if a disabled child is excluded on a temporary basis, the letter should specifically set out how their needs were taken into account. If a disciplinary policy has a reward system in which children who misbehave miss out on a reward then

it is particularly important to ensure that there is documented evidence about how a child's particular needs have been taken into account

If there is a claim, any disciplinary engagement is going to be the subject of close scrutiny, and documented evidence is vital. This may include records to show that relevant staff have had training. While this can be potentially resource-intensive, if evidence is not available there will likely be criticism at a trial. Even where a child is not considered to be disabled but has some form of learning difficulty, it is best to proceed in the same manner, as if they are disabled, and specifically detail how their particular needs have been considered.

### 66 -All schools are subject to general public concepts of acting lawfully, reasonably, rationally and in a procedurally fair way

Overall it is a matter of judgment for schools what disciplinary policy they want to follow, but the key area of legal risk is around discrimination

SCHOOLS WEEK

INTRODUCING THE HOODINERNEY MODEL AS REVEALED AT HTRT SUMMIT

# WANT A SENSIBLE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Five years ago Laura McInerney and Matt Hood developed a model for how the schools system might work more coherently. Few people listened. Some parts were echoed in David Blunkett's review of school management, but, otherwise, it failed.

'Never mind, the system will work out,' they thought. Five years on, and it's still not okay. In fact, it's even more fragmented.

So here they are, trying again to convince the world about the way our school system could become coherent again.



**LAURA.MCINERNEY** @MISS\_MCINERNEY

**MATT HOOD** @MATTHEWHOOD

#### How did we get into such a fragmented mess?

he academy system has one huge benefit. In the past, when schools were overseen purely by local authorities, everything was great as long as schools were performing. If a school failed, but the authority was working out, then turnaround was possible. But if a school struggled and the authority was floundering then it was often a disaster. Under this system, some schools failed systematically for decades.

One idea was to turn the authority around, or outsource it for a short period until it got back on its feet like the Hackney Learning Trust. Finding organisations able to pull this off was a problem, however. Most people who know how to rescue local authorities already work in them and aren't just sitting at home waiting to be deployed onto a takeover team.

Another solution – the one that the academy system provides – was to change the system so that schools were run by nonprofit academy trusts, or multi-academy trusts as they gathered more schools.

Under the charity model, if a school is failing it can be removed from its local authority (or more recently its academy trust) and given to another one. This is much easier because there are lots of trusts (around 1,000) and so it's always possible to find another when needed. It's even possible to move every school in a trust and close it down altogether. The recent failure of a 21-school trust in Wakefield proves the point. Within a few months, other trusts said they would take on the schools. The problem is that around 30 per cent of schools are in this model, and it's very uneven across phases. While over 70 per cent of secondary schools are in trusts, fewer than 25 per cent of primary schools are. We're running two parallel systems and that's messy.

We've also got a situation where local authorities have essentially been hollowed out. Manchester used to have loads of school improvement partners to help struggling schools but now it has next to none. So local authorities are hamstrung when they attempt a comparable job to multi-academy trusts, even though they are responsible for most primary schools.

The regional schools commissioners manage the contract between the state and the trust to run a school but, as their role is now expanding, they are also inspecting (or "monitoring") schools and taking on school improvement roles. Then there's the partially hilarious situation in which Ofsted can inspect schools and local authorities but can't inspect multi-academy trusts. So instead they swoop into 15 schools at once and do an unofficial multi-academy trust inspection report that's as informal as it is un-appealable.

It's worth saying that we strongly believe, despite the confusion, that the system has lots of really good people doing, with good intentions, the things that they believe are right. Were this mess transitioning towards a more coherent system, we would be okay. Today's acute problem, though, is that we are not transitioning anywhere.



Figure 1 – In the past, everything was okay if schools were performing well and local authorities overseeing them performed well



Figure 2 – If a school failed, and the local authority did not have the capacity to resolve it, there was a serious problem. Some schools languished for many years in this situation.



