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unis tell pupils



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Meet the new
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FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2018 | EDITION 143

'I've had my nose broken twice out on the streets'

Profile: Peter Lee

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At least £23m spent on failed studio schools - but no straight answer

EXCLUSIVE

- Eight figures squandered on studio schools that shut or never opened
- DfE officials won't admit to full cost of the 26 closures so far
- Three more studio schools announce plans to close this week alone

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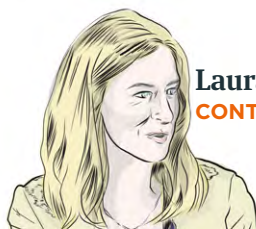
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WEEK

Meet the news team



Shane Mann
MANAGING EDITOR
(INTERIM)

@SHANERMANN
SHANE.MANN@LSECT.COM



Laura McInerney
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

@MISS_MCINERNEY
LAURA.MCINERNEY@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



Cath Murray
FEATURES EDITOR

@CATHMURRAY_
CATH.MURRAY@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



Freddie Whittaker
CHIEF REPORTER

@FCDWHITTAKER
FREDDIE.WHITTAKER@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



Tom Mendelsohn
SUB EDITOR

@TOM_MENDELSON
TOM.MENDELSON@LSECT.COM



Alix Robertson
SENIOR REPORTER

@ALIXROBERTSON4
ALIX.ROBERTSON@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



Jess Staufenberg
SENIOR REPORTER

@STAUFENBERGJ
JESS.STAUFGENBERG@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



Pippa Allen-Kinross
REPORTER

@PIPPA_AK
PIPPA.ALLENKINROSS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

THE TEAM

Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Matthew Willsons
Photographer:	Eltis O'Brien
Financials:	Helen Neilly
Sales team leader:	Bridget Stockdale
Sales executive:	Clare Halliday
Administration:	Georgina Heath
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Opinion



MARY
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Education adviser,
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CATT
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Director of education and research, the
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Head of school, Q3 Langley

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CONSULTANCY AND TRAINING LTD
161-165 GREENWICH HIGH ROAD
LONDON SE10 8JA
T: 020 8123 4778
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News

61 councils forced into fresh school budgets raid



More than 60 councils have been given permission to top-slice money from school budgets to make up for cuts to a central government grant.

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Halfon takes his crusade to AP in years 12 and 13

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READ

Dorset school told to improve or have funding withdrawn

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A Dorset multi academy trust has been warned that one of its schools will have its funding agreement terminated if it does not improve on a damning Ofsted inspection.

Lisa Mannall, the regional schools commissioner for the south-west, has written to the Twynham Learning multi-academy trust, after The Grange School in Christchurch was rated 'inadequate' with serious weaknesses in April.

A secondary, it is one of six schools run by the chain, which was established in 2011. The MAT's other secondary school, Twynham School, is rated 'outstanding', while two of its primaries are 'good', one is 'outstanding', and one has yet to be graded.

Ofsted raised concerns about issues at The Grange including a lack of progress among pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged. There were also problems with poor attendance and behaviour, and a lack of breadth in the curriculum.

Mannall asked the trust to submit a copy of its post-inspection action plan, information on the steps taken to improve pupils' attendance, and evidence that the local governing body is providing "robust" challenge to the school's leaders.

An education adviser will now work with Twynham Learning to help it improve in the 'inadequate' areas, and Mannall or a member of her team will observe a meeting of the board before the end of the academic year.

The trust must also commission an external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding, as recommended by Ofsted.

"The report highlights that not enough has been done to improve the standard of education for students at The Grange School," said the chair of the Twynham Learning board, Debbie Place.

"As a board we were too slow in identifying this, however significant work had already been done to rectify this, including the appointment of two senior leaders in January."



DOMINIC HERRINGTON

Dominic Herrington promoted to interim national schools commissioner

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Dominic Herrington, the regional schools commissioner for the south-east of England and south London, will be the new national schools commissioner.

