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SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

FRIDAY, MAY 4, 2018 | EDITION 138

THE HINDS ERA BEGINS

- RSC 'inspections' of schools BANNED
- 'Coasting' and floor standards under review
- Only 'inadequate' schools face forced conversion
- £5m teacher sabbatical fund unveiled

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On notice: 27 private schools warned by DfE

ALIX ROBERTSON | @ALIXROBERTSON4 Investigates

Twenty-seven warning notices sent out to private schools have been published by the Department for Education, six months after they were issued.

The government began releasing the notices in February, following a *Schools Week* campaign which demanded parity of treatment with the state sector.

The existence of the notices was first revealed by *Schools Week* in 2015 as part of a broader investigation into regulatory failures in the independent sector. We discovered that 131 were

quietly issued between January and November in 2016.

The following January, the DfE even claimed that it would immediately begin publishing the notices online, but none appeared at all for more than a year.

Schools Week's analysis of the latest 27 reports found substantial concerns about faith schools, special schools and alternative provision for excluded pupils, along with wide discrepancies between the fees that individual institutions charge.

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Profile

PAUL WHITEMAN |
NAHT's COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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NEWS: PRIVATE SCHOOL WARNING NOTICES



Religious schools: From the sublime to the ridiculous

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4 **Investigates**

The government has made public 27 warning notices issued to private schools that failed to meet its independent school standards. Schools Week senior reporter Alix Robertson took an in-depth look at the documents.

Gender segregation, narrow curriculums and failures to prepare pupils for life in British society have been identified at nine faith private schools.

Six of the 27 schools criticised in this round were Islamic and three were orthodox Jewish.

Among them are Olive Secondary Boys and Olive Secondary Girls, two sections of an Islamic faith school in Bradford which cater to around 200 pupils. It is part of The Olive Foundation, an organisation that runs evening schools in Islamic studies. Boys and girls are taught separately by staff of their own gender.

Inspectors wrote to the school, which charges fees of £2,075 per year, after it fell from 'good' to 'inadequate' at an inspection last July. Ofsted noted it had stopped teaching Islamic studies in the school day, after "disappointing" exam results in 2016.

The watchdog found boys and girls were treated differently enough to affect personal development. Inspectors said pupils needed more opportunities to mix with different genders and the public.

Boys did not get the same quality of English teaching, while girls didn't get regular opportunities for physical education.



The school also did not accept pupils with special educational needs, in violation of equalities law. It was approached for comment.

Talmud Torah London, an orthodox Jewish school for boys aged five to seven in Hackney, was criticised for not preparing pupils properly for life in British society after being branded 'inadequate' by Ofsted last June.

The school opened in September 2015 as an unregistered setting, and in February 2016 was granted registration for 20 boys. It is now located in a local synagogue. Its fees were not disclosed.

Ofsted found pupils spent most of their time learning Yiddish and a 'Kodesh' religious curriculum. The 'Chol' secular curriculum was "too narrow", with "fragmentary teaching", no checks on progress and "minimal" provision for

personal, social, health and economic education. The school was approached for comment.

In its new integration strategy, the government promised to beef up the action it takes against private schools that fail to meet the independent school standards, but campaigners don't believe it will work.

Private schools were warned earlier in the year that they could fail inspections if pupils are being led to believe followers of other faiths are "not worthy of respect", if different religions are not taught, or if boys and girls are taught differently because of their sex.

The DfE also drew up a voluntary code of practice to keep pupils safe in out-of-school religious settings like madrasas and yeshivas, despite opposition from faith leaders.

Jay Harman, education campaigns manager for Humanists UK, said the failings in this round of warning notices are "endemic to the faith school sector as a whole".

"Engaging in a game of faith school whack-a-mole, which deals only with problems as they arise in individual schools, can never be successful," he said, asking on the government to "show some teeth and tackle these problems at the system-wide level".

Other private faith schools written to by the DfE were Islamic schools Tayyibah Girls' School in Stamford Hill, Olive Tree School in Lewisham, Al-Furqan Community College for Boys in Birmingham, and Date Valley School in Surrey, Jewish schools Beis Soroh Schneirer and Beth Jacob Grammar School, both in Hendon, and Luton Pentecostal Church Christian Academy.

HUGE VARIATIONS IN FEE STRUCTURES

The fees charged by private schools in the latest round of warning notices vary from less than £2,000 to more than £85,000.

Fig Tree Primary School, a low-cost primary in Nottingham with an "Islamic religious character" and only around 50 pupils costs just £1,800 a year. At the other end of the scale, the Hillcrest Shifnal School in Shropshire charges up to whopping £87,000.

Fig Tree, which was rated 'inadequate' across the board in 2017, is not the first private school with comparatively low fees. In February 2017, Professor James Tooley caused a stir with his plans to establish The Independent Grammar School: Durham, a "no-frills" private school charging just £2,700 a year.

At the time, Tooley told *Schools Week* it would provide "really sound grammar school-type education" but pupils would forego perks like "Olympic swimming pools".

That same month, Janet Downs from the Local Schools Network argued that smaller, cheaper private schools are actually more likely to be rated poorly by Ofsted, and are also often in worse buildings.

Ofsted's assessment of Fig Tree Primary found that its buildings are "in a poor state of repair", with loose ceiling tiles, damp, mould, and unsafe electrical sockets. "Many urgent repairs are needed and pupils' health and welfare are at risk," the regulator said at the time.

It had no medical room and leaders lacked the "training, expertise or time" to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities.

Dr Humaira Latif said the inspection happened at a tricky time. The school had an acting headteacher who had only been in role for a couple of weeks. Since then Latif has taken charge permanently. "It was difficult for her to showcase our strengths," she said.

Maintenance work was planned for the upcoming holidays, including preparing a medical room and refurbishing toilets.

Since Ofsted's visit, external reviews of governance, health and safety and safeguarding have taken place and staff have received more training.

Latif acknowledged finances are "a big contributor" to the school's challenges: "We are limited with our resources; our material as well as man power."

Of the 27 schools in the latest wave of published notices, Olive Secondary charged the second lowest fees, at £2,075 per year, ahead of Tayyibah Girls' School, which charged £2,670. Both are Muslim schools located in Bradford and London.

Higher fees are generally charged by special schools. Running Deer in Devon, where staff work one-to-one with pupils, charges £52,000 a year.

Joanna Winterburn, its managing director, said this depends on the needs of the pupil: "In some cases, we charge more if higher/intensive support is required."

Hillcrest Shifnal School told *Schools Week* it has "no standardised fee", and charges different amounts based on individual pupils' needs.

Special schools: 'A square peg for a round hole'

Leaders of private schools for excluded pupils and those with special educational needs have hit back at criticism.

Four private special schools and two alternative provision schools were issued with warning notices in the most recent round, but leaders argued Ofsted's analysis was unfair because of the unique needs of their pupils.

Hillcrest Shifnal School, a school for seven- to 19-year-olds with social, emotional, mental health and learning needs in Shropshire, received a DfE warning after a no-notice one-day inspection in September last year, triggered by a complaint.

The school is part of the Hillcrest Children's Services organisation which runs six schools and is part of the Outcomes First Group, which offers care and educational services in 100 local authorities. It charges fees of up to £87,000 a year and had 42 pupils in September.

Ofsted found few schemes of work, "exceptionally weak" outcomes and poor behaviour at secondary level. Inspectors also described the school's environment as "sombre and uninviting". A room for agitated secondary pupils to calm down in resembled an "unfurnished prison cell".

However, according to a spokesperson, a new headteacher started in January and has made changes based on an action plan developed with the DfE.

A therapeutically trained behaviour coach has also been appointed.

Running Deer, a special school for eight- to 16-year-olds at risk of exclusion in Devon received a warning notice after it was rated 'inadequate' during its first Ofsted inspection last September.

It converted from a community development organisation to a registered school in May 2016, but Ofsted said the process had "not been fully thought through". Teaching staff lacked the skills needed "to secure effective learning".

Running Deer, which charges £52,000 per year and offers opportunities such as survival skills, equine therapy and conservation activities, had no admissions or first-aid policy and had been operating across two sites without notifying the DfE.

However, Joanna Winterburn, the school's managing director, said meeting the standards was "a bit like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole" for a small, specialist organisation.

"Since our inspection we have been working very hard to meet the independent school standards. We know that the work with our students makes a real and lasting difference and we hope that we can be a good school."

Schoolhouse Education in

Greenwich provides alternative provision for excluded 14- to 16-year-olds. Pupils are referred by the local authority, which covers the costs, and all have special educational or behavioural needs or disabilities.

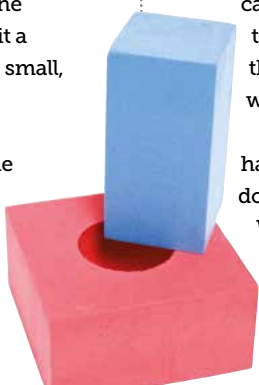
Ofsted rated the school 'inadequate' across the board last year. It was not teaching science, history or geography GCSE, and afternoon games sessions were taught by an unqualified staff member. Limited progress, poor attendance and a lack of punctuality were criticised.

Lynda Smith, head of the school, said the report was "an absolute shock". She attempted to challenge the outcome but was unsuccessful. "I believe genuinely that it was a flawed report," she said.

"Our students have come away from a system that crams in 12 or so subjects, they can't cope with it. The standards need to be adjusted to take into account the type of young people we work with."

Smith added that the inspector had seen the PE tutor's DBS check documents.

Warning notices were also issued to Hope House School in Barnsley, Westfield House School in Norfolk, and CACFO UK Education Centre in Croydon.



NEWS: NAHT CONFERENCE PREVIEW

HINDS ANNOUNCES SWEEPING CHANGES TO ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Schools deemed coasting will no longer face the threat of forced academisation or a change of sponsor following a U-turn due to be announced by the education secretary today.

Under the changes, regional schools commissioners will be prevented from sending education advisers in to inspect schools. Damian Hinds wants to save schools from the “spectre” of multiple inspections by making it clear that “the only people who should go to schools for inspections are Ofsted”.

In a departure from the legacy left by Nicky Morgan, Hinds will announce only an Ofsted ‘inadequate’ rating will trigger forced conversion or rebrokering of schools.

Coasting and floor standards will be scrapped, and replaced with a “single, transparent” accountability measure that will prompt government “support” for schools, but not academisation.

Addressing the annual conference of school leaders’ union NAHT in Liverpool, Hinds will set out plans to substantially scale back the role of schools commissioners.

In a new set of “principles for a clear and simple accountability system”, published today, the Department for Education pledges “no more ‘inspections’ of schools by representatives of RSCs”, which it says can “feel a lot like inspections”, can be confusing for schools, and “can add to workload where there are additional requests for data”.

Officials will still work to identify schools that have not failed but “would benefit from an offer of support”, and ministers will “set a clear threshold that will trigger an offer of support” following a consultation.

This follows the announcement last week



that national schools commissioner Sir David Carter is to step down this summer.

“What I’ve found from speaking to many of you these last few months is that there is also real confusion within the sector,” Hinds is expected to say. “I believe school leaders need complete clarity on how the accountability system will operate.

“I’m clear that Ofsted is the body that can provide an independent, rounded judgement of a school’s performance. This means we will not be forcibly turning schools into academies unless Ofsted has judged it to be ‘inadequate’.

“We will not have both floor and coasting standards as this can be confusing – we will replace this with a single, transparent data standard. We will consult on how this will operate, and consider whether an Ofsted ‘requires improvement’ judgement should also be part of the trigger for an offer of

support.”

Paul Whiteman, NAHT’s general secretary, will address the conference after Hinds’ speech. He said the announcements made today would be “widely welcomed” by his members.

“It’s absolutely right that there should only be one agency with the remit to inspect schools. Clarity about the standards that are expected is just what we’ve been calling for,” he said.

“Removing the coasting and floor standards will do much to address the confusion felt by many school leaders. It will be important that the new support standard is set at the right level and helps direct rapid, high-quality, funded support to the schools that need it most.”

Carole Willis, the chief executive of the National Foundation for Education Research, welcomed “anything that gives schools



greater clarity around accountability” but warned against “placing too much emphasis on using academisation as a silver bullet”.

Tom Sherrington, a former headteacher and education consultant, said that both floor and coasting standards are “essentially a ludicrous concept” because they are tied to a “de-facto competitive grade system” that always gives a proportion of pupils’ low grades.

“The idea that all schools can be above the standard is totally incompatible with the pretty tight grip there is on the grading system.”

Instead, he recommended a single measure, where schools with a Progress 8 score of -1 are “genuinely supported” with their teacher recruitment, retention and staff development. The Department for Education would need to put money and resources into such support, he added.

Additional reporting by Jess Staufenberg.

£5M SABBATICAL FUND FOR EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

A £5 million sabbatical fund will give experienced teachers the opportunity to take a break from the classroom, Damian Hinds will announce.

The education secretary will set out the government’s initial response to its consultation on ‘Strengthening qualified teacher status (QTS) and improving career progression for teachers’ during his speech to the annual conference of school leaders’ union NAHT.

Proposals for a sabbatical fund for those who have been qualified and teaching for at least seven years were first set out in the consultation last December. At the time, the government said teachers would have to apply “with a specific project in mind”, and if they are successful they would have their salaries paid for up to a year.

Today, the Department for Education confirmed that £5 million will be available, and that the sabbatical will be on offer to experienced teachers to take time out for activities “such as a year working in industry relevant to their field”.

Ministers will also proceed with plans set out in the consultation to extend the induction period for teachers following training from one to two years.

However, plans to change qualified teacher status so trainees receive only “provisional” QTS at the end of their training and “full” QTS two years into the job will not go ahead, following the consultation.

“All of us have a shared goal of making sure teaching remains an attractive, fulfilling profession,” Hinds will tell heads today.

“We will be introducing an enhanced offer of support for new teachers – including extending the induction period to two years – and we will work with the profession to develop a new early career content framework that will set out all the training and mentoring a teacher is entitled to in those first years.”

He will promise to take an “unflinching look at the things that discourage people from going into teaching or make them consider leaving”. The DfE will also look at “how we support teachers to get better at what they do and hone their expertise and career progression”.

The sabbatical fund is one of a series of measures aimed at improving flexible working in schools. There will also be a research project to “introduce more flexible hours in the profession”.