Figure 3 – One idea was the outsourcing of the local authority to a private provider – but they aren't enough organisations able to do this role



Figure 4 – So, multi-academy trusts were created meaning schools could be moved if they fail from one trust into another. However, this developed alongside the LA model. And then regional commissioners were placed on top. This is confusing.

# 1? HERE'S HOW IT SHOULD LOOK...



1.

### So how do we create a new model?

We created a model based on three simple principles.

- **People can only do their job and not somebody else's.** In the school system we need everyone to do one job. Each of these roles is tough enough without having to do everyone else's at the same time. As crazy as this sounds, we just want schools to be teaching their pupils. Likewise, commissioners cannot also be improvers and inspectors can't be setting policy through speeches and reports.
- 2. **Every decision needs to be open and transparent.** Opaque decisions attract sharks and provoke suspicion. Not every discussion must be public, but decisions must be publicly explained and evidence taken into consideration open for scrutiny.
- 3. **There can be no conflicts of interest.** This means no related-party transactions absolutely none. It isn't permitted in other charitable sectors, so if governors want to offer deal-of-the-century items to schools, then give them to the place down the road.

### **REVEALED: HOW THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD WORK**

he solution is so simple it's embarrassing. The Department for Education appoints commissioners. Those commissioners then contract – or "commission", the clue is in the name – multi-academy trusts to run schools. Commissioners also sign off on opening new schools, closures and pupil admission number changes.

The Education Funding Agency (note, we've removed "skills") is basically the administrative arm of the regional schools commissioners, staffed with civil servants who actually write and manage contracts, send out cash and balance the books. They can ask independent auditors to investigate the books of academy trusts, but they can't do it themselves (per rule two). Any information on finances can be used by the RSCs to terminate or renegotiate contracts if needed.

Next are the "school improvers" – that is, academy trusts. As we see it, the job of trusts is, basically, school improvement. Obviously they have outsiders in to help, but if a multiacademy trust wants to buy in a school improvement partner, or a peer-to-peer network, or 3,000 days of coaching, that's its own choice. Ultimately, school improvement is for the multi-academy trust to sort – and if it can't, the school in question moves to someone else.

Note, this category includes multiacademy trusts, standalone academies and



local-authority trusts. As a hybrid system is too complex, our solution is to compel local authorities to create arms-length spin-off trusts in which they place their schools, similar to the way council housing was placed into arms-length housing associations in the 2000s.

Local authorities could take 19 per cent of governor places, as they currently can on any academy trust. However, these trusts are not owned by the local authority.

And that's good because the local authority

can then focus on its own jobs (per rule 1), which we believe are admissions, placeplanning and commissioning special-needs provisions. If you want that written as one job: making every child gets a guality place.

In our brave new world, schools are not in charge of their own admissions ( as that would be a conflict of interest, as per rules 1 and 3), so local authorities do it.

We recognise that commissioners have ultimate control on how many places exist, as they grant school openings, closures and place changes. That said, we'd give local authorities the right to have an open hearing with the commissioner on this issue each year, at which councillors represent local people's views about place needs. The commissioner would then write a public decision about why they are granting cash/ contracts to meet demand (per rule 2). If the RSC think the local authority is wrong, they can say so – and not grant any more schools. This separates local and national democracy in an important way. In our

#### SCHOOLS WEEK

#### FRIDAY, MAR 9, 2018

### INTRODUCING THE HOODINERNEY MODEL AS REVEALED AT HTRT SUMMIT

model, local councillors can be held responsible for the quality of their input to the commissioner (which will be public, both in terms of the meetings and minutes), but it is the national government which should be held responsible for the outcome – that is, the decisions of the commissioners. After all, national government appointed the commissioner and holds the purse strings. Hence, if a town is furious at the regional schools commissioner, it should take it out on their MP. If they are mad at the way its councillors represented local needs, take it to the local elections.

And if you don't believe any voter does this, we basically agree, but we are also sceptical that ballot-box democracy has ever really held anyone in education to proper account.

The one group left is Ofsted. As we see it, Ofsted is the schools inspectorate. The only inspectors.

Regional schools commissioners cannot have their own monitors sticking their noses into schools. It is Ofsted's job to inspect both schools and academy trusts, and write up reports which are fed back to commissioners.