Schools Week exclusively revealed on Tuesday that he will replace the outgoing Sir David Carter in September, but he has only been appointed on an interim basis for six months and will retain his regional duties.

The temporary appointment will "provide continuity for academies across the country when Sir David Carter retires from the civil service after four years at the department", the Department for Education said.

Carter announced his retirement in April, pointing to a mixture of personal and professional reasons.

The Department for Education has since announced sweeping reforms to the school improvement role played by the schools commissioners group, scrapping its "coasting" trigger for intervention and banning advisers working for RSCs from carrying out inspections of schools.

A career civil servant, Herrington has

worked at the Department for Education since 2006, apart from a brief sabbatical at consulting firm Capgemini in 2010.

Starting out as a deputy director, Herrington ended up running the DfE's academies group before he became an RSC in 2014.

He is a governor at Goodrich Community Primary School in south London, and is also the first person to hold the top commissioner job without any teaching or school leadership experience.

Both Frank Green, the inaugural holder of the role, and Carter have both been teachers and heads, and they both lead academy trusts before entering the civil service.

"I'm looking forward to working with the regional schools commissioners in seven other areas of England to build on Sir David Carter's achievements by continuing to challenge and support school leaders," said Herrington.

Carter, himself a former RSC for the south-west region, had warm words for his successor.

"I wish him all the best as interim NSC," he tweeted. "It is a fantastic job leading such a great team and he will do it brilliantly."

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Halfon takes his crusade to AP in years 12 and 13

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

High-quality alternative provision for vulnerable pupils in years 12 and 13 is too scarce and should be expanded, the chair of the education select committee has said.

Robert Halfon told delegates at alternative provision academy trust TBAP's annual conference that he was "shocked" by how little post-16 alternative provision there is in the country.

In particular the Conservative MP would like to see AP academies and pupil referral units offer more technical and vocational courses including apprenticeships.

But sector experts say funding cuts to post-16 education makes it difficult to open AP schools for older pupils, causing many vulnerable pupils to "drop off the map" after year 11.

Gemma Dixon, the head of TBAP's 16-19 academic academy, said the school had been set up as an alternative to further education colleges in the area.

"FE colleges often do a tremendous job, but there were definitely a lot of young people who struggled with the large amount of responsibility they're required to take," she said. "There is a need for an academic route with lots of support like ours. Post-16 alternative provision is absolutely crucial."

The academy takes pupils from other AP or those who've been excluded from mainstream schools based on their



ROBERT HALFON

performance in a cognitive ability test, and supports them through the International Baccalaureate.

All six of its year 13 pupils have university offers, in computer science, foundational art, journalism, psychology, business studies and pre-nursing. There are also now 11 pupils in year 12.

Dixon believes that too many excluded pupils are pushed towards vocational and technical qualifications when they might not be suited to those, which "denigrates the enormous value" of technical courses if they become a dumping ground for excluded pupils.

The trust might have opened an AP school for technical and vocational courses too, but would struggle to win government funding as FE colleges already appear to fill this need.

"There needs to be a cultural shift that AP must extend to 19 years old. We could fill those places 100 times over," said Dixon.

But Catherine Sezen, a senior policy manager at the Association of Colleges,

a membership body for further education colleges, said that some pupils may find their environments daunting, though "others flourish and thrive".

Many colleges already provide high-quality AP with staff trained in behaviour management. Greater funding for the sector would allow for even "more thorough transition arrangements".

Government data shows there were 15,300 pupils from nursery to year 11 educated in pupil referral units and AP academies last year – compared with a tiny handful of just 340 attending in year 12 and 13. A spokesperson for the Department for Education confirmed that most pupils formerly in AP went onto non-AP routes such as FE colleges after year 11.

Seamus Oates, the chief executive of TBAP, said the government's base funding of £10,000 for these pupils "should be uniform" across all year groups, and "perhaps be even higher" given the extra support many pupils require.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies recently confirmed that in the next couple of years, levels of funding for post-16 provision will sink to levels not seen since 1989.