Sam Twiselton, director of the Sheffield Institute of Education at Sheffield Hallam University, said the idea of sabbaticals was “brilliant” in theory but queried the amount of money put aside.

She asked whether teachers would be able to apply to do research or a qualification, in which case “£5 million probably wouldn’t actually go that far”.

If teachers have to bid for a career break in a competitive process they could also be put off, she warned.

Finally, teachers considering a sabbatical in England might be too worried about missing numerous policy changes in that time, and so the funding might need to cover a “keep-in-touch mechanism” and “process for easing you back in” to encourage staff to take the leap.

NEWS

Small trusts dominate high-pay league table – but is the data out of date?

FREDDIE WHITTAKER & JESS STAUFENBERG
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Exclusive

Ninety-two academy trusts that pay multiple members of staff between £100,000 and £150,000 have been named.

Data obtained exclusively by *Schools Week* shows the majority of trusts with multiple employees on this kind of salary are small. In fact, of the 92 trusts named, 56 have fewer than 10 schools, and 11 have just one each.

However, many of the smallest trusts named by the Department for Education told *Schools Week* that the data – which covers the financial year 2015-16 – is out-of-date and misleading because it doesn’t acknowledge recent efforts to clamp down on excessive pay.

For example, the James Brindley Trust claims it only features on the list because its principal was suspended on full pay with an interim hired in their place during 2015-16.

“Our inclusion in the DfE list is therefore highly misleading,” a spokesperson said. “The chair of trustees has written to the chief executive of the ESFA to express her disappointment that these exceptional circumstances have not been taken into account.”

Macmillan Academy said it was in a similar position, while Charters School said it is due to reduce the number of employees in the £100,000 to £150,000 bracket from September.

“The report you have written pertains to the 2015/6 academic year and it does not reflect the current staffing situation,” said Macmillan HR director Pam Smith. “We do not currently have more than one employee in that pay range and that has been the case since 2016.”

Green Spring Education Trust has also changed its approach, and now has only one member of staff earning between £100,000 and £150,000.

Trust chair Jane Earl said the employee’s

salary “is appropriate to the employee’s leadership responsibilities and it is comparative to other employees carrying out a similar role in London”.

Due to a change to its management structure, the Northumberland Church of England Academy no longer has any employees earning over £100,000, according to interim chief executive Alan Hardie, who believes there are “inconsistencies in reporting” of salaries between trusts.

“The previous executive director’s reported salary included all on-costs, where I believe that the majority of figures for other trusts may have been actual salary payments,” he said. On-costs include pension and national insurance contributions.

Watford UTC principal Emma Loveland said she had “no member of staff being paid a salary of £100,000 to £150,000. However, the UTC’s accounts for 2015-16 show the school did have two members of staff in the bracket that year.

“I’m not sure why the DfE would have included us in that list,” she told *Schools Week*.

The list of 92 schools also includes 19 trusts with 20 or more schools on their rosters. These include some of England’s largest academy chains, such as the Academies Enterprise Trust, Reach2, United Learning, Oasis, Delta, TKAT, Harris and Ark.

Of the 92 trusts named this week, 43 recently received letters from Education and Skills Funding Agency chief executive Eileen Milner, urging them to explain why they have multiple employees on high salaries. The remaining 49 schools received letters demanding they justify pay earlier in the year.

A Department for Education spokesperson said officials were “as robust as possible” when identifying trusts for intervention over pay, and that they would work with individual trusts to address “any inconsistencies”.

“We have challenged a small number of trusts to ensure that where high salaries are awarded there is clear evidence for doing so.

TRUSTS PAYING TWO OR MORE SALARIES
OF £100,000 TO £150,000 IN 2015-16

TRUST NAME	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	TRUST NAME	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Charters School	1	Valley Invicta Academies Trust	7
James Brindley School	1	Bright Futures Educational Trust	8
Kingsbury High School	1	Diverse Academies Trust	8
Macmillan Academy	1	Learning in Harmony Multi Academy Trust	8
Burntwood School	1	Dixons Academies Charitable Trust Ltd	8
Green Spring Education Trust	1	The Dean Trust	8
Highcliffe School	1	Eastern Multi-Academy Trust	9
Holland Park School	1	The Co-Operative Academies Trust	9
St Edward’s C of E School and College	1	Swale Academies Trust	9
The Northumberland C of E Academy	1	The Brooke Weston Trust	10
The Watford UTC	1	The Spencer Academies Trust	10
Arden Multi Academy Trust	2	The Diocese Of Westminster Academy Trust	11
Gdst Academy Trust	2	The Griffin Schools Trust	12
New College Durham Academies Trust	2	Aspirations Academies Trust	12
The Fulham College Academy Trust	2	The Education Fellowship Trust	12
Unity Schools Trust	2	Community Academies Trust	13
Whitefield Academy Trust	2	Hull Collaborative Academy Trust	13
Graveney Trust	2	The Thinking Schools Academy Trust	13
Kenton Schools Academy Trust	2	Creative Education Trust	13
The Core Education Trust	2	Wellspring Academy Trust	14
The Southfield Grange Trust	2	Step Academy Trust	15
Beacon Multi-Academy Trust Limited	3	Leigh Academies Trust	15
Grace Academy	3	Cfbt Schools Trust	16
Pa Community Trust	3	Tauheedul Education Trust	16
The Herefordshire Marches Federation	3	L.E.A.D. Multi-Academy Trust	20
Brentwood Academies Trust	3	Northern Education Trust	20
The Cardinal Hume Academies Trust	3	Outwood Grange Academies Trust	21
Coastal Academies Trust	4	Wakefield City Academies Trust	22
Finham Park Multi-Academy Trust	4	Academy Transformation Trust	24
Haberdashers’ Aske’s Federation Trust	4	Kent Catholic Schools’ Partnership	24
The Futures Trust	4	E-Act	25
Avanti Schools Trust	5	The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust	26
Fort Pitt Thomas Aveling Academies	5	Ormiston Academies Trust	30
Sidney Stringer Multi Academy Trust	5	Greenwood Academies Trust	32
The Challenge Academy Trust	5	The David Ross Education Trust	33
Trinitas Academy Trust	5	Ark Schools	35
Future Academies	5	Harris Federation	40
Loxford School Trust Limited	5	The Kemnal Academies Trust	41
The Shared Learning Trust	5	Delta Academies Trust	44
East Midlands Education Trust	6	United Learning Trust	47
Woodard Academies Trust	6	Oasis Community Learning	49
Ambitions Academies Trust	6	Reach2 Academy Trust	54
Abbey Multi Academy Trust	7	Academies Enterprise Trust	62
Fylde Coast Academy Trust	7	Isle of Portland Aldridge Academy Trust*	N/A
Greenshaw Learning Trust	7	Learning Schools Trust*	N/A
Ninestiles Academy Trust Limited	7		
Redhill Academy Trust	7		
		* Trust now closed	
		Trusts in receipt of most recent ESFA letter shown in bold	

CofE turns the other cheek on rural schools

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

The Church of England may have to close some of its small rural schools as problems with funding, teacher supply and building maintenance get worse.

It oversees 70 per cent of schools in the smallest category, those with fewer than 110 pupils, which means that the challenges facing most schools in the country – teacher recruitment, falling pupil numbers, low funding and upkeep of old school buildings – are exacerbated.

The Reverend Nigel Genders, head of education at the Church, told *Schools Week* that his organisation remains “committed as a major education provider”, but accepted that some schools may have to close.

He said that a “hard-edged approach” is necessary to “take objective decisions in the interests of children”.

A recent report by his department blames “successive governments” for their failure

to fund more than a “skeleton staff” at small schools, and says it is time to “reimagine” education in small schools and isolated villages.

Rev Genders said the report is designed to “help schools and dioceses think about the quality of education offered in small and rural schools and embrace change in a way which leads to high quality education”.

However, he declined to comment on how many or which schools are likely to face closure, as decisions will be taken “in the local context”.

The CofE runs 1,351 “very small” schools with fewer than 110 pupils, around 70 per cent of the country’s total stock. 1,264 of these schools are in rural areas.

It also runs 1,411 “small” schools of between 111 and 209 pupils, 856 of which are rural, as well as 1,859 schools with more than 210 pupils, where just 321 are in rural areas.

In the case of struggling schools, the report said it can be difficult to “justify keeping the school open” unless there is an



“overwhelming reason”.

The DfE recognises that “smaller, more remote schools face different funding pressures” a spokesperson said. She pointed to a £26 million sparsity funding factor in the national funding formula.

However, the CofE noted that a number of its rural schools are ineligible, as the sparsity factor applies only to pupils who would have to travel more than two miles to the next primary school.

There is also little opportunity in such schools for career development, broad curriculums or strategic planning, and trainees are “reluctant to move to rural areas”.

The condition of small rural schools is also problematic. Many inhabit 19th century

church buildings with high maintenance costs and heating bills. It can be “difficult to justify” maintaining a school which requires “significant investment” to “bring the building up to standard”.

The report recommends that small schools work in “formal groupings” of local authority schools or multi-academy trusts, allowing them to share governors, headteachers and resources, and suggests several villages may need to share new rural schools in the future.

Barbara Taylor, the secretary of the National Association of Small Schools who chairs the governors at a school with 49 pupils in south Oxfordshire, accepted that some underperforming small schools may have to close, but argued “most” perform well and are a “focal point of the community”.

Her own school is able to attract trainees and teachers who “really know” the children, and warned that closing village schools will cause young families to move away.

“It worries me that if you close the school, you lose a key element of the community.”

NEWS

STUDIO SCHOOLS TO SET UP HOME IN MATS

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Exclusive

The controversial studio schools programme has announced a dramatic shift in focus after the tally of those closed or due to do so rose to 24.

Studio schools, small 14-to-19 institutions with a vocational focus, will now be incorporated into multi-academy trusts, rather than running as standalone schools with backing from the further education sector.

The model has been fraught with recruitment problems from the outset. Twenty of the schools have already closed, and last week, two more on the Isle of Wight and in Plymouth said they'd follow suit over the summer.

The state-of-the-art Plymouth Studio School cost £4.2 million to build and only opened in 2015. The £2.4 million Isle of Wight Studio School has been open since September 2014.

Manchester Creative Studio will also close in August, and Rye Studio School will become a sixth-form, taking the total number of closures to 24 and leaving just 30 open. Furthermore, four studio schools slated to open never went ahead, and Department for Education records show that none are currently in the pipeline.

The Studio Schools Trust – a company set up to support and promote the institutions – has also closed following funding problems

caused by “uncertainty and delays”. The Studio Schools Network, a new company, was set up to replace the trust last August, but has yet even to establish a working website.

The change in direction is not unexpected. Meeting records released by the DfE in June last year revealed academies minister Lord Nash met with the Studio Schools Trust in March 2017 to “review the concept of studio schools”.

The Studio Schools Network told *Schools Week* it would be “leading the movement into maturity” by moving away from working with FE colleges to focus on partnerships with multi-academy trusts.

Studio schools were introduced in 2010, designed to provide practical workplace skills for 14- to 19-year-olds alongside academic and vocational study, but many struggled due to low pupil numbers and poor Ofsted ratings.

A spokesperson for the DfE insisted that studio schools “remain popular and are providing their pupils with a good mix of academic and vocational education, alongside the skills valued most by employers”.

The government is “looking at existing studio schools and what we can learn from them”, and will “not hesitate to take swift and decisive action” against underperforming schools.

Government records show more than £50 million in capital funding has so far been spent on opening studio schools, though the data only covers 27 of those currently open, so the actual figure is likely to be much more.

CLOSED	
Apollo Studio Academy, Durham	The Studio, Liverpool
Barnfield Studio School, Luton	Darwen Aldridge Enterprise Studio, Lancashire
Durham Studio School	Walsall Studio School, West Midlands
Harpurhey Studio School, Manchester	Waverley Studio College, Birmingham
The Green Hub Studio School, Kent	De Salis Studio College, Middlesex
Da Vinci Studio of Science and Engineering, Stevenage	Dorset Studio School
Hyndburn Studio School, Lancashire	The Studio: At Knutsford Academy, Cheshire
Bradford Studio School (formerly International Food and Travel Studio)	Sir Frank Whittle Studio School, Leicestershire
Tendring Enterprise Studio School, Essex	Space Studio Banbury
The Hull Studio School	Studio West, Newcastle
The Midland Studio College, Hinckley	Bath Studio School
The Midland Studio College, Nuneaton	Atrium Studio School, Devon
Southampton Studio School	Bicester Technology Studio, Oxfordshire
Create Studio Goole,Yorkshire	Digitech Studio School, Bristol
Da Vinci School of Creative Enterprise, Letchworth	IKB Studio School, Bristol
Future Tech Studio, Warrington	Mendip Studio School, Somerset
Vision Studio School, Mansfield	Space Studio West London
Devon Studio School	The Studio @ DEYES, Liverpool
New Campus Basildon Studio School	Christleton International Studio, Chester
Kajans Hospitality and Catering Studio College, Birmingham	Logic Studio School, Hounslow
	Scott Medical and Health Studio College, Plymouth
	Queen Elizabeth Studio School, Cumbria
STILL OPEN	ANNOUNCED CLOSURE
Creative and Media Studio School, Kirklees	Island Studio School, Isle of Wight
Stephenson Studio School, Leicestershire	Manchester Creative Studio
Fulham Enterprise Studio, London	Plymouth Studio School
Parkside Studio College, Middlesex	
Stoke Studio College – Construction & Building Excellence	DID NOT OPEN
Stoke Studio College – Manufacturing & Design Engineering	Liverpool Tourism and Culture Studio The Film, Theatre and Costume Studio, Bradford
The LeAF Studio School, Bournemouth	The Health Occupations Studio, Bradford
The Ockendon Studio School, Essex	Digital Studio College , Derbyshire
	The Aldridge Centre for Entrepreneurship Studio School, London

£13.5 MILLION SCHEMES TO HELP CLOSE THE ‘WORD GAP’

Two new multimillion-pound schemes will help boost early language and literacy development for disadvantaged children.

The projects, totalling £13.5 million, aim to “build the confidence of parents to support their children in language and reading at an early stage” in an effort to reduce the gap in communication skills between disadvantaged children and their peers when they start school, the government said today.

There is a “word-gap” between disadvantaged children and their better-off peers by the age of five, and evidence shows it “has a long term effect on educational outcomes”, the Department for Education said.