Commissioners can ask Ofsted to conduct an inspection if they need more intelligence, but the inspection must be independent. Reports can then be used to close a school if needed, something Ofsted cannot do alone ( due to rule 1), or the report can be ignored. That is up to the commissioner – as long as they explain themselves (rule 2).

And that's it. All the bits are pointing in the right direction and almost every issue is solved.

#### **Frequently asked questions:**

#### What about special needs: We

somewhat waved a hand here and said "LAs are in charge of special needs" as if that's easy. It's not. In fact, Jules Daulby, who knows about these things, has suggested that special needs may even need its own commissioning system which sits behind the LA. We are totally up for that.

Where are headteacher boards? In the bin. You can't have school improvers also trying to be the commissioner (rule 3). Open local hearings would replace headteacher board meetings and at hearings anyone could present evidence – including councillors, local headteachers, and parents (rule 2). The RSC then makes decisions via a public written document (rule 2).

#### What about all the weird grants and school improvement funds that multi-academy trusts apply to the EFA for?

Good point. A lot of those grants break rule 2 and there's a conflict of interest with the EFA handing out cash when it is also managing contracts around quality. Hence we are happy with the DfE directing policy itself, and putting up funds for its own projects which multi-academy trusts can apply for. For example, the recent cash for breakfast clubs is the perfect example of a fund the DfE could dangle and get people to apply for if it so chooses without wrecking the system. As for school improvement funding, in our model it's not a thing. If money is needed because a school has failed and needs turnaround support, that can be built into the rebroker terms when the commissioner writes a new contract. If a school is only temporarily failing and needs emergency cash this could also be part of a (transparent) contract renegotiation.

### What about teaching schools alliances?

They can keep existing. If trusts or a school want to be in one to help with their school

improvement then that's great for them, but they're not a school improver. Their job is to train and develop teachers to teach. Teaching schools may improve by proxy, or a multi-academy trust may choose to buy their services in to aid improvement. As an individual item however, their role is not "school improver".

#### WE NEED YOU

Having spent five years on this, we think it solves many problems. Yes, it still relies on good people filling every role. And we aren't saying in-dealing will disappear. But it at least puts the system on the road to coherence. And, from that road, we can talk about how to tweak the system and make it better rather than continuing in the messy, ridiculous, borderlinecorrupt way the school system works at present.

The question is: what have we missed out? What else does the model need? You tell us.

Contact us via twitter (@miss\_mcinerney & @matthewhood) or email laura@schoolsweek.co.uk

### WHAT JOB DOES EACH ORGANISATION DO IN THE NEW MODEL?



DFE – Appoints regional commissioners

REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS – Commission trusts to run schools and manage the contracts. This includes granting new schools, closing schools, and moving schools from one trust to another.

TRUSTS - Run and improve schools





SCHOOLS - Teach children

LOCAL AUTHORITIES – Ensure every child has a high quality place (via admissions, representing the area at place-planning hearings, and overseeing special needs)

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#### 24 SCHOOLSWEEK

### REVIEWS

### TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

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



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

#### 

The WomenEd book club, non-binary bias and the affair Penelope didn't have @Penny\_Ten

After the inaugural #WomenEd online book club discussion on Mary Beard's Women and power on January 28, Penny Rabiger explores issues of gender and voice.

"One of the things that troubles me is how we manage to tackle these issues without polarising into men and women, good and bad, feminist and sexist, and without alienating people," she writes.

She discusses the importance of understanding socialisation and conditioning (to which we are all subject, whether we accept it or not), how and why we categorise, and why we need to be alert to the ways in which categorisation can be misleading and even unhealthy. Penny is saying what I think, but she has the flair to express it so much more skilfully than I could.

#### What do I tell my young performers when they ask me if they should go into the performing arts industry? @isc\_schools

In this blog, from the Independent Schools Council website, a head of drama considers the advice she gives to students who want to pursue a career in the performing arts. Melanie Stamp understands that this is an industry which is "brutal and elitist" and that anyone venturing into it requires resilience and strong support networks.