Halfon agreed that widespread 16-to-19 alternative provision will not be possible "without the resources".

A spokesperson for the DfE said "fundamental reforms" are being made to improve post-16 education and a major review of post-18 education and funding is also underway.

EXCLUSIVE



One company and two individuals charged with running an unregistered school

An organisation and two individuals have been charged with running an unregistered school.

The Al-Istiqamah Learning Centre Limited, based in Ealing in west London, has been charged with conducting an unregistered independent educational institution, contrary to the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Crown Prosecution Service confirmed this week.

Nacerdine Talbi, 46, has also been charged with conducting an unregistered independent

educational institution, and with liability "as an officer of a body corporate which has committed an offence of conducting an unregistered independent educational institution".

Maryam Bernhardt, 38, faces charges of conducting an unregistered independent educational institution.

The case had been due before Westminster Magistrates' Court on Tuesday but has been adjourned until July.



PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA_AK

News

61 councils forced into fresh school budgets raid

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

More than 60 councils have been given permission to top-slice money from school budgets to make up for cuts to a central government grant.

Councils stopped receiving the education services grant (ESG) last September, and the 2018-19 financial year is the first without transitional funding in place to soften the blow.

ESG money helped local authorities fulfil their legal obligations such as school place planning, and was replaced by a "central school services block" in the dedicated schools grant. This covers councils' statutory duties for both maintained schools and academies.

But the general funding element of the ESG, which covered extra services specifically for maintained schools like legal costs and improvement services, is no longer paid, leaving schools to foot the bill.

Now the government has revealed that 61 councils have been given permission by their schools forums to top-slice money from maintained school budgets from this April, to cover those non-statutory duties previously paid-for by the ESG.

The councils were named this week by Nick Gibb, the schools minister, in response to a question from Liberal Democrat education spokesperson Layla Moran.

"The general funding rate of the ESG was only for the responsibilities that local authorities held for their maintained schools," explained Gibb. "Local authorities can fund services from the maintained school budget shares, with the agreement of the maintained school members of the schools forum, to meet these responsibilities."

The government announced its plans to scrap the ESG during its 2015 spending review in an attempt to save £600 million, amid warnings that councils would struggle to support schools. Earlier this year, it was revealed that academies would lose £353



million by 2020 as a result of the cut.

Councils have demanded that the cuts be reversed, and Richard Watts, the chair of the Local Government Association's children and young people board, said this week that it is "not right" for schools or councils to "foot the bill for services that were previously funded by government".

"If councils are to perform their statutory duties to support school improvement, then they need sufficient funding and powers to properly discharge these responsibilities," he said.

Malcolm Trobe, the deputy general secretary of school leaders' union ASCL, said councils are in a "difficult position".

"The Department for Education should be supplying them with sufficient funding to deliver their regulatory responsibilities and statutory duties," he continued. "If the money is top-sliced for this, or for other issues such as high needs, this is delaying the effective delivery of the new national funding formula."

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the NAHT union, agreed that the new national funding formula should not be "distorted or undermined".

"There needs to be enough money in the system. The removal of the ESG took £600 million out of the overall schools budget, so it is easy to see why councils feel compelled to make up for these cuts by some other means," he said.

A DfE spokesperson said it had taken the "difficult decision" to cut the ESG "in order to protect the core schools budget".

For a full list of councils, see our story online.

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Primary schools sought for air pollution study

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Primary schools in London and Luton are being invited to take part in a major new study into the impact policies to improve air quality have on pupils' health.

The Children's Health in London and Luton study, funded by the National Institute for Health Research, will monitor 3,000 primary school pupils over four years to test whether clean-air policies can improve growth of lungs or reduce chest infections and asthma attacks.

It will coincide with the launch of central London's new ultralow-emissions zone (ULEZ) in April 2019, to directly test whether the new anti-pollution measure has an identifiable impact on children's health.

Last week, the capital's mayor Sadiq Khan confirmed that the ULEZ would be expanded to north and south circular roads from October 2021 which, along with stricter rules for heavy vehicles, should cut the number of schools in areas with illegal levels of air pollution by more than two thirds.