A £5 million programme run by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) will trial projects in the north of England to provide “practical tools and advice” to parents so they can help their children learn new words.

Sir Kevan Collins, the chief executive of the EEF, said it can “sometimes be difficult” to get parents involved in their child’s learning, and “we know little about how to do this well”.

Another £8.5 million has been committed to the Local Government Association for a new early-years social mobility peer review programme, which will help fund councils to work together to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, said the new support “will help parents with early language learning at home by giving them practical advice on activities like reading and learning the alphabet which are so important in making no child is left behind”.

AI ‘will soon beat pupils’ taught a knowledge-based curriculum

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Pupils will not be able to compete with advanced artificial intelligence systems if they are taught a knowledge-based curriculum, a leading academic has warned.

Rose Luckin, a professor of learner-centred design at UCL, believes this kind of teaching is “naive” because it imparts facts in a shallow way, leaving pupils unable to compete with systems that can recall facts much faster.

Instead, pupils should be taught to be self-reflective about their knowledge, a method she called “meta-knowing”.

For example, rather than teaching pupils to remember that the Battle of Hastings took place in 1066, schools “should be asking how we know that the Battle of Hastings was in 1066?”

This is pupils’ best chance not to lose out to AI systems in the future, which will have a far greater capacity to remember and recall facts, she warned.

“AI will retrieve that knowledge faster – and it won’t forget it either,” she told private school heads schools at the Headmasters and Headmistresses Conference on Wednesday

Schools are actively encouraged to follow a knowledge-based curriculum by the schools minister Nick Gibb, and he often praises those which adopt it.

The approach also draws criticism. Andreas Schleicher, head of education at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation



and Development (OECD), recently warned that Britain’s focus on rote learning will cause it to fall behind in terms of education standards.

However, Tom Richmond, a senior research fellow at the Reform think-tank, said it was “disappointing” to see Luckin present a knowledge-based curriculum as part of the problem, “when in fact it is part of the solution”.

“The suggestion that students will be fully prepared for the future without a thorough grounding in the core facts, theories and principles behind science and computing is simply not tenable.”

Martin Robinson, an education consultant and director of Trivium 21C, said knowledge taught in schools comes with “ethical frameworks and questioning”, while robots and computers will always lack “human context and nuance” and will always need

interpreting.

Other speakers at the conference discussed the need to move away from a fact-checking, test-oriented system.

David Price, an educational futurist and senior associate at the Innovation Unit, told delegates they must wean themselves off the “crack cocaine” of standardised testing.

“We’ve got this global obsession with getting the best marks,” he said. “Pupils are being turned into “needy, anxious, dependent test-takers. What we should really be asking is how we train our pupils to ask questions, or even how we help them develop a sense of agency.”

Sir Anthony Seldon, the vice-chancellor of the University of Buckingham and a former master of the private Wellington College, also criticised the “exams factory” in schools, which teach children in rows, write facts on a board, and ultimately have not changed “since the 1600s”.

The “narrow, male focus on cognitive ability” is at the expense of the full range of an individual’s abilities. Artificial intelligence and technology changes in the next 10 to 20 years will bring a “fourth education revolution”.

But Joe Nutt, an education consultant, dismissed artificial intelligence as the most recent fad.

Schools should reject it for the “marketing hype that it is” he said. “It is the latest in a long sequence of fashions in education.”

However, schools need to teach pupils strong critical skills to deal with upcoming technological changes.

NEWS

Doomed free school got £250k to help it close

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The government gave more than £250,000 to a doomed free school to help it close down, new documents reveal.

The annual accounts of the Collective Spirit Free School in Oldham, Greater Manchester, show the Education and Skills Funding Agency paid £254,819 "to assist in the close-down of the academy" in 2016-17. The funding meant that the academy shut last year with a £192,710 budget surplus.

It also received more than £150,000 to pay another academy for support. School funding bosses also wrote off debts of at least £300,000 in the school's final year.

The school, opened by charity boss Raja Miah in 2013, was placed in special measures in 2016 following a damning 'inadequate' Ofsted report. Its leaders announced last June that it would close, and its doors shut for the final time in September.

The school's 2016-17 accounts show that general debts of £51,105 owed back to the public purse were written off by the ESFA as "donations". This is on top of almost £250,000 written off as a result of the school having overestimated its pupil numbers.

Free schools are funded based on their predictions of pupil numbers. Those which receive more than they needed because



they overestimated their roll are supposed to pay the extra money back.

But data obtained under the Freedom of Information act earlier this year shows that debts of £248,660.66 accumulated by Collective Spirit as a result of this "pupil number adjustment" were written off by the ESFA in 2016-17.

The Collective Spirit Free School paid out £339,261 in related party transactions to Collective Spirit Community Trust Limited, a company part-owned by one of its trustees, in 2016-17.

Payments included £120,000 for "extended curriculum" services, £57,760 for catering supplies, £39,134 for transport, £28,167 for educational consultancy and £20,266 for "educational boosters". The

school even spent £16,666 on "marketing" in its final year of operation.

This is on top of £419,028 paid by the school to the Collective Spirit Community Trust in 2015-16, of which only £139,676 was declared at the time. Alun Morgan, a former director at the school, owns a 50-per-cent share of the Collective Spirit Community Trust.

Auditors were also unable to conclude that the disclosure of related-party transactions was "fairly stated" because they were unable to get hold of all invoices issued to the school by the trust.

The school also paid Consilium Academies Trust, an organisation run by its chair Martin Shevill, £4,000 for work on HR support and safeguarding in 2016-17.

The Department for Education also gave Collective Spirit an additional £154,500 to pay a neighbouring academy, Oasis Academy Oldham, to support Collective Spirit Free School in its final year.

Auditors for the school also reported that they were unable to access statements for two of its three bank accounts, which contained £1,006 and £217 respectively when the school closed. As a result, they were unable to confirm if any adjustments to the bank balances were necessary.

They were also unable to account for £33,512 in donations given to the school through its ParentPay online system because they could not gain access to it.

GIBB QUIETLY SHAVES £5M FROM FUTURE TALENT FUND

The government will only pay £18 million towards its new future talent fund, which is aimed at helping the brightest poor pupils in secondary schools, £5 million less than expected.

The policy was first announced last December by the former education secretary Justine Greening. It formed part of her 'Unlock talent and fulfil potential' social mobility strategy, which included a range of old and new investments.

At the time, the government pledged investment in a "new £23 million future talent fund to trial a range of new teaching approaches to support the education of the most-able children from less well-off communities".

Now the government has said that £5 million will need to be raised by whichever school, academy trust or charity takes on the project as its "fund manager".

There was no mention of the need for additional funds to be raised at the time of December's announcement, and details of the cut were buried in a statement, seeking bids from potential managers of the fund.

Schools minister Nick Gibb appealed for applications from organisations to run and evaluate at least 30 projects between January next year and July 2020.

The pilots should help schools support "their most able, disadvantaged pupils" and address the drop-off in academic performance between key stage 2 and key stage 4, the DfE said.

STA Travel Education are giving one school £10,000 to spend on a trip

STA Travel Education have broken traditions, to help make school trips more accessible, they are offering one lucky group the opportunity to win their next trip, to the sweet tune of £10,000! The company are so dedicated to sending schools away, that they're handing out freebies.

STA Travel, the self-confessed 'round the world' experts have turned their efforts to something a little closer to home, educational travel. The company has over 37 years' experience in the industry and have now added the string 'Educational Travel' to their bow. The team is made up of on the road experts who offer face-to-face advice to both schools & universities, on everything from destination inspiration and itineraries to personalised trip goals. Back at base this on the road team is supported by an experienced team of experts, the classic travel obsessed that they just don't make anymore!

We spoke to director, Ellen Rayner, about the movement "No funny business, we're just passionate about inspiring the next generation. Travel educates as well as inspires and we want to make school trips a more realistic opportunity for many students" Ellen went on to comment on the standard of school trips for many "A lot of our clients come to us with small budgets and are restricted to domestic travel, we want to make sure one of these groups has the opportunity to realise a new culture, somewhere further flung!"

STA Travel Education have risen to educational fame as a member of the School Travel Forum (STF). Some serious noise is being made around the company who work with local schools right through to the big red bricks! To go hand in hand with their STF accreditation, STA Travel Education have recently been awarded a LoTC badge for their efforts in encouraging students to go beyond the classroom.



To find out how you and your school can win, go to <http://grouptravel.statravel.co.uk/win-your-group-trip.htm>

NEWS

REMEMBER THE NORTH, TEACH FIRST TOLD

JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

Teach First has made progress placing trainees in the north of England but is still struggling in some areas, reflecting the recruitment difficulties faced by schools there.

Figures seen exclusively by *Schools Week* show 630 trainees have been posted in northern areas and the Midlands this year, while 741 are stationed in the south including London.

Trainee numbers in Yorkshire, the north-west, and both the east and west Midlands have also crept up more slowly than in southern areas over the past five years.

The north-west had only eight more trainees this year, against an additional 78 in the south-east and south-west, compared with five years ago. In the west Midlands, there are actually three fewer trainees now than five years ago.

A spokesperson for the teacher-training organisation pointed out that it has fewer trainees in the south-east and south-west than in the Midlands and Yorkshire, so Teach First has also been trying to focus there as well as in the north.

However, teacher-training experts are urging the charity to refocus its efforts on the north.

The government's social mobility action plan concocted under former education secretary Justine Greening acknowledges that many recent education reforms have been concentrated in London and the south-east.

David Owen, head of teacher education at Sheffield Hallam, said he expected a "bit more of a push" to the Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber from Teach First, but said it shows "how difficult" it was to get trainees into regions that need teachers.

He wants to encourage more Teach First trainees to move into the north as their impact is keenly felt.

In response to the charity's shifting focus, London had a drop in trainee numbers, down by 66 over the past five years to 480 this year.

But John Howson, the founder of teacher vacancy website TeachVac, warned London has its own problems and still needs the charity's input.

Private schools in the capital siphon off state school teachers, he claims. Added to the high cost of living and the bulge in secondary school pupil numbers, London's teacher supply is also on the edge.

"I would be very worried if Teach First continued to reduce the percentage of trainees in London," he said. "The capital has a significant teacher supply problem and needs it."

James Noble-Rogers, the executive director of the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), echoed the sentiment, and said Teach First would "leave a hole" if it moved out of struggling areas in the capital.

A Teach First spokesperson said it aimed to place teachers in areas that needed it most, and that 15 years ago this had been London.

However the capital has seen "significant improvements" and Teach First has since focused on coastal and isolated areas in recent years.

"We're proud to work in every single region of England and we are proud to work with the schools facing the greatest challenges, wherever they are in the country," they said.



ONE YEAR ON: THE UNEVEN SUCCESS OF THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

ALIX ROBERTSON @ALIXROBERTSON4 **Exclusive**

Schools and academy trusts are not making the most of the millions of pounds they pay into the apprenticeship levy, over a year on from its introduction.

Concerns about schools' understanding of the levy have been raised by a training specialist, who said he was "shocked" by how little was known, while a senior MP has also started looking into the issue after raising concerns with ministers.

Under reforms that came into effect last April, employers with an annual payroll of more than £3 million have to pay 0.5 per cent into the apprenticeship levy. They can then use money from the levy pot to pay for training.

Dave Cobb, from the National College of Education, which was set up last October to run courses aimed at helping schools use their levy money, said his organisation had spoken to more than 40 trusts and signed up around 400 apprentices, but was worried about schools' engagement.

"We have been quite shocked about the lack of awareness," said Cobb, who said schools are spending a fraction of the money they put in.

"£180 million been deducted from schools' budgets since April last year. Way under 10 per cent of that has been spent; it's a massive problem."

Schools aren't alone in ignoring their levy funds. The number of people starting an apprenticeship has fallen by around 30 per cent since the levy was introduced this time last year.

The skills minister Anne Milton raised concerns in October about how many large companies were unaware of the levy.

Schools Week approached the 10 largest multi-academy trusts in England to ask about their progress on apprenticeships, and found some are much more active than others.

The Academies Enterprise Trust is England's largest academy trust with 64



schools. It currently has 72 apprentices, while eight more will start in May, and 31 in September. Overall AET will have taken on 51 new apprentices in 2017-18, up from 39 in 2016-17.

The lack of education-focused apprenticeships has made it "difficult to utilise funding in full and effectively", a spokesperson said.

Oasis Community Learning has 50 apprentices on teaching assistant (TA), business and administration, and IT courses across 49 schools. This is double the number the trust had before the levy was introduced. It hopes to grow this to 150 by next year.

The 36-school Ark trust has 32 apprentices on similar courses to Oasis, but couldn't say whether numbers had increased since the levy came in. It hopes to boost numbers next year.

Reach2, which runs 55 primary schools, has taken on five new apprentices since the levy came in, all for TA roles.

The 43-school Kemnal Academies Trust told *Schools Week* it had some apprentices in "support functions" but was unable to give a specific number.

The Harris Federation, which has 44 schools, said its number of apprentices was "too small" for it to give any comment.

Ormiston Academies Trust, United Learning, the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust and Delta Academies Trust did not give any information.

Local authorities pay into the levy on behalf of schools they oversee. Many charge

the levy payments back to their schools in the form of a top-slice from their budgets.

In Kent, the council has gone from employing 40 apprentices at 28 schools in 2016-17 to 111 at 75 schools this year.

Most apprenticeships have been in primary schools, but secondaries are "starting to take an interest", said David Knox, Kent county council's apprenticeships officer. Some are looking into "growing their own", where they can't recruit maths or science teachers.

Anneliese Dodds, the Labour MP for Oxford East, criticised the government for failing to analyse the impact of the levy on schools.

A shadow Treasury minister, she contacted the schools minister Nick Gibb, but was told the government is waiting to receive reports from schools on their progress, which aren't due until September.

"We've had schools consulting on whether they should reduce their hours to save money," she said. "At this critical time, I find it strange that the government hasn't analysed what the benefits are for schools."

"We are working with schools to make sure they make the most of the levy and the opportunities it provides," a DfE spokesperson told *Schools Week*.

A new postgraduate teaching apprenticeship was approved by the government last October, and will take on its first candidates in September.

Everything you want to know about apprenticeships but were afraid to ask

FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

Two new apprenticeship-based policies came into effect in April 2017 that have serious ramifications for schools. *Schools Week* has prepared a handy cut-out-and-keep guide to what you need to know.