She recognises how recent revelations have raised our awareness of the extent of sexual harassment and bullying across the arts and media world, and knows how all this may well deter the talented and committed. However, she loves her subject, and concludes that this is a time of change and opportunity: "Now is the time to encourage our young people to take theatre in a new direction for the future they want to see. Introverted leadership – Harnessing your authentic ambition @AnnaAmbrose

#### Anna's post is based on her

presentation at a #WomenEd event in Birmingham on January 20. She spoke about her professional journey, how she felt the need to act the part of a more outgoing person in order to be taken seriously as an aspiring leader, until "from a point where I felt that my current leadership 'act' wasn't enough, and was questioning whether I had the energy to act some more, I found a different path and decided to be more me, not

less". She talks of how networking with others can help to give us the confidence to flourish as authentic leaders, teachers and human beings.

#### Values-led leadership: Moving from surviving to thriving @TheHopefulHT

Headteacher Hannah describes recent events she has attended and advice she has shared with educators at all levels, focusing on the importance of values and "the things I wish I had known earlier in my career, the insights I have gained through my tumultuous leadership journey over the last few years".

These include the value of reflection, the power of coaching, why we need never to lose sight of our "non-negotiables", and how, if we do this, we can navigate difficult change. I found this inspiring.

#### The MaternityTeacherPaternityTeacher project at #TLCWorcs18 @bristol\_teacher

Claire Nicholls' post is also based on a presentation, one I was privileged to hear at #TLC (Teaching, Leadership, Confidence) in Worcester in February. Claire has been involved in the #MTPTproject since the time of her own maternity leave, and she writes here about how the initiative developed, what it is trying to achieve and why it is well worth supporting, whatever your personal circumstances. Claire's presentation and this blog made me think, and encouraged me to challenge some of my own assumptions.

#### **The first 19 lessons of headship** @ITLWorldwide

A bonus final piece comes from Independent Thinking Ltd. I read and tweeted this recently and the number of comments and retweets it generated suggested it had clearly struck a chord. The first 19 lessons (originally 15, but the list has grown) of headship. See what you think.

# BOOKREVIEW

-CRAIG BARTON-

#### How I wish I'd taught maths By Craig Barton

**Published by** John Catt Educational **Reviewed by** Sinead Goodden, assistant headteacher for CPD

#### \*\*\*\*

There can't be many maths teachers in the land who have not heard of Craig Barton, either through his resources or the hugely popular *Mr Barton's Maths* podcast. If you have been part of the mastery initiative, lots of the ideas won't be new, similarly if you generally keep up to date with the latest maths educational research. However, it is the plentiful

examples and practical nature of this book which makes it so appealing essential reading for both novice and experienced teachers

When you find yourself talking to strangers on holiday about a maths education book and their eyes don't glaze over, it's a clear indicator that it might be a page-turner! Barton has no agenda other than

#### trying to improve his own

teaching. This book is him sharing, in an accessible and immensely readable style, the changes he has made to his teaching and why.

I appreciated the consistent structure throughout, which follows the format of "what I used to do", "sources of inspiration", "my takeaways" and "what I do now". Busy teachers will also be grateful for the summary at the end of each chapter, which Barton calls "if I only remember three things".

"What I used to do" and "what I do now" are self-explanatory. I am a stickler for research and evidenced-based teaching, so I loved the "sources of inspiration" where Barton lists all the research articles and books that have inspired the changes he has made. As I read this book, my wishlist of other books expanded exponentially.

If you are expecting this book to be a critique of the literature, you will be disappointed – but it does not profess to be that. "My takeaways" is feasibly the most interesting section. Here, Barton reflects on the research and interprets it in a classroom context with lots of practical examples. What made this book so different from

others I have read is the fact Barton is still a classroom teacher. I could be reading a section and think "where does he get the questions for his low-stakes quizzes from?", then turn over a page and almost immediately find the answer. Similarly, I have found this with his podcasts; I would think of a question I wanted to ask the guest and almost by telepathy Barton asks the very same question himself! This is in stark contrast to some books and articles written by educational academics who are no longer in the classroom.