Researchers will compare two groups of 1,500 primary school pupils aged between six and nine, and monitor the air pollution the children are exposed to. Half the children will be from central London primary schools where the ULEZ is implemented, and half from primary schools in traffic-restricted zones in Luton, which has a "broadly similar" population and air quality.

Pupils will have an annual health-check for four years, during which the size and function of their lungs will be monitored. With parental permission, researchers will check their health records to monitor how often the children have respiratory infections, visit a doctor or are admitted to hospital with chest problems. They will also test whether better air quality encourages children to spend more time exercising outdoors.

Participating schools will receive £1,000 for taking part (£250 a year) and pupils will receive a certificate and an interactive science lesson on air pollution and health.

Schools interested should email chill@gmul.ac.uk

26 dud studio schools (and counting) cost £23m (and counting)

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

The government has spent more than £23 million on studio schools that have either closed or never opened but the price tag total won't be known until the much-delayed publication of its final costs.

Twenty-six studio schools have closed or announced plans to close since the scheme was introduced in 2010. In the past week alone, two schools in Stoke-on-Trent and one in East Sussex announced their imminent end.

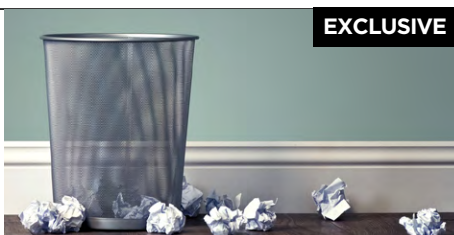
The small, vocationally-focused 14-to-19 institutions struggled to survive due to low pupil numbers and poor Ofsted ratings, and just 29 still exist with no plans to close. Another four that made it to the late planning stages never opened.

The government has not updated its list of capital funds given to the schools since 2016, and so far has only revealed the costs for 26 out of the 59 studio schools.

In response to a Freedom of Information request from *Schools Week*, the department said it would publish the remaining information "in the coming months".

However, it did voluntarily reveal that £241,886 was spent on two studio schools – Digital Studio College Derbyshire and The Aldridge Centre for Entrepreneurship – which never actually opened.

Almost half a million was written off



EXCLUSIVE

against the Harpurhey Studio School, which opened in 2011, but converted to an alternative provision academy in 2012, before closing a year later.

The FoI also revealed that the government gave no capital funding to the Liverpool Tourism and Culture Studio or the Film, Theatre and Costume Studio, Bradford, neither of which opened. It also spent nothing on Green Hub Studio School, which operated as a pilot for a year in 2011 before closing.

Including all these schools, plus the 14 previously closed schools for whom figures have been published, the total spent on failed schools comes to more than £23 million.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the government had "failed to provide a coherent strategy to ensure that these institutions were sustainable".

"We can see no good reason for withholding any information about the capital funding of studio schools. It is public money and the DfE should be transparent about how it is being spent," he insisted.

The Department for Education would

not state when the report will appear, and though it is not required to do so under Freedom of Information laws, it is not allowed to delay the release indefinitely.

Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, described the studio schools project as "a failed experiment and one that has cost taxpayers dearly", and laid the blame for its failure "squarely with the government which has promoted and continued to spend money on a flawed model".

The Studio Schools Trust, which was set up to support and promote the institutions, closed earlier this year amid funding issues. It has been replaced by the Studio Schools Network, which aims to establish closer ties with multi-academy trusts but does not have a working website.

A spokesperson for the Network said it would be "inappropriate" to comment on capital funding, but insisted that many schools are "are supported well by their trusts and as a result are proving to be successful above and beyond headline performance measures".

"We have recently seen new statutory requirements on local authorities and other secondary schools to ensure parents and students are aware of the opportunities studio schools provide," he added.

"We welcome these reforms and their anticipated positive impact on atypical admissions."

The DfE was contacted for comment.