First, there's the apprenticeship levy.

It's not a tax, the government insists, but a contribution any organisation or business with a payroll of more than £3 million must make – including at schools and trusts.

Organisations above that threshold must pay 0.5 per cent of their total payroll to the government, though each receives an annual allowance of £15,000 to offset against it.

For example, an employer with a payroll of exactly £3 million would not be liable to pay anything, because that £15,000

tolerance would completely offset the charge.

An employer with a £5 million payroll would have to pay £10,000, which is their £25,000 charge at 0.5 per cent of their payroll, minus the £15,000 allowance.

Another way to think about it, is that schools and trusts must pay the government an extra half a penny on every pound they spend above that £3 million threshold.

This is likely to put larger multi-academy trusts at a disadvantage, because while each secondary school subject to the levy technically has access to the £15,000 allowance, trusts with larger bills and therefore much larger levies still only get £15,000.

Although local authority-maintained schools, where staff are employed by the council, don't have to pay the levy directly, many town halls are top-slicing the levy

payments from their schools budgets.

Second, there are the new public sector apprenticeship targets.

These targets apply to all public sector organisations with more than 250 employees. The target is 2.3 per cent "apprenticeship starts" each year. Note, the word is "starts" – it doesn't mean the proportion of apprentices employed.

This means that any organisation subject to the target must hire a number of apprentices equivalent to 2.3 per cent of their full time equivalent workforce every year.

For example, a school with 300 employees would have to hire seven apprentices a year in order to meet the target. A multi-academy trust with 500 employees would have to make 12 apprentice hires a year.

This focus on starts has prompted some concerns that schools and trusts struggling to meet the target could face having to fire apprentices – or other staff – every year in order to be able to replace them with new apprentices.

NEWS

£10m northern funding unspent in four years

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

A £10 million fund set up almost four years ago to improve education in the north of England has not yet been spent, the former chancellor has admitted.

The Northern Powerhouse Education Fund was announced by George Osborne during his autumn statement in late 2014, to help replicate the success of the London Challenge in improving educational outcomes in the north.

But Lord Jim O'Neill, the vice-chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership and an ex-treasury minister, told the parliamentary education committee that "not a great deal" of the money has been spent.

"There was a Northern Powerhouse education fund announced, which afterwards was increased in size, and I'm not aware of that being spent," he told MPs.

During the hearing, O'Neill was asked about education in the north of England alongside Osborne and Henri Murison, the partnership's director.

The three men were questioned about their 'Educating the north' report, which recommended that schools be measured on the "employability and success" of their pupils when they reach the age of 25, and suggested reforms to pupil premium funding to "better target" the most disadvantaged pupils.

The group also wants to establish

government-supported "locally led clusters for school improvement" to share services more effectively and improve careers advice and mentoring.

Lord O'Neill hopes for more cash in next year's government spending review, but believes the education fund should be used in the meantime.

"Linked to some of the specific ideas, some of that I'm sure could be used for some of these initiatives that don't require anything to do with the spending review," he said.

The Department for Education was approached for comment, but could not say what had become of the Northern Powerhouse Education Fund by the time *Schools Week* went to press.

Instead, it pointed to the £70 million Northern Powerhouse Schools Strategy, which was announced at the 2016 budget and has been spent on initiatives like English and maths hubs, recruitment and retention schemes and Education Endowment Foundation trials to boost young children's language, vocabulary and social skills.



Lord Jim O'Neill and George Osborne

EVEN GEORGE OSBORNE'S HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT UTCs

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

George Osborne, one of the driving forces behind university technical colleges, would consider scrapping the starting age of 14 were he still in charge at the Treasury.

The former chancellor told the parliamentary education committee that he had been examining early issues with the 14-to-19 vocational schools just before he left office in 2016, and had come to the conclusion that they are in need of radical reform.

He was in Parliament in his capacity as chair of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, attending a hearing on education in the north.

The partnership's latest report, released in February, discussed the need for more workplace-based learning options for 14-year-olds in the region. However,

Osborne has now admitted that UTCs have perhaps not been the best option.

The idea of UTCs was born at the end of the Gordon Brown's premiership in the late 2000s with the backing of former Tory education secretary Lord Kenneth Baker, though the subsequent coalition government expanded on it.

"There was a question mark at starting it at 14," Osborne told MPs. "There is an argument that I was digging into before I left office that moving school at 14 is not always the easiest thing and people are reluctant."

Eight UTCs have so far closed, largely due to recruitment issues, and one fifth of the UTCs inspected by Ofsted so far are rated 'inadequate'.

Osborne is the latest senior figure involved in the inception of the specialist technical education providers to admit that the model, as it stands, is in serious trouble.

Michael Gove, who launched UTCs in his stint as education secretary, acknowledged in February last year that "the evidence has accumulated and the verdict is clear" that UTCs were in trouble.

Three months ago it emerged that Gove had been "forced" to create UTCs by Osborne and David Cameron.

NATIONAL SUPPLY TEACHER AGENCY DATABASE OPENS FROM SEPTEMBER

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A new government project will help schools get value for money when hiring agency supply teachers.

Developed with the Crown Commercial Service (CCS), schools will get access to a new national list of preferred suppliers when recruiting supply teachers and other temporary staff.

The list is expected to be available from September and will cover all temporary and fixed-term teaching and non-teaching positions, from teaching assistants up to executive leader roles.

The Department for Education now wants schools and trusts to express their interest through a form on the CCS website.

Suppliers will have to pass certain tests to make sure they are reliable, for example being transparent about the margins they charge, and not charging additional fees for workers who stay in post for 12 weeks or more.

They will also have undergone background screening checks and will be audited by an accredited industry body.

The idea was introduced last May, when the CCS revealed that spending on supply staff rose from £918 million in 2011-12 to £1.2 billion in 2014-15.

Last week the Headteachers' Roundtable published a legal template that schools can use to get supply agencies to waive costly "transfer fees", which are charged when



ex-supply teachers are hired on a permanent basis.

A headteachers' survey released by the school leaders' union ASCL last month revealed that 73 per cent of respondents had paid a finder's fee in the past 12 months, and that 48 per cent had paid £5,000 or more.

The "variation of contract" document, drawn up in partnership with law firm Thrings, aims to help schools who want to hire teachers they have previously hired through an agency. ASCL's boss Stephen Tierney writes about it in more detail on page 18.

However, it will not help schools avoid paying for services when they directly approach recruitment agencies for help.

At the beginning of April the National Education Union also mooted the idea of a union-run supply teacher vacancy service to supply teachers with schools directly and cut out expensive middlemen.

The expert view: See page 18

SCHOOLSWEEK

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Ofsted WILL prosecute illegal schools, and 5 other things from education committee

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

The education committee held a double session this week as part of its inquiry into alternative provision.

Questions were put to schools minister Nick Gibb, Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, Stuart Gallimore, the president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, and senior Ofsted inspector Sue Morris-King.

Here are six things we learned.

- 1. The government WILL prosecute illegal schools**
Gibb said it was important to distinguish between an "unlawful" unregistered school setting and an out-of-school setting, like a garage where a child goes one day a week to learn a vocational skill.
- 2. Ofsted will judge schools on the AP they choose**
Although he does not think unregistered,



part-time alternative provision should be closed down, Gibb did say Ofsted will be holding schools to account for the provision they choose for their pupils and will be asking what steps they have taken to ensure it is safe.

"If the school has not taken those steps, that will be something Ofsted will judge the school over," he said.

3. Inspectors want to visit more alternative provision

Responding to a question from committee chair Robert Halfon, who warned that of the 48,000 children in alternative provision, there is only "clear Ofsted inspection data for around 16,000", Morris-King said Ofsted is looking into whether a provider where

a child spends a "couple of days" should become registered.

"There should be further consideration given to what should be registered. It might be, for example, that we turn it on its head and say that a pupil shouldn't be allowed to be placed in unregistered provision by their school or by their pupil referral unit – who themselves use AP – for more than two days a week if it isn't registered," she said.

4. 'Very small number' of AP settings take over 16s

Around 45 per cent of AP students "find themselves without sustained education and employment" once leaving.

Gibb described the figures as "very stark", suggesting that 37 per cent of AP

students at the end of key stage four are either included in NEET statistics or have no destination measure recorded for them.

It is important to improve the quality of AP and share best practice in order to tackle the issue, but on the subject of raising the age limit to 18, he said it is a "power" that local authorities have, but not a "duty". Just 49 alternative settings are currently offering provision beyond the age of 16 which he acknowledged was a "very small number compared the total".

- 5. The government could step in if fair access panels don't work**
"If one school or a number of schools in a locality opt out of the fair access process it can disrupt the entire ecosystem and leave many children very vulnerable," one of the committee MPs told Gibb.
 - 6. Progress 8 outliers are being 'looked at'**
Gibb does not "accept the argument" that concerns over Progress 8 scores could be to blame for the disproportionate number of SEND children being excluded from schools.
- "We have to hold schools to account. Progress 8 is the fairest way to hold schools to account for their academic attainment," he said.

Family literacy test falls apart

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

A programme which taught parents how to help boost their children's literacy was scuppered after too few parents turned up to the sessions.

Although pupils whose parents came to sessions apparently made as much as two months of additional reading progress, only one third of eligible parents attended.

Run by the Education Endowment Foundation, the 'Family skills' programme approached parents of pupils with English as an additional language at 102 primary schools.

The evaluation revealed "how difficult it is to expect parents to turn up at school for classes of their own", according to the EEF's boss Sir Kevan Collins (pictured).

Evaluators were "cautious" about the claim pupils made extra progress, as a larger group should be analysed after so many parents stayed away.

On top of that, many of the schools used in the control group also offered other family-based learning programmes, which made it harder to see the true impact.

In the trial, led by Learning Unlimited with the Bell Foundation, the parents of 1,985 reception pupils were invited to attend

two-and-a-half hour weekly sessions with family tutors over one term.

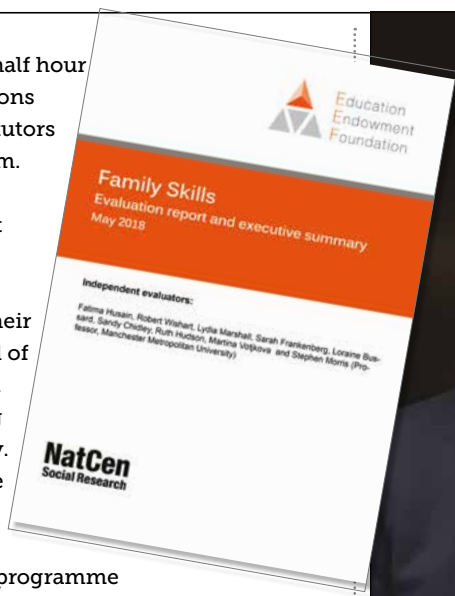
They were taught about phonics, the benefits of reading to their children and of bilingualism and learning through play. Parents were also offered a tour of school. The programme cost £143 per pupil.

The EEF has also published the results of several other trials it has funded, including a computer game for improving phonics which had no discernible impact compared to normal interventions.

GraphoGame Rime was delivered to nearly 400 year 2 pupils with low literacy skills in 15 schools across Cambridgeshire.

Teachers said the game, developed in Finland, was "highly engaging, motivational and enjoyable".

But evaluation found it was "no more or



less effective" than interventions already in place such as one-to-one help. It cost £48 per pupil a year to run.

Finally, a pilot of a character education programme called 'Positive action' was turned down for further trial and evaluation after pupils displayed more "prosocial behaviour" but a decline in positivity about themselves.

Full details of the trials are available in the reports, online at educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

NATIONAL EDUCATION TRUST TO CLOSE, BUT ACADEMY TRUST REMAINS

The National Education Trust will close this year, but the academy chain it operates will continue.

The trust, established in 2006 to support school improvement, confirmed it had transferred its assets to the NET Academies Trust and that it will close in the next three to six months.

According to the Education Uncovered website, the news was revealed in an email from the office of Sue Baldwin, the regional schools commissioner for the east of England and north-east London, to a parent saying the trust "has been wound up and will no longer be a sponsor of NET academies".

In a statement, NET said its recent school improvement activities have "increasingly been at the academy level" and trustees had concluded it was "not necessary or cost-effective to keep the separate charity going, particularly as there has been a marked decrease in NET's income in recent years".

All "remaining assets and activities" have been transferred to NET Academies Trust and trustees "are now putting in place arrangements to formally wind up NET".

The charity's latest accounts, covering the period to March 2017, warned NET was "experiencing a period of significant challenge as a result of material changes to the education services marketplace, the impending departures of key members of staff and the absence of a substantive CEO".

NEWS

Could measuring trainees’ resilience be the retention crisis magic bullet?

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

A Bradford teacher-training organisation has reduced drop-out rates by screening applicants for their resilience.

The wastage rate of teacher trainees at Bradford SCITT fell from 10 per cent to one per cent in the first year after applicants’ resilience was measured and those with low scores were targeted with support.

The man behind the idea, George Madine, an associate lecturer at Bradford University, has now piqued the Department for Education’s interest with a possible solution to the retention crisis.

It’s not plain sailing however. As he revealed at a Westminster Education Forum event last week, his idea has been passed around different officials for the past 14 months.

Workforce data shows 13 per cent of newly-qualified teachers leave teaching at the end of their first year of teaching, and one in three leaves within five years.

In response, Madine developed a tool to measure resilience, which he defines as a “set of learned behaviours to enhance coping”. The questionnaire covers 17 factors, including social support networks, self-efficacy, tendency to blame and even sense

of humour.

Each applicant is given a score between 0 and 60; participants with a score lower than 20 are likely to struggle. One applicant had a score of three.

Out of the 61 applicants set to start at Bradford SCITT in September 2017, the average score was 34.

Eight senior leaders of schools were given resilience training to mentor the vulnerable trainees and all but one remains on the course, reversing a significant prior wastage rate of 10 per cent that’s normal at this point in the year. The trial continues with 140 trainees this coming September.

But the programme is having to “work very hard” to keep trainees who scored especially low from dropping out.

His research also shows resilience falls by 14 marks once trainees begin teaching, meaning those with low scores are likely to leave down the line.

What’s more, they will often become “expensive employees” as they will need more sick days, he warned.

Madine suggested instead that applicants who score below 20 on resilience are not accepted onto courses.

“But we could only do that if there was a surplus of applicants,” he pointed out. “At the moment we have to set the bar set like

this, because there aren’t enough people applying.”