The influence of Barton's interview of Doug

Lemov (his podcast in November 2017) is obvious throughout the book. During this interview, Lemov describes his approach to delivering CPD sessions - "see it, name it, do it". Barton follows the same mantra, trying to give his strategies memorable names, for example: "the goal-free effect", "silent teacher", "example-problem pairs", "supercharged worked examples" and so on. This is useful as you read the book because it helps you

remember previous sections.

A word of warning: my love of this book could be influenced by the fact that our career paths are similar, from our roles to our change of teaching philosophy. Just as Barton cringes at the memory of dressing up as Pythagoras, I cringe at the memory of dressing up as Euclid. One of the key messages in the book is that "students remember what they think about" and looking back, dressing up as an ancient Greek mathematician certainly won't help pupils remember the fundamentals of Euclidean geometry!

So, in true Mr Barton style, if you only remember three things:

- 1. This book is essential reading for maths teachers at any career stage.
- 2. This book is broken down into very practical and useable sections.
- This book is so readable that it continues to answer your own questions as they inevitably arise.



# Week in Westminster

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

### **MONDAY:**

The Liberal Democrats want to snatch the teacher vote from Labour. How? By scrapping Ofsted, league tables, SATs and pretty much everything else in schools.

In its place, Uncle Vince and co want to establish an "independent schools inspectorate". If the idea sounds familiar, that's because it already exists. The Independent Schools Inspectorate is the national inspectorate of, yes, you guessed it... independent schools.

We expect the next Lib Dem policy paper to propose a new name for the ISI once its current one is pilfered by the government that they're definitely going to form.

### **TUESDAY**:

The DfE announced new £40k bursaries to encourage veterans to teach. Well, we say "announced". Technically, the department re-announced its announcement, which had already been announced by the MoD in The Sunday Times. The DfE was also forced to admit that there was no way to ensure that these veterans, who will get their money in the second and third years of an undergrad degree in "shortage" subjects, will actually enter the teaching profession.

This was missing from the original announcement because the MoD got its facts wrong and initially claimed the bursary was only available to those studying for a teaching degree. Oops! Meanwhile, one name stands out from the rest of the signatories on a hard-hitting letter urging Damian Hinds to abandon plans to lift the faith admissions cap for free schools.

No, it's not Rowan Williams, though the former Archbishop of Canterbury's intervention is significant.

The most important name on the list is Sarah Wollaston, the Conservative MP for Totnes, who is one of the new "awkward squad" of Tory backbench rebels.

Wollaston threatened to vote down proposals to scrap the cap last time they were proposed in 2016. At that point, the government had a slim majority. Now, with the government propped up by the DUP, opposition from its own benches will be even more unwelcome.

### WEDNESDAY:

Amanda Spielman's testimony to the education committee made for uncomfortable viewing, as the chief inspector squirmed her way through almost two hours of questions from MPs.

No wonder. Ofsted is under huge pressure on illegal schools, a problem it feels helpless to solve without extra powers and support from the government. Week in Westminster expects Spielman would far rather Damian Hinds had been there to field the difficult questions.

However, another bone of contention for MPs was Ofsted's controversial "Bold beginnings" report on reception, which annoyedmany educationalists last year.

While other MPs attempted to discredit the evidence in the report with their own anecdotes, Lucy Powell, the former shadow education secretary, questioned the rationale behind the report. Powell raised concerns that, because "a particular government minister" is "militant on one side of argument", the report may prompt a "more draconian approach to reception". Week in Westminster can only wonder whom she was talking about.

### THURSDAY:

Another cause of concern for the government is the loss of new teachers to supply agencies. In its teacher recruitment bulletin for March, the DfE asks ITT providers for their "support" in advising candidates of the "potential implications of signing up with agencies".

As per prior Schools Week investigations, the government has received evidence that supply teacher and recruitment agencies are hoovering up new teachers. It seems that supply teacher agencies are now public enemy number one. So how is the government's new trusted supply teacher agency pool is coming along?

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEEKLIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name Chris Jones Age 54 Occupation Former school leader, now company director Location Essex Subscriber since July 2016

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...