There are a quarter of a million graduates without graduate-level jobs, he said, so if three per cent of these with high levels of resilience were recruited to teach, “recruitment crisis would be solved”.

The resilience-training programme is also available to other SCITTs and ITT providers at a cost of about £100 per trainee, which includes resilience screening, profile and training for each trainee, and resilience mentor training.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said schools might find it “very useful” to have a tool that identifies vulnerable trainees.

His union had been urging the government “for some time” to work with the sector to develop a retention strategy, and to use the “best evidence” in doing so.

The DfE is “bearing the findings in mind”, a spokesperson said. They also suggested that the fact that Madine’s research straddles several different teams might explain why he’d been put in touch with so many people.



PUPIL MENTORING CAN WORK – BUT ONLY IF SCHOOLS GET IT RIGHT

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools should be “cautious” about introducing mentoring programmes for vulnerable pupils because they can cause harm if executed badly, the children’s commissioner has warned.

Despite its popularity, mentoring needs a stronger evidence base before being offered to struggling pupils, according to a new report.

However, a mentoring consultant disagrees, and believes that properly evaluated mentoring schemes are invaluable.

Working on behalf of the commissioner, analysts at the education think-tank LKMCo sampled more than 350 mentoring programmes across the country, reviewing literature and interviewing experts.

The findings show “modest positive effects” from mentoring, but there is considerable variation within and between programmes.

While some mentoring programmes are aimed at young adults, a large proportion were aimed at pupils, often the most vulnerable.

Pupils not in education, employment or training are particularly targeted, though those with special educational needs or who were young carers were the least mentored.

Most support (73 per cent) is aimed at improving social or emotional development. Only one in five programmes aids academic attainment.

The report concludes that “overall there are promising signs that the average youth mentoring programme has a small but positive effect on the average mentee”, though “there is no guarantee that mentoring will be effective and there are risks of negative effects”.

Children in care are vulnerable if relationships end early, meaning mentoring programmes should last at least one year.

Schools should ensure mentors are trained, set “clear expectations of the relationship”, and get to know parents. Afterwards, each programme should be rigorously evaluated.

But Stephanie George, an educational consultant who has trained 1,000 mentors over eight years, said a clear distinction must be made between the voluntary schemes included in the LKMCo research and the formal mentoring programmes run in some schools.

As deputy head of Plashet School in east London, George introduced mentoring practitioners who worked with pupils according to specific criteria including attendance, family and peer issues, and bereavement.

Following an assessment of needs, an initial six-week mentoring period was reviewed every half-term by a coaching manager and the programme adapted as needed.

The school was identified in 2009 by Christine Gilbert, a former head of Ofsted, as one of the country’s outstanding schools “in challenging circumstances”, partly as a result of its targeted interventions and above-national average results.

George told *Schools Week* there must be greater consistency amongst mentoring programmes “so we can offer the same high-quality intervention across the country to our most vulnerable students”.

CAMPAIGN TO MAKE SCHOOL LIBRARIES A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

Library associations across the country are joining together in a campaign to make school libraries statutory and Ofsted-inspected.

The three-year campaign will also ask for evidence on the current state of school libraries, and for ring-fenced budgets for library improvements.

It is being run by a collection of organisations including library and information association CILIP, the School Library Association, the Association of School and Education Librarians, and the National Literacy Trust.

Nick Poole, chief executive of CILIP, said every child should have a “great library in their school” which is run by “inspiring and professional librarians, and stocked with up-to-date books and resources”.

“I’m delighted that the library sector is launching a new campaign for great school libraries and making the case to government, Ofsted, headteachers, teachers and parents,” he added.

“We will campaign for school libraries to be statutory and for Ofsted to inspect them, for government to put school libraries at the heart of their education strategies and for ring-fenced budgets for school library improvement.”

Poole announced the campaign at the CILIP School Libraries Group conference last Saturday. It is expected to launch in June.

Alison Tarrant, director of the School Library Association, wants feedback from schools on how many libraries are still open and what difficulties they are facing, as well as



highlighting the “amazing things” that some school libraries are doing.

She said research shows that reading for pleasure improves the vocabulary of pupils, and argued that removing school libraries has a “huge impact” on disadvantaged children without access to books, as it takes away “access to culture” and “goes completely against social mobility”.

She described a “frustration” that libraries are statutory in prisons but not in schools, and hopes the campaign will lead to “progress in terms of support from government and Ofsted, and also a wider acknowledgement of the value of school libraries”.

“Just making libraries statutory and inspected by Ofsted isn’t enough unless the funding is there, otherwise we will end up with schools in more deprived areas which don’t have the money to spend on libraries getting worse Ofsted grades,” she said.

“We don’t want to compound the problem. We want to highlight the importance of having school libraries and create wholesale change so people see what libraries can really offer, and encourage the government to fund

them.”

A spokesperson for Ofsted said the regulator expects schools to “focus on securing high literacy standards for all pupils, as well as offering a deep and rich curriculum”.

Inspectors will “consider the impact of the teaching of literacy on outcomes” and will look at the resources used by teachers to improve reading skills, which “may include looking a school’s library resource, where this is available”.

“It’s not for Ofsted to determine whether or not schools must have libraries,” he added.

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said school libraries “play a role” in giving children the “opportunity to read widely”, and that schools “are responsible for deciding how to provide this service for their pupils”.

“We believe schools are best placed to make decisions about how to use their funding to deliver the best outcomes for their pupils,” they added.

In April 2016, a motion passed at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers conference called for a campaign to prevent library closures and urge Ofsted to inspect them.

A survey of 456 union members showed 53 per cent said their school didn’t have a library. Although 22 per cent said their library had been given more space, around 16 per cent said the amount of space used by their library had diminished.

At the time, the School Library Association said its membership had dropped from 3,000 to 2,500 over the last decade. There are no government figures on how many schools have libraries.

Like the curriculum... my authority has to be broad and balanced...



Stam



EDITORIAL

It's time to redraw the knowledge vs skills battle lines

Debates have raged this week over the comments made by a UCL academic to the national conference of heads of independent schools.

Rose Luckin warned that pupils taught a "knowledge-based curriculum" of the type favoured by schools minister Nick Gibb will be unable to compete with advanced artificial intelligence in the future.

She suggested that teaching facts leaves pupils without the capacity to make use of their knowledge in creative ways. They will be more susceptible to fake news, she argued, because they will see knowledge as something imparted by an authority figure, as opposed to something they reflect upon and discover.

This is the latest intervention in an age-old debate about knowledge vs skills, and just like Brexit, we often hear scaremongering from both sides.

The problem is, when a debate is unnecessarily polarised, no one wins except the press, which gets to sweep up the sensationalist headlines.

The 19th century Prussian philosopher Georg Hegel had a theory, which was that every idea necessarily caused its polar opposite to appear in response. This gives way a third, more mature stage of thought, however, in which the unity of

the two opposing concepts becomes clear, and a deeper understanding is born. His "dialectic", as it is known, is sometimes described in simpler terms as "thesis, antithesis, synthesis".

Whatever the accuracy of Hegel's dialectics, the knowledge/skills debate doesn't seem to follow this pattern. Rather, it seems to swing back and forward between the two extremes, without ever finding a synthesis.

Surely it's time for educationalists (and journalists) on both sides to reach that point of maturity and stop framing arguments through the lens of the artificial, binary knowledge-skills divide.

Or if we want to keep things in their boxes, let's at least not let our tribal loyalties blind us to what's actually happening on the ground. Isn't it time their opponents stopped pretending that the knowledge focus of schools like Michaela automatically means they are not teaching students to play with ideas – or that institutions such as School 21 don't teach knowledge as well as creativity?

Then instead of fighting over whether a knowledge-based or skills-based approach is better, we can start to share examples of excellent teaching and learning, in whatever form it comes.

Maybe the era of massive MAT CEO pay is ending

Another week, another list of academies warned about excessive executive pay.

This time, the government has given us the names of 92 trusts which pay, or paid as in some instances it turned out, at least ten members of staff between £100k and £150k a year.

We support the government's much-needed interventions on huge CEO pay packets, but we're troubled by the response from trusts singled out in the latest investigation, many of which have clearly got wise to the strength of

feeling about pay since the data was collected in 2015-16 and adjusted their policies accordingly.

As one of the trusts pointed out, it is important to differentiate and recognise where schools have taken action.

The public mood on executive pay is not going to shift any time soon. Our investigations this week have shown how schools are now reflecting on what is proportionate and appropriate when it comes to leaders' pay.

Flogging a £50m dead horse

Flogging a dead horse is not usually something to be encouraged, but seems to have become a badge of honour when it comes to the DfE and studio schools.

It's not enough that the number of schools to have closed is fast catching up those still open. It's not enough that the Studio Schools Trust has been quietly disbanded and replaced by a company so unprepared that it doesn't even have a website. It's not even enough that former chancellor George Osborne has admitted the starting age of 14 "hasn't worked" for its sister project, UTCs.

Apparently the DfE will insist the schools are "popular" no matter how low their pupil numbers and Ofsted grades fall. And, having already spent over £50 million on the doomed project, the question remains: how much more money will be pumped into this failed initiative before the DfE accepts this dead horse won't be getting up again? The DfE needs to ensure that those Studio Schools currently open are fully supported no matter what decision is made about the policies future.

Marketing and Communications Manager

Salary: £40k to £55k per annum, dependent upon experience.

Full time, permanent, 10% pension, 25 days' holiday increases to 30 days after one year.



The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations that make up the Independent Schools Council. We provide objective inspections to safeguard the quality and effectiveness of the education, care and welfare of children in schools. Based in Barbican, the organisation has approx. 35 employees, and contracts a pool of over 1000 carefully selected and trained inspectors to provide its services across the UK.

We are now looking to appoint a standalone Marketing and Communications Manager, reporting to the CEO. The successful candidate will be responsible to manage, develop, design and

implement the marketing and communications activities for the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and ISIC (ISI's subsidiary consultancy and training business).

Visit our website at <https://www.isi.net/about/working-for-isi> for further information. If you would like to apply for this position, please provide a full and complete CV together with a covering letter outlining your suitability for this role, experience in your current role and salary expectations to natalie.venner@isi.net.

Closing Date: Thursday 31st May at 5pm



OUR LADY & ST. BEDE
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

EXAMINATIONS & DATA PERFORMANCE OFFICER

GRADE I (26-28) £23,166 - £24,717

37 HOURS PER WEEK, FULL TIME | PERMANENT

Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy and the Directors of Carmel Education Trust wish to appoint an excellent Examinations & Data Performance Officer.

We wish to appoint a candidate who:

- Will organise, maintain and develop data and tracking systems across the school integrating examinations
- Produce reports using internal and external assessment and progress data
- Can lead and support development of staff using data
- Has outstanding ICT skills
- Is highly motivated
- Can develop efficient systems to generate, analyse and utilise data
- Has excellent analytical & problem solving skills

We can offer:

- A Catholic school that has a clear mission and strong tradition dating back to before 1850.
- A vibrant, well run, ambitious and caring school.
- A school where staff enjoy coming to work and are able to maintain a work-life balance.
- A professional climate where all staff are valued, listened to and who are able to fully use our gifts and talents.
- An excellent behaviour climate where staff can teach free from disruption.

- Most importantly, fantastic pupils who are hardworking, display great humility and appreciate the effort of adults who work on their behalf.
- A school which is part of the Carmel Education Trust: a group of 7 schools, all working together as one to provide exceptional levels of expertise and support.
- A rapidly expanding school, c. 900 pupils will be admitted in September 2018, increasing to c.1000 in 2019.
- A £5m building expansion programme.
- An Ofsted (January 18) and Diocesan (November 17) rated 'Outstanding' school.

School Visit

We are passionate about our school and want to fill it with staff who share the same passion, values and drive. You would be warmly welcomed to our school at any time, to see and feel what Our Lady & St Bede is like on a typical day and to ask any questions you may have on an informal basis.

Please contact the Headteacher's P.A.:

Mrs Johanna Smurthwaite: smurthwaitej@ourladyandstbede.org.uk

For an application form, please e-mail **Mrs Johanna Smurthwaite:** recruitment@ourladyandstbede.org.uk or Tel: 01642 704970.

Closing date: Monday 14th May 2018, 12:00 midday.



OFSTED HAS RATED US
OUTSTANDING
IN EVERY CATEGORY
NOVEMBER 2017

Harris Girls' Academy Bromley is an outstanding school. Our examination results places amongst the very best in the country and we believe that with high quality teaching and support, our girls will become responsible and successful in their chosen paths. We believe that teaching is a craft and continually strive to become even better at it; our high quality CPD supports ambitious and hardworking colleagues to make a real difference to the lives of our students. If you are passionate about your subject, committed to your own learning and keen to make a difference, this could be the academy for you.

We are currently looking for:

Coordinator of Humanities, Coordinator of MFL, Coordinator of Art and Design & Technology, LP of Science, Faculty Director

Why work at Harris Girls' Academy Bromley?

Harris Girls' Academy Bromley is the number one school in Bromley for progress and one of the most successful schools in the country, with progress being amongst the top 1% of schools this year at +1.09 (Progress 8 2017). We are very proud of our academic and cultural achievements and are ambitious about the future.

At Harris Girls' Academy Bromley we aim to ensure that every student is inspired and supported to achieve her personal best in a creative and enterprising culture where learning comes first. Through the development of our learning ethos of CORE, we encourage the girls to become Committed, Optimistic, Resilient and Enterprising.

For more information, or to arrange a visit, please e-mail **Miss Clair Standing** on principalspa@harrisbromley.org.uk

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**Do you want to collaborate with colleagues to create an
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**Can you get teachers to think hard and get excited about
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Can you find and grow our 'bright spots'?

Are you a professional learning and development champion?

The Prince Albert Community Trust (PACT) wish to appoint a passionate and dynamic Lead Practitioner, who will take a school-wide focus on professional learning and developments from September 2018. In particular, this exciting new role, will focus upon designing and implementing small scale classroom inquiry and action research. So if you are passionate about maximising the impact of teaching within the classroom and have the enthusiasm to bring others with you then this new role could be the one for you!

So a little bit about us...

The PACT is a forward thinking and innovative Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and we serve fantastic pupils, parents and staff. In addition to this, we are very fortunate to have the support and challenge from a superb group of Trustees. Our family of schools consist of Prince Albert Primary School, Heathfield Primary School and Highfield J&I School. We are supporting Birchfield Primary School and are currently building a Secondary Free School.

We want to invest in you...

At the heart of all that we do, is our bespoke professional learning and development culture, striving to unleash talent and nurture expertise. We passionately believe that our staff are our biggest asset and so we have a personalised PLD package that is tailored to the journey each and every individual wants to embark on. We invest heavily in our staff as we know that only through staff development will we achieve the very best outcomes for our children.

The main thing is our main thing...

This in turn has provided us with a teaching and learning philosophy that ensures the standards we deliver for all of our pupils are as high as we would want for our own children; this is something we pride ourselves on. We are relentless in the pursuit of excellence for all of our pupils and firmly believe that there is no limit to a child's potential, which is equally true of adults. Learning is a life-long experience and we feel extremely privileged to contribute to the learning of children and adults alike.

WE are a team...

We are a friendly, professional and hardworking team and are proud to offer a supportive and experienced leadership team to work alongside. We are a well-resourced MAT with sensible policies to ensure that our practice supports both our wellbeing and work life balance. If you believe you possess the qualities to take on this exciting challenge then we would be delighted to hear from you. Part time applications would also be welcomed. The PACT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Visits are warmly welcomed and positively encouraged. If you wish to arrange a visit, please contact the PACT on **0121 327 0594 Ext 259** where Hannah Langston will make the necessary arrangements. Further information about the schools, our outcomes and philosophy can be found on our school websites: www.princealbert.bham.sch.uk; www.heathfld.bham.sch.uk; www.hifield.bham.sch.uk; www.pact.bham.sch.uk.

The application pack can be downloaded from any of the school websites and your application should be submitted to
h.langston@princealbert.bham.sch.uk.

"This post is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) and therefore the ability to speak fluent and spoken English is an essential requirement for this role"

Closing date: Wednesday 9th May 2018

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READERS' REPLY

Reply of the week
receives a
Schools Week mug!



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TWEET



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WEBSITE

Struggling to afford CPD? Charge parents £1 a week, says leading head



Sharon Mather

Perhaps he should consider that in many areas parents can't afford to feed their children properly! This approach isn't the answer!

Schools without professional clerk are breaking government rules



Martin Matthews, Oldham

A good article raising a legitimate concern. A professional clerk ensures due process is followed which keeps governance aligned to the Nolan principles and the myriad of regulations and advice. How can a "minute taker" know if a legal and important decision is made correctly or challenge poor practice?

Kent private school seeks unpaid intern for one year's work



Katie Topham // @MissTopham83

Appalling... because that's what we study for years for. To volunteer!

Ofqual investigates examiners' experience



Stuart Hitch // @s_w_hitch

Maybe they should also look at the pay and just



how many examiners are working at well below the minimum hourly wage for doing this. Recent advert for a dishwasher was paying double and there is your examiner recruitment and retention problem.

Ir8 Guy // @Ir8_Guy

This's just common sense! You can't qualify to teach and start marking straight away, in the same way you can't qualify and start leading a school straight away! It's wrong and irresponsible to allow such inexperienced kids to mark papers – because that's what most of them still are.

Could Ofsted be about to wipe the grading slate clean?



Janet Downs, Bourne

This is sensible especially if accompanied by making any inspections over, say, five years, out of date. This should include those judged outstanding.



Juli // @Jmr28Juli

Blimey ... if this happens – if – it might actually start making a difference.

How should schools manage out-of-hours emails?



St Patrick Hewitt // @MashStPaddy

Always thought the individual sets the expectation. If someone sends an email on the weekend and I choose to not reply, I'm telling that person that weekend hours aren't work hours.

REPLIES OF THE WEEK

Kent private school seeks unpaid intern for one year's work



Mark Watson, Gloucestershire

Sensationalist headline and predictable union outrage. Of course this person is being paid – it's payment in kind rather than payment in pounds. I don't know the housing situation in Ashford, and we don't know what kind of accommodation is being offered, but it clearly has a monetary equivalent. If someone offered me free accommodation and board in return for a service I would see that as being paid for it. Whether or not it is fair reward is another question, but we're not given any details on this because it might cloud the chance to have a dig (what possible relevance does the amount of money a term costs at Ashford have? The issues would be exactly the same if it was happening at one of United Learning's academy schools).

Affordable teacher homes thwarted by funding rules



Brian Lightman // @brianlightman

In my first year of teaching I had a teacher's flat at low rent. Massive incentive, which enabled me to work in a location which I would not have looked to relocate to. The government will only avert the recruitment crisis by investing in teachers.

Fifteen years ago I met a vicar in a bar in Oxford who had spent 20 years working in prisons with violent male offenders. He told me that the youngest ones only had two shots at turning their lives around.

"Either they find Jesus, or their girlfriend gets pregnant and they suddenly get the preciousness of humanity," he said. "That last one is risky, though. Sometimes it makes them realise how badly they've hurt other people and they give up altogether."

His comments stayed with me as I went into teaching and found myself dealing with a small number of pupils already on track for future detention at her majesty's pleasure. Among that group only two seemed entirely lost: dead behind the eyes, empty in their hearts. It slayed me every time I noticed it. And I tried everything: tough love, caring love, personalised attention, harsh reminders that society wouldn't put up with this behaviour, detentions, encouraging feedback, the whole gamut.

And yet, and yet.

In the years since I taught those pupils I've often wondered if either found religion or a pregnant girlfriend. Unfortunately I think it's more likely they found the end of someone else's knife.

On Tuesday, the schools minister Nick Gibb was rightly called to account for the government's fairly limp actions on pupils who are permanently excluded from schools and placed into pupil referral units. Most future prisoners come from within this group, and their educational outcomes are poor. Just one per cent of excluded pupils receive five passes at GCSE including



LAURA MCINERNEY

Contributing editor, *Schools Week*

How do we solve a problem like permanent exclusion?

English and Maths. Ninety-nine in every hundred enter the world without those basic qualifications, and with an exclusion on their school record. It's not entirely surprising they end up in prison.

And yet, and yet.

The problem for Gibb, and for all of society, is that we don't really know what to do about this fact. In the same way that we struggle as a society to know what to do with people who have dementia, who are suicidal, or who have long-term chronic fatigue, we all shuffle around the problem hoping that by talking about some other proxy – money, delivery targets, accountability – that we can get away from the reality that some genuinely thorny things happen and we don't know what to do about it.

With exclusions and prisoners, one approach is to say that we should divert the cash for prisons into more nurturing

activities. The broadcaster Afua Hirsch wrote in *The Guardian* last year that a place at Rainsbrook secure training centre for young offenders costs over £160,000 per student. Rugby School, the top independent establishment, just down the road from Rainsbrook, only charges around £30,000.

I desperately wanted my challenging pupils to be perfect, but they'd have been every bit as difficult at Rugby as they were in our school. The reason why Rainsbrook costs so much more is that it involves more supervision, more restraints, more locked doors. That's sad, and not how anyone wants it to be, but the hope that nurturing more will fix things isn't enough.

Gibb's brightest idea in the session was that if schools are stricter early on then children get more used to behaving and never need to be excluded. But as one alternative provision leader said to me after hearing about this

sort of logic: "That's a great approach, but how would he cope if – as has happened to me – a kid climbs up on the roof, takes a shit, wipes his arse with a sock and then hangs it off the edge shouting SMELL THIS, SIR? That kid doesn't give a stuff for your rules, so then what?"

While the colourful details of this story are the bits that will stick in your mind, the important words are "so then what?" Because, being blunt, that's what we don't necessarily know. All across the country, teachers, leaders, PRU workers, support staff and mental health workers are tearing their hair out trying to get kids who are violent, desperate and disengaged to stay on the straight and narrow. But strong, practical knowledge of how to do this is little-known, little-shared, and little-evidenced.

The upcoming Timpson Review will help; it is going to gather best practice. More important, perhaps, is the work of *The Difference*, the charity seeking to get teachers to move from mainstream and work in PRUs so they can help build this knowledge and then return to the mainstream and share it. If nothing else, it will at least mean an influx of qualified teachers into a sector that is currently running at twice the number of unqualified and temporary teachers compared to the mainstream.

It is okay that we do not yet have answers to this problem. I don't blame Nick Gibb for not having solved something that no government has solved in a hundred years. But we've got to start seriously trying. Jesus needs a back-up plan.

PAUL WHITEMAN

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Paul Whiteman, general secretary, NAHT

Almost a year to the day since he was unveiled as the NAHT's preferred candidate to replace Russell Hobby as its general secretary, Paul Whiteman is preparing to deliver his inaugural keynote speech at the union's annual conference.

But Whiteman's address in Liverpool this weekend will be delivered under very different circumstances to his predecessor's last year. For one thing, he won't have the leader of the opposition as his warm-up act.

Last year's eventful conference – held less than six weeks before election day – saw Jeremy Corbyn receive a hero's welcome while Justine Greening, then the education secretary, was a no-show.

There may be no general election this year, but Whiteman insists he still wants his members in campaign mode as they prepare to debate and set policy on the biggest issues facing schools across the country.

"Headteachers and all school leaders have a duty to speak up for the children in their care, and it doesn't matter whether there's an election

running," he tells me. "It doesn't matter what colour of government we have; they have a duty to say when things are going wrong in their schools."

A few weeks before the conference, we meet in a café minutes from Congress House in Holborn, where Whiteman is due to meet other leaders at a Trades Union Congress event. Ever the millennial, I order avocado on toast; Whiteman just has coffee.

He is tall, bespectacled, and a proud south Londoner with an accent to match. He still lives in Croydon, where he was born, and when he arrives he mumbles something scathing about the trains that made him a little late to our meeting.

It is poignant that we meet before he heads to the TUC. He was born into a union family. His father was an official with the Banking, Insurance, and Finance Union, which Whiteman joined when he started work at the Orpington branch of TSB in 1986 at the age of 18.

He first became active in the union in the early 1990s. Banking was changing and, by then a branch manager, he watched as technology transformed the way people looked after their money, and "massive redundancies" followed.

"I was a little bit mouthy," he tells me, a cheeky smile on his face.

However, he was reluctant to follow in his father's

footsteps and become an elected official. There was a "kind of unwritten understanding" between the two men, he says. Whiteman junior focused on his career, while Whiteman senior tended to the union.

Following his father's retirement, though, the son was quick to roll up his sleeves.

As an elected official, he rose through the ranks, eventually chairing the union's Lloyds TSB committee, which represented all members within the newly-merged bank.

At the age of 30, he applied for a union bursary to study for a master's in industrial relations and employment law at Keele University.

He confesses "with slight embarrassment" that he "didn't really enjoy school very much", had snubbed further study after his A-levels, and "hated every minute" of his banking exams. But the chance to study as a mature student was different.

"I absolutely adored it. The difference was that when

I did the banking exams, I was young, I was still living at home, I was completely free to do what I wanted to do, but when I did the master's I was 30, three kids under three, a full-time job and I was active in the union."

"MY JOB IS VERY MUCH TO BE NON-PARTISAN"

Two years of "very little sleep" later, and Whiteman found his first full-time union job at the First Divisional Association, a union for senior civil servants where he spent a decade representing government department permanent secretaries, NHS chiefs, Ofsted inspectors and other important officials.

A decade later, in 2012, he joined the NAHT to run its representation and advice division, which included its legal team and regional offices, dealing with "the misery and conflict on the ground". Five years later, when Hobby announced he was moving to Teach First, Whiteman was at the front of the queue to replace him.

"When he decided to go, you only had to look at me to know I had ambitions," he says, admitting that Hobby had tipped him off ahead of his announcement, and told him to be ready.

"He was an absolute gentleman. I had a bit of notice to get my head round the fact that he was going."

To the outside world, Whiteman's appointment looked seamless. Hobby announced his plans to go in January last year, and Whiteman's name was announced to members at the union's conference in April. But behind the scenes, a "torturous" appointment process had gone on.

"It was a really competitive process, actually. It started with a meeting with a headhunter firm, then three lots of



“I STILL THINK THAT AT ITS CORE, POLITICS REMAINS AN HONOURABLE PROFESSION, AND PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO DO RIGHT”

testing cycle metrics including things like verbal reasoning,” he recalls.

“Then we had an appointment workshop centre thing, an assessment centre. Over two days. Part of that included interviews with all sorts of different panels, so everybody in the union got a bite.”

Having passed the plethora of tests and panels, Whiteman took the reins at a tumultuous time for schools.

Now the challenge for leaders is to keep hold of the momentum started by the success of the school cuts campaign in bringing education to the forefront of last year’s general election. He wants heads to keep fighting, and rejects criticism levelled at leaders who spoke out about funding last year. He also insists the NAHT will never be partisan.

Unlike Hobby, who upon his appointment in 2010 admitted to being a card-carrying Labour Party member and remained so throughout his tenure at the NAHT, Whiteman refuses to reveal his own political leanings.

“It doesn’t matter. My job very much is to be non-partisan,” he says, matter-of-factly, “and I’m not going to let you draw me on it.”

His trade union background is “pure”, he says, because he’s always sought to articulate the voices



of his members and their profession, rather than use it as a platform to pursue political ambitions.

So what will a Whiteman-led NAHT look like? With tension continuing to build over school funding and teacher pay, will heads finally join classroom teachers on the picket line under his leadership?

He is clear that strikes would be “an action of last resort”: “My experience is that industrial action of any description is always tremendously painful and disruptive.”

But the situation is nevertheless very serious, he admits. If the government’s teacher pay review body recommends a larger-than-usual rise this year he fears heads may have to refuse to implement it unless more cash comes from central coffers.

Are politicians ignoring the worsening situation in schools? Or are they just blissfully unaware? He gives them more credit than that.

“I still think that at its core, politics remains an honourable profession, and people are trying to do right,” he suggests. “I don’t think they’re blind. I don’t think they’re ignoring it. But they are making conscious political decisions about where to spend money and where to spend the nation’s

wealth. And they stand or fall on those conscious decisions.”

Under his leadership, he hopes the NAHT will be the “authoritative voice” of education leadership, a body that “isn’t afraid to say difficult things in a public space”. He insists that the NAHT retain its own culture and brand, and resists calls for his organisation to merge into the National Education Union.

Still, the lifelong trade unionist in Whiteman is clearly excited by the formation of the NEU, now the largest education union in Europe and the third largest in the world.