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

On my iPad, usually in an evening or over the weekend after a busy week working with schools across the country.

#### Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?

I really read it for news of the developments within multi-academy trusts. It's a bit of business intelligence, but also because I am concerned for the education system.

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

The use of test results as the sole indicator of the success of an institution. You can argue that other markers are used, but the national dialogue is based on this.

#### Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?

Kenneth Baker. He was and still is a huge change agent within the system. He recognised the need for staff to constantly grow and develop, hence Baker Days, and has championed the UTC system and reform generally.

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

The reporting on progress measures and their impact is probably my first read. Secondly, the changing face of academy trusts.



What do you do with your copy of Schools Week once you've read it? I share it with my colleagues at my company, CJ Learning, and I send specific articles to staff for specific action.

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

I'd create an edition focused on curriculum design and purpose, one article would be on curriculum-led budget planning, which is the major focus of what we do, and another on increasing need in these times of reduced budgets.

#### Favourite memory of your school years?

Dinky Richardson, an art teacher and ex-architect who inspired us to be creative and not accept the standard position.

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

Making furniture and turning wood, revisiting all the lost crafts that made this nation what it is.

#### Favourite book on education?

The curriculum: Theory and practice by A.V Kelly

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

More discussion of key issues. Curriculum design would be my favourite but there are so many dimensions of school life that the list is endless.

If you could be a fly on the wall in anyone's office, whose would it be? Sir David Carter because there is so much to be done and I want to hear how policy is translated to practice. I'd find it hard to be a quiet fly...

#### SCHOOLS WEEK

Sulletin with Sam King

#### **Dragged into the 21st century FEATURED**

Bristol-based primary school has used World Book Day to raise awareness of LGBT issues by inviting drag queens to read to pupils. Parson Street Primary School hosted a performance group called Drag Queen Story Time, who read from books including 10,000 Dresses by Marcus Ewart and Olive the dog who was really a frog, by Simon Toby Browne, which explore themes of gender identity and equality, and challenge the idea of gendered clothing.

The school invited the group to take part in the event after a recommendation from the deputy mayor of Bristol, who had seen them perform at local libraries.

"We thought it could support our work

around equality," explained Jamie Barry, the school's headteacher. "It wasn't our primary objective when we made the booking, but we thought it would be a useful conversation to have with our children about gender identity and so on."

The school was awarded the 'gold best practice' award from LGBT charity Educate and Celebrate in 2017, which recognises schools that promote equality and celebrate diversity in the classroom.

"There was some concern about the



appropriateness of the drag queens because people thought they were adult

Drag Queen Story Time perform for primary pupils (Credit: SWNS)

entertainers," Barry admitted. "We had to remind them that they did work in adult entertainment, but in the same way that there are actors in Peaky Blinders who also read stories on CBeebies. They'll tailor their performance to the audience.

"I think we need more and more schools to do things like this so it doesn't become an outof-the-ordinary, maverick show that it perhaps looks like it is."



### **Mr Cameron comes to visit**

avid Cameron has officially launched a specialist school's new state-of-theart building.

St Piers School in Surrey, which educates more than 50 children with complex epilepsy and other neurological conditions, now has an immersive sensory learning area to help pupils develop their cognitive skills, and even a go-kart track

Pupils have moved into the new school building on St Pier's Lane, which became reality after the former prime minister's wife Samantha launched a capital fundraising appeal for the £5.63 million the project needed back in 2011.

"The new building and facilities are secondto-none, the staff are exceptional - and it

was a real pleasure to see the impact on the learning and behaviour of the young people," said Cameron. who is vice-



president of Young Epilepsy, the charity that runs the non-maintained special school. "St Piers School looks absolutely

magnificent and has facilities many schools could only dare to dream of. I am delighted that David Cameron was able to open the school," added Sir Gerald Archer, Young Epilepsy's president.



Newly hatched



### **FREE FOOTBALL KITS FOR SCHOOLS**

Schools can get their hands on football kits and sporting equipment for free through a programme encouraging children to be more active in school.