“It’s fantastic. I wish them very well with it, because it will be a very powerful and no doubt credible force.”

Before we part ways, an animated Whiteman describes his “fantastic” first nine months in the job, during which the “biggest shock” was a discovery that his admiration for school leaders could grow.

“Over five years I developed a depth of respect for and liking for the profession. But nine months into this job, when you’re frequently out in schools and you’re really seeing it, it just blows your mind every time.”

PROFILE: PAUL WHITEMAN



"YOU ONLY HAD TO
LOOK AT ME TO KNOW
I HAD AMBITIONS"

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What's your favourite book?

I guess the first one that really stuck in my mind was *The three musketeers*. I read it when I was young and then I reread it as I got older, and the two bits of enjoyment were completely different. As a youngster it was the swashbuckling, riding all over France stuff, then the political intrigue when I read it as an adult was really entertaining. But, I guess if you push me for my absolute favourite, that would be *To kill a mockingbird*.

What's your favourite cuisine?

Italian. Every time. Dead easy.

Your favourite place to visit abroad

Probably Barcelona. I don't go very often, but it's blown my mind and I know I'll be a frequent visitor, there's no doubt about that.

...and at home in Britain

I'm a Londoner, and I love London. Absolutely adore London, but if I'm going to disappear somewhere to relax it's north Devon, generally around Croyde Bay, which I discovered when I was a teenager. I was 17, and we all saw ourselves as being part of the British surfing community and we were going down to surf, three of us in a two-man tent on a campsite. It was certainly character-building if nothing else. I had pretty much all the kit, but you can see, the long hair has fallen out. Surfing in the snow at Easter was not fun, but it was a great time and I've been returning with family ever since. It's a fabulous place to be.

CV

- 2017 – present:** General secretary, National Association of Head Teachers
- 2012 – 2017:** Director of representation and advice, NAHT
- 2002 – 2012:** National officer, FDA (the civil service union)
- 1998 – 2000:** MA in industrial relations and employment law, Keele University
- 1997 – 2002:** Elected official, Unifi (previously the Banking, Insurance, and Finance Union)
- 1986 – 2002:** Bank clerk and manager, Lloyds TSB (previously TSB bank)

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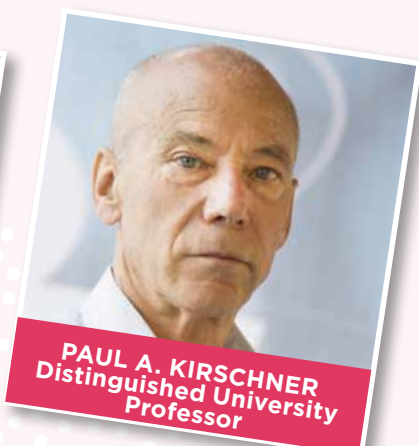
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SCHOOLSWEEK

OPINION



STEPHEN TIERNEY

Headteachers Roundtable Group

It's time to end the oppression of supply agency transfer fees

The fees charged by agencies that provide schools with supply teachers are becoming untenable. Stephen Tierney has some simple, practical advice which could save heads a packet

Squeezed budgets combined with a tight labour market means that teacher supply agencies are having a field day at schools' expense right now. The ethical problem here is that they are funnelling excessive amounts of public money into shareholder pockets every year. However, schools are not powerless – we can band and act together.

The use of sign-on or transfer fees by supply agencies is something that rightly annoys and frustrates many school leaders.

Supply agency sign-on fees usually derive from one of three routes.

Firstly, an agency provides a member of staff for a permanent vacancy that a school can't fill. There is a rationale for a reasonable finder's fee in this case. However, we have anecdotal reports of charges of over £9,000, which is ridiculous, particularly since the new member of staff could resign within weeks of starting their new job – and go back on the supply agency's books with no transfer fee paid back to the schools.

The other main type of supply agency fee tends to be charged when a school appoints a member of staff – having first advertised and interviewed – who had previously been on supply at the school.

Finally, and more outrageously, there are times when a school appoints someone whose CV happens to have been randomly emailed to them by the supply agency, at some point in history. Supply agencies often still try and charge in this circumstance.

It's time to put an end to these transfer fees. Acting together, it is more than possible: what's needed is a process of engagement, collective action and a steady nerve.

This is why Headteachers' Roundtable has been working with the legal firm Thrings (which kindly did this work pro bono) to bring you a simple variation of contract agreement. This can be used to effectively overwrite sign-on fees of types two and three above, which are often written into supply agency contracts.

It's important to remember that supply agencies need you and your school's funds to carry on operating. The process of engagement works best if a few schools in an area get together to speak to the most

commonly used supply agencies. There is often already a business relationship established and it may be that using this helpful legal document – which is available to download from here <https://bit.ly/2r9T86S> – and a short sequence of polite and sensible discussions, the signing-on fee can be removed from all future business transactions.

If not, I would advise you to stop using the supply agency; they will see their turnover and profits plummet and will soon be knocking on your door. This is your trump card, and I've used it on a number of occasions. Simply withdraw your business and either stop using supply agencies or establish a small group of supply teachers.

“What's needed is a process of engagement, collective action and a steady nerve

These may be employed on casual or permanent contracts across a small group of schools; you are more powerful when you act together.

By withdrawing our business from a supply agency this year, the company moved from threatening to take us to court for the non-payment of a signing-on fee, to offering us a profit share for any supply teachers we used from their agency in future.

It's important to note the caveats in the letter of variation of contract, concerning the company's name and that the letter must be signed by a director. You can find out the names of company directors through a simple search of the documents at Companies House.

On the final point, make sure everyone at your school knows how to respond to unsolicited emails with CVs attached. Have a standard response, which might be something along the lines of: “We don't accept unsolicited CVs; please remove us immediately from your mailing list. If we do not already have a signed contract with you this email is to inform you we do not accept your terms and conditions.”

There are certain things that we don't need permission to address. This is one such case.



SAMANTHA HURLEY

Director of operations, Association of Professional Staffing Companies

Actually, teacher supply agency fees are justified

Teacher recruitment agencies play a vital role in short-notice school staffing, argues Samantha Hurley, who says they deserve to charge for the service

Headteachers have the freedom to recruit directly should they wish to. However, the reality is that many rely on the skills, experience and networks of professional recruiters to ensure that classes have a good-quality, fully compliant teacher at incredibly short notice. If you use a recruitment service then clearly you have to pay a fee.

Of course, it's an issue if recruitment firms are not providing clear terms up front that tell the school what their fees are, and that should be dealt with, but paying a reasonable fee for a good service is appropriate.

We'd suggest that efforts in the sector could be focused towards giving more training to headteachers around what is and isn't appropriate contractually, identifying recruiters who may be charging unreasonable fees, and how to negotiate sensible terms. The majority of professional recruiters adhere to industry standards where transparency is key.

APSCo's education code of conduct was developed in conjunction with NAHT and states that our members “shall not misrepresent pay rates, contract terms, assignment duration or other subjects relevant to the relationship between the member, the client and the candidate” and shall not “unfairly prevent a candidate from pursuing other opportunities, nor will they induce candidates to breach or improperly interfere with a contractual relationship with a client”.

The new Crown Commercial Service framework for supply teachers, which has been developed in conjunction with the Department for Education, recognises that there must be some consideration for recruitment firms, which pour time, energy and resources into sourcing and screening talent. Under the framework, supply teachers must work for a school for a minimum of eight weeks, and then an additional four weeks' notice should be given before a candidate can be employed directly by the school if no fees are to be paid. This calculation of assignment duration pauses during school holidays.

Recruitment consultancies – which, let's

not forget, are commercial organisations – will barely recoup their costs during this 12-week period. The amount of time and money which goes into securing talent and providing the required level of compliance should not be underestimated. Our members report that managing compliance processes costs an average of £800 per candidate.

Education recruiters work unsociable hours to ensure that schools are able to source appropriately qualified teachers, and the Headteachers' Roundtable should recognise the important role that recruitment firms fulfill.

Professional recruiters work closely with schools and school leaders are grateful for the service which they provide – but too many heads quickly forget the reason why they had access to the first-class teacher they want to keep full-time. Undermining supply agencies will ultimately result in a more commoditised sector, and a fall in the quality of individuals that schools have access to, as well as the level of safeguarding.

In terms of bringing on board a teacher when a recruiter has sent that candidate's CV to the school “at some point in history”, there is usually a contractual restrictive period after which a school is able to hire that candidate directly without a recruitment fee, typically three or six months. Schools need to be aware of the contractual terms that they sign up to. It is also worth noting that increased spending on supply teachers does not necessarily mean that increasing recruitment fees are wholly to blame. Surely the sector should be looking at the shortage of skilled teachers in the market, and also the resource planning undertaken by schools.

As the new supply teacher framework demonstrates, the DfE recognises the role that recruitment consultancies play in accessing talent – and it's about time that all individual school leaders do the same. Statements like “agencies are draining public money” just aren't helpful.

We need to focus on helping headteachers and academy trust leaders to understand the terms in place – making them clear and transparent – so that the fees they pay are appropriate, and the restriction periods are reasonable. Teacher unions may want to adopt a standard contract model that is fair and appropriate, and APSCo would be happy to work with them to produce this.

Special schools aren't just a watered-down version of mainstream schools, and require progress measures that provide meaningful information for students, parents and the government, argues Sabrina Hobbs

As many mainstream schools are still finding their way through life beyond levels, special schools are dealing with a similar scenario of their own.

Our old system of progress levels has been scrapped and a pilot replacement system introduced. The problem is, however, that the trial system is not only demoralising for special school pupils and their parents, it will also fail to provide meaningful data for government.

The good news is that schools have been invited to mould the new system. Weaved within the 2016 Rochford review of assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests are phrases such as "schools should decide their own approach" and exhortations for assessment systems to be "meaningful" and "appropriate".

This opens up a window of opportunity for special schools to frame the agenda on assessment.

At Severndale Academy, the only special school in the Shropshire local authority, we began with internal discussions of purpose and need. Who are assessment results for, what do they tell us, and how are they helpful to raising attainment?

The Rochford Review recommended scrapping P scales – a system of levels that



SABRINA HOBBS

Principal, Severndale Academy

How should we be measuring progress at a special school?

worked in parallel with the old national curriculum level descriptors – and replacing with them with "interim pre-key stage standards".

The huge conceptual flaw is that these pre-key stage standards are designed for mainstream schools to assess pupils with SEND using consistent measures, not for pupils working at lower levels attending special schools. The criteria are so generalised that they tell you little about what works and doesn't work within a given curriculum or approach.

Essentially, they will end up telling us that all of our pupils are working "below age-related expectations" and will all be forever "emerging".

The purpose of summative assessments is to tell the government, parents and students what they are attaining. Mainstream students are attaining different things to special school pupils.

The P scales were developed to work

alongside the old national curriculum. They bring value to our summative assessment framework, celebrating attainment and tracking progress through a bank of incremental knowledge and skills in different subjects.

“

Every child needs to have their progress recognised

Since the replacement of level descriptors with age-related expectations in 2014, the two systems no longer match. But this is an issue related to systems rather than the question of assessment being fit for purpose. We believe the content and our application of P Scales is fit for purpose and

so we made the decision to continue to use them, despite the removal of the statutory obligation.

In the government's keenness to monitor everything scientifically, let us not forget the value of formative data. Parents want to know how their child is doing and what you are doing to improve their learning.

The Rochford Review recommended a new statutory duty to assess pupils who are not yet engaged in subject-specific learning against the seven areas of engagement (responsiveness, curiosity, discovery, anticipation, persistence, initiation and investigation) – effectively a form of behaviour for learning. We have adapted this measure and extended it to all of our pupils at Severndale Academy, and we've found it to be useful.

Parents are reassured that their children are being tracked and that adaptive approaches make the difference to progress, rather than being presented with another set of meaningless numbers relating to their child's attainment.

We need an updated version of P scales that maps to the new national curriculum, to be used as summative assessment data by government. Formative data should be used to provide feedback to parents and pupils, along with the summative progress data from P scales.

Finally, let's not try and make special a poor relation of mainstream – it's not a watered-down curriculum, it's a different curriculum. Every child needs to have their progress recognised, even if it doesn't fit neatly onto a straight-line scale.



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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

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Our blog reviewer of the week is Iesha Small, an educational researcher, teacher and commentator @ieshasmall

Drop dead, data drops

@fultonofscience

"When you have three data drops a semester, the term is always ending," writes Kevin Fulton. Sometimes it feels like data is the one true god of education. A science teacher, Fulton examines how the generation of internal tracking data affects pupils and teachers. Internal data drops are often considered in terms of increased teacher workload and he certainly touches on that, but he also raises the point that a constant focus on feeding the internal data machine reduces time that pupils have to actually learn.

How to like a class

@StriPosTeacher

"We've all been there – that knot in the stomach when you have to face 8S again," says Bristol-based StiPosTeacher. When I first started teaching, I had a colleague who would separate his class into those who he felt wanted to learn and those who messed around and didn't seem to care. It was surreal walking into a classroom and seeing several very engaged students working on their maths while a smaller group of children at the back were doing exactly what they wanted and being treated by the teacher as if they didn't exist. I thought of him when reading this blog, which advises that instead of dreading teaching a class we can decide to like them, and offers clear and practical steps for how this works alongside maintaining high expectations.

Progress 8: What if we started at the beginning?

@edudatalab

"What about those pupils who left schools before January of Year 11 and who aren't

included in Progress 8?" enquires Dave Thomson, a statistician at DataLab. This informative blog exposes a major flaw in Progress 8. Originally introduced as a fairer measure than the previous standard of five A*- C at GCSE, which made some schools concentrate most resources on pupils at the GCSE C/D borderline and ignore everybody else, especially at the lower end.

Thompson points out that pupils who come off roll or are transferred to PRUs or alternative provision before January of year 11 do not get counted in a school's Progress 8 scores, thus creating a perverse incentive for schools to shed them. As always, such students are disproportionately from groups already experiencing historical disadvantage. He presents an alternative that would more fairly record some of society's most vulnerable children.

The problem with physical education just focusing on physical activity and health/sport based curricula

@Misslynchpe

"Have you considered if your curriculum is elitist? Racist? Sexist? Ableist? Classist? Or even healthist?"

Shrehan Lynch asks her fellow PE teachers. I've heard questions like this asked of English or history curriculums but I must admit I've never given any thought to it in the context of physical education. I'm not a PE teacher but movement is important to me and I often despair that physical exercise is sometimes seen as a more disposable part of curriculum as our young people get older and have to take public exams. I agree with Shrehan's final point that we are not apolitical as teachers but rather we "are responsible for making the world a fairer place beginning with the confines of your teaching space".

The slow disintegration of inclusion for children with SEND

@BartShaw1

"Many teachers believe that schools are informally showing the door to children with SEND who are unlikely to make progress," writes Bart Shaw, a SEND research specialist. Shaw explores findings from a recent survey by the NASUWT teaching union. School budgets are tightening at the same time that increasing numbers of children are being identified as having SEND and teachers are feeling ill-equipped and under trained to meet the needs of these pupils. He argues that schools should give SEND the same priority as Pupil Premium and offers suggestions for how to reduce the rising SEND exclusion trend.

BOOK REVIEW

Leadership dialogues II: Leadership in times of change

By Dave Harris and John West-Burnham

Published by Crown House

Reviewed by Holly Hartley, principal, Thistley Hough Academy



I would be lying if I said that my bedside table was stacked with the latest educational must-reads. In fact, I try to approach my reading habits with some notion of work-life balance. Thus, I am not ashamed to say that there is always room for a bit of low-brow Jack Reacher in my life. While it may be a bit of a reach to compare a book on education with the rippling masculinity of Lee Child's muscle-bound hero, *Leadership dialogues II* is nonetheless his equal in terms of its lean, incisive efficiency to grapple with complex problems.

This is a nifty little book that fits easily into my busy life: I can pick it up and put it down, and I can start at different points and flit back and forth as my fancy takes me. Critically, for a relatively small investment of time, the returns can be huge.

This is not a one-size-fits-all book that tells me what to do. This is a very practical work that helps me work with my team to fathom actionable responses to key issues in our context. It

is a thinking book that sparks values-led discussion and decision making in devising innovative approaches to stubborn issues in an ever-changing educational landscape.

Leadership dialogues II helps us to wrestle with eight contemporary themes such as middle leadership, staffing models and evidence-based practice, which are each subdivided into five sections. Offering a neatly packaged club sandwich of ideas, research and questions for debate, it saves time by acting like a supercharged executive summary that would otherwise have taken some poor soul hours to pull together.

Rather like Reacher himself, this is a book focused on action rather than words.

Granted, we may not be beating up the bad guys, but the discussion generated can be equally as satisfying, especially when you have that breakthrough, light-bulb, penny-dropping "oh yeah!" moment that triggers real context-based action that improves the life chances of our kids.

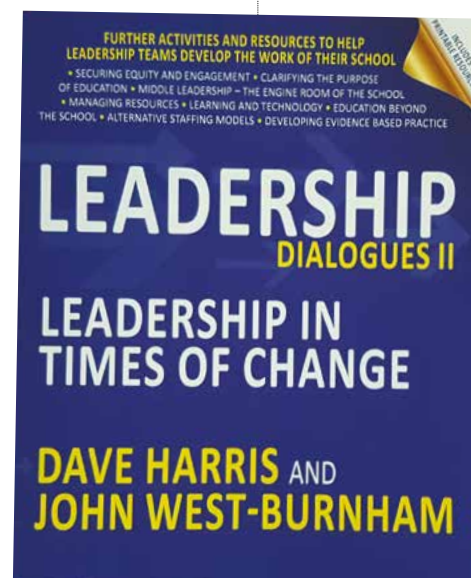
This book is very quick to engage with; as the authors themselves assert, it is a case of "think, discuss, act". The resources contained within it, and those which can be handily downloaded in either PDF or Word format, offer further frameworks for discussion, debate and action. It is also a book about action and integrity. As Harris and West-Burnham state, "the best people to interrogate the problems and find the answers are those people working in, leading and governing these schools every day".

At Thistley Hough we have debated long into the night on the thorny issue of equality for all our students. Infuriatingly, and despite all that we do, we still have some where we fall wide of the mark. At an SLT meeting a couple of weeks ago

we tackled this book's chapter on "securing equity and engagement" to focus our discussion. Team members were guided by the section discussion, and the key questions gave us more momentum and direction than before. The downloaded resources then helped shape our next steps. We all then left with some homework of our own to report back in a couple of weeks. For those of us who are

time poor, this was a very efficient way to plan a fruitful session. Rather than drifting in the darkness, we quickly found ourselves in the well-lit streets of new thinking. We're not done yet, but I am hopeful that the denouement will be spectacular.

While *Leadership dialogues II* may not make you go weak at the knees, it definitely has moral purpose at its heart. Suitable for any educational setting, I imagine that most leaders will find a fair few things to gnaw on. Fair enough, I didn't take fully to all the downloadable resources, but I am left feeling empowered that I too can fight the unwinnable and come out on top. In my mind, anything that inspires creative thought in the fight to secure social mobility is worth a go.





Week in Westminster

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

FRIDAY:

Far be it from us to accuse the Department for Education of being a sneaky and secretive organisation... but the Department for Education proved itself to be a secretive and sneaky organisation this week.

In December, Justine Greening announced plans for a £23 million 'Future talent fund'. But this week, buried at the bottom of a press release, the new administration announced that five of those millions will have to be raised by whichever school/trust/charity is selected to run it.

The government can argue that it never stipulated where the £23 million would come from until it's blue in the face. When it's announced by a minister, investment means government investment, and the cynicism with which DfE spinners attempted to bury bad news is staggering.

MONDAY:

Busy watching Whitehall like a hawk in

case Damian Hinds became the Home Secretary (he didn't). WiW feels for Damian who we imagine spent much of Sunday evening perfecting the Tory power pose ahead of a promotion. One day Damian.

TUESDAY:

A meeting of the education committee descended into a true clash of the titans as two fearsome warriors – Nick Gibb and James Frith – bravely did battle over alternative provision.

Frith threw down the gauntlet first, responding with fury to Gibb's suggestion that he didn't want to get in the way of headteachers maintaining discipline.

Leaning forward, hands clasped, voice dripping with heroic disdain, Frith countered: "With respect, sir, this isn't about discipline all the time."

But Gibb, no doubt buoyed by finally being referred to as "sir", was not to be outdone.

When Frith dared to suggest more children are being failed by the school system because of a "narrowing of

mainstream school performance", brave Sir Gibb was ready to strike back with the devastating question: "Who are those children you don't think should learn to read?"

Cue shocked gasps from the committee, grimaces from the public gallery, and a crushed Frith muttering: "I think you should probably withdraw that".

Gallant Sir Gibb reigns victorious once more, ready for his next joust.

WEDNESDAY:

George Osborne became the latest politician to wash his hands of the UTC project as he joined Michael Gove in rubbishing the legacy of the struggling technical schools.

Appearing in front of MPs on the education committee, Osborne regaled us with several verses of his new song, "If I were still chancellor", which just sounded like a long list of excuses to us.

What's wrong with the approach of "you broke it, you pay for it"?

THURSDAY:

Just when the schools sector was starting to murmur about Damian Hinds' lack of action since entering office in January, the education secretary came out all guns blazing and put the boot into his predecessor's legacy.

We're not talking about Justine Greening's plans for QTS – which have been softened somewhat following a spirited consultation – but rather about Nicky Morgan's coasting schools.

Not only is the coasting label no longer going to automatically trigger intervention, but it's going to be scrapped entirely.

Schools will surely revel in the news, but it leaves those of us who watched both government and opposition painstakingly dismantle the infamous Education And Adoption Act that enacted the coasting measure wonder if it was all just a completely pointless waste of time.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name David Weston

Age 38

Occupation CEO, Teacher Development Trust

Location London

Subscriber since April 2015



FLY ON THE WALL

Where do you read your copy of *Schools Week*?
On the train, on my phone.

Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?
I'm slightly obsessed with spot the difference, but don't tell anybody.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one education policy, which would it be?
I'd multiply the money and time available for CPD by a factor of 10.

Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?
Maybe Ken Baker for bringing in the five INSET days?

What is your favourite story or investigation reported in *Schools Week*?
The leak of the Labour manifesto during the 2017 election changed the course of history!

What do you do with your copy of *Schools Week* once you've read it?
I share it with my Teacher Development Trust colleagues.

What would you do if you were editor of *Schools Week* for a day?
I'd have to buy a bright yellow jacket, of course.

Favourite memory of your school years?
My chemistry lessons with Mr (now Sir John) Holman.

If you weren't working in education, what would you be doing?
I nearly left school teaching to go into full-time competing and teaching of ballroom and Latin American dance... so maybe that?

Favourite book on education?
I have hundreds of favourites! Viviane Robinson's Student-centred leadership is a great recommendation. And I hear that Bridget Clay and David Weston's new book on CPD is epic...

What new things would you like to see in *Schools Week*?
Some more case studies of the amazing CPD practice that goes on in so many schools.

If you could be a fly on the wall in anyone's office, whose would it be?
Theresa May, or maybe the head of MI5?



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...



Greecing the wheels in Corfu

FEATURED

Students at an Essex secondary school have raised over £4,000 to help refurbish an orphanage in Greece.

Over the course of three years, students at Forest Hall School have been hosting fundraising activities such as non-uniform days, fashion shows, cake sales, sponsored sports events, car washing and school fayres to raise money for much-needed refurbishment at an orphanage in Corfu via Smile of the Child, a children's welfare charity.

Since fundraising efforts began, 28 of the school's students have visited the orphanage in two trips, which they fundraised for themselves, aiming to help those less fortunate than themselves, as well as having the opportunity to experience another culture.

"I feel honoured that Forest Hall is involved in such a worthwhile charity. The money that the school is raising will make a massive difference to the orphanage. They have a small toilet block for all 38 orphans – the money raised can help refurbish this and other areas of the orphanage," explained Hannah Jones, co-head of the school.

During the autumn term, a group of five of the orphanage's residents will visit the school, and sightsee London over the course of a five-day trip.



The orphanage



An Easter egg raffle



Students visiting Greece

"Visiting the orphanage has opened up their eyes to poverty experienced by people in Europe. It has enabled our students to develop empathy for others while also getting to experience a different culture

and country and make new friends," added Stephen Hehir, the school's executive principal.

The school will continue to fundraise for the orphanage in order to help with future refurbishments.



A still from the film

THE STORY OF COTTON, UNRAVELLED

A film exposing the dark side of the cotton industry has been released by the Fairtrade Foundation for use in schools.

The 12-minute video explores the lives of cotton farmers and garment workers in India, who despite working long days can barely afford food. The film also looks at the Rana Plaza clothing factory collapse in Bangladesh, where 1,138 factory workers lost their lives.

Along with the film, a series of free online resources have also been released for use in the classroom, including cotton-themed activities, lesson plans and assembly scripts to help raise awareness of the darker side to the cotton industry, and the ways pupils can help combat it by looking out for fair trade clothing.

"One of the most effective ways of changing the way our clothes are grown and made is to tell big brands what we want," said Subindu Garkhel, cotton manager at the Fairtrade Foundation. "By letting your favourite clothes shop or brand know that you want your clothes to have been made fairly they'll start to sit up and take notice."

To access the film and resources, visit: <https://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/resource/unravelling-the-thread/>



I predicate a riot

Year 3 pupil Alex Debrowski with 'Copzilla'

Pupils across the West Midlands have taken part in a competition to name eight new riot vans in their local police force's fleet.

'Optimus Crime', 'Copzilla', 'Zeus', 'Proud to Protect', 'Kit' and 'Jupiter' were six of the winning name suggestions from local primary school children, which will now be displayed on the flanks of West Midlands Police's new cars. The last two vans are yet to be named.

Six schools took part in the competition, which was run as a way of building positive relationships with the youngest members of

their community.

"Policing is extremely challenging these days, but that only makes it all the more important that we should invest our time with young people," said sergeant Andrew Edwards. "We want to do our bit towards making a better tomorrow, and we'll do so with the help of Optimus Crime and his friends."

"I have been astounded by the creativity and energy shown by the schoolchildren, as well as the support provided by their teachers, who have worked hard with us to make this a rewarding experience," he added.

Happy half-a-century!



Fashionable at 50

A logistical nightmare...

A primary school has celebrated its 50th anniversary by getting pupils engaged with local history.

To mark Burton End Primary Academy's golden jubilee, the school hosted a fancy-dress day, with each year group given a decade to focus on, starting from the 1960s.

Lessons were focussed on the shifts in lifestyle, culture and technology since the Suffolk school opened in 1968, with the event culminating in a pupil fashion show, attended by former students, parents,

governors and guests from the Samuel Ward Academy Trust, of which the school is a member.

"The anniversary gave us a great opportunity to mould some of the curriculum around major events over the last 50 years – how things have changed like computers, and how parts of our town have stayed the same," said Karen Sheargold, the school's headteacher. "We wanted to use the celebrations as a way of giving the school a fresh start and looking ahead to the next 50 years."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



**SOPHY
BELLIS**

Headteacher, Lakelands Academy

START DATE: April 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Assistant headteacher, Lakelands Academy

INTERESTING FACT: To unwind, Sophy spends time on her own narrowboat on the canals.



**JOHN
DIBDIN**

Headteacher, Lanchester Community Free School

START DATE: April 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Headteacher, Mount Pleasant Lane School

INTERESTING FACT: John's hobby is stone carving.



**NICKY
EDMONDSON**

Chief executive, Excalibur Academies Trust

START DATE: September 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Principal, St John's Marlborough

INTERESTING FACT: Nicky's great-grandmother was a Romany gypsy who smoked a clay pipe.



**JENNIFER
LOWRY-JOHNSON**

Principal, Ormiston Chadwick Academy

START DATE: April 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Associate vice-principal, Ormiston Chadwick Academy

INTERESTING FACT: Jennifer is a die-hard Liverpool supporter and once refused a publicity photograph with Ryan Giggs as he played for Manchester United at the time.



**SARAH
MATTHEWS**

Headteacher, Truro High School for Girls

START DATE: September 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Acting headteacher, St Mary's School

INTERESTING FACT: Sarah loves to read – especially about anthropology.

Get in touch!

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

future



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THURSDAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- HMCI Amanda Spielman -
- Matthew Syed -
- Literary Festival -
- Research Ed Strand -

FRIDAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP -
- Paul A. Kirschner -
- #WomenEd Strand -
- SEND Strand -

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COGNITA

SCHOOLS WEEK

SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a **Schools Week** mug



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