The Premier League Primary Stars Kit and Equipment scheme is offering primary schools in England a range of football-themed equipment, including pop-up goals, full football kits, footballs, cones, training bibs and even tracksuits for teachers.

The application window to apply for the kits runs from Feb 20 to April 6, and successful applicants will receive their footballing supplies from September.

"We hope this year's process will be as successful as last year when we donated over 3,700 kits and equipment packs," said Nick Perchard, head of community at the Premier League. "Schools have the opportunity to apply for a full playing-kit, or an equipment pack which includes items that support teachers to get their children active throughout the day."

To apply for the equipment, teachers need to register on the Premier League Primary Stars website, and visit: https://plprimarystars.com/ kit-scheme

### The bestlaid plan

Seven ducklings have successfully hatched at Oasis Academy Byron in a school-wide lesson on life-cycles.

The school obtained the eggs and equipment needed to hatch them from an egg supplier in time for its annual science week, giving pupils the chance to experience the hatching process first-hand. The eggs have been on display in the school's reception area in an incubator.

so visitors, staff, parents and pupils could witness the miracle of life unfold. "It makes them understand the life-cycle

so much better when they've seen them in the egg and when they come out," said Jill Turner, the school's science leader. "You can

show them pictures, but it's not nearly as engaging as having the real, soft, cute, furrv obiects."

Now the ducklings have hatched, pupils and staff are being encouraged to handle them as often as possible, to ready them for life outside the school gates.

"The egg supplier has a list of people who want the ducks, so they want us to handle them as much as possible, so they're really people-friendly," Turner added.

College

farm near Warwickshire.

START DATE: January 2018

Middle School

time.

**EDITION 132** 



**INTERESTING FACT:** Roger grew up on a small

BEN

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Deputy head, Tweedmouth

**INTERESTING FACT:** Ben builds and restores

classic and custom motorcycles in his spare

RYDER

Middle School

Headteacher. Berwick

#### WILLIAM RILEY Headteacher, **Queensway Primary** School

#### **START DATE:** June 2018

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Deputy headteacher, Worthinghead Primary School

**INTERESTING FACT:** William likes to collect original art and has a collection of over 1,000 video games.

#### 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

#### **DR TRACY** CARLTON

**Marketing and** business development director, Services for Education

**START DATE: January 2018** 

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Director of marketing, **Keypath Education UK** 

**INTERESTING FACT:** Tracy's favourite party trick is making animal sculptures out of tin foil.



#### BILL HOLLEDGE CEO, Paradigm Trust

START DATE: March 2018

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Chief operating officer and acting CEO, Paradigm Trust

**INTERESTING FACT:** Bill originally trained as a nursery teacher.





Speakers include: Laura McInerney Contributing Editor at Schools Week

If you're a Chair, Vice Chair, Governor or Head Teacher, the SCHOOLS NorthEast Northern Governance Conference is an unmissable opportunity to network with regional colleagues and find support around the biggest issues facing school governors today.

SCHOOLS NorthEast, the first and only school-led regional network in the UK, was founded by Head Teachers in the North East in 2007. Now in their tenth year, SCHOOLS NorthEast are continuing to support schools through a culture of collaboration and their extensive events programme.

### **Event information**

To find out more or to book tickets Go to www.schoolsnortheast.com/events or call 0191 204 88 66

Friday 20th April 2018 at St James' Park, Newcastle upon Tyne Tickets from as low as £30+VAT



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#### SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

							-		
	0						7		Difficult
3	8					4	5		EASY
				5	6			8	
		3			2			9	
4	1	9	5		3	8	2	7	
5			8			3			
1			6	9					
	4	6					3	1	
	5								

7				3			2		Difficulty MEDIUM
	8	9						1	
2			5	7			4	6	
9		8			5				
			2		3				
			7			1		3	
8	4			6	2			9	
1						6	3		
	9			5				2	Solutions

3 6 7 5 2 1 9 8

 1
 4
 6
 9
 7
 5
 3
 2

 6
 3
 2
 8
 5
 9
 1
 4

4 1 3 8 7 6

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

Solutions:Difficulty:Next weekMEDIUM

4

8

7

2 9 5

#### **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.