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JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

DfE seeks bids for £100,000 phonics roadshows contract

The government is seeking bids for a £100,000 contract to deliver "phonics roadshows" across the country, five months after the cash was first announced.

The Department for Education has put out a tender for up to two providers to run 20 events, half in the north of England and half elsewhere in the country.

This is the second wave of roadshows funded by the government. The first 50, announced in 2016, were aimed at allowing schools to "share best practice in the teaching of phonics and early reading" and support the government's "aim of ensuring high-quality

systematic synthetic phonics in every primary school".

Each contract will be worth £50,000 and are open to all commercial, charitable and social enterprises. The roadshows will run from September this year until next March.

The roadshows were first announced alongside a centre of excellence for literacy teaching and 35 literacy hubs by the former education secretary Justine Greening in January.

The exact locations of the roadshows are to yet to be confirmed, but "bids should demonstrate an understanding of the areas

where the bidder thinks that the roadshows are needed. For example, areas where results in the phonics screening check are low".

However, Anita Kerwin-Nye, the chief executive of campaign group Every Child Should, complained that documents about the new centre and hubs do not mention dyslexia or disabilities, important factors when teaching children to read.

"So a tender could win the major literacy brief with no expertise in those areas," she tweeted.

Schools Week has approached the DfE for further details.

News

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Three more studio schools fall by the wayside

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Three more studio schools have announced their intention to close this week, taking the total number to have shut or with plans to close to 26.

On Monday it was revealed that Rye Studio School in East Sussex will close this summer after it failed to recruit even half of the pupils it needed.

Then on Tuesday, it emerged that Stoke-on-Trent Studio College for Construction and the Built Environment (CaBE) will close this August, while its sister college for Manufacturing and Design Excellence (MaDE) will close the following year.

According to trustees, the Rye Studio School has never managed to recruit more than 50 per cent of the pupils it needed, which affected its finances.

It opened in 2013 and had hoped to take on 300 pupils, but faced the kind of recruitment problems common among studio schools, many of which have struggled to persuade pupils to move at the age of 14. In light of its problems, it did not recruit any new pupils last September or for September 2018.

Trustees initially drew up plans to convert the school to a sixth form, but decided the move was "not financially viable".

"A number of options have been explored but ministers have decided that the school, which has not admitted any new pupils for September 2017 or 2018, should close by the end of August 2018," said a DfE spokesperson.

The school, which as a result of its recruitment freeze last year now has only year 11 and year 13 pupils on roll, has arranged for careers support for current year 11 pupils looking for a new school.

Staff will be consulted on "redeployment or redundancy", and a "listening period" for parents, staff and "interested persons" will run until July 5.

Meanwhile, the two schools in Stoke-on-Trent have also reported dire problems with recruitment.

Ann Marie Lucy, the chief operating officer of Alpha Academies Trust, which runs both schools, said the decision to close had been made as they "have not been able to recruit sufficient students".

"In particular the sixth form has struggled to attract prospective students," she said. "It is a sad reality that such small schools cannot continue long-term," she said.

A DfE spokesperson said it had "agreed, in principle" to the closure.

"A number of options have been explored but ministers have decided that the schools, which have not operated above 25-per-cent capacity, should close in August 2018 and August 2019 respectively," a spokesperson said.

The CaBE studio school opened in September 2012, and is currently rated 'good' by Ofsted, while the MaDE school opened the following year and is rated 'requires improvement'.

Both have a capacity of 300, but have struggled to recruit anywhere near that number – particularly post-16.

CaBE currently has 17 pupils in year 11, while MaDE has 17 in year 11 and 34 in year 10, but none in either sixth form.



Teachers hit back at right-wing think-tank

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

School leaders have "entirely rejected" claims by the Taxpayer's Alliance that teachers have been enjoying a pay rise and do not deserve salary hikes.

The right-wing pressure group aims to reduce funding to public services in order to reduce taxes.

In a report published today it claims teachers' gross pay increased by 1.6 per cent in 2016-17.

When the effect of automatic pay progression in the early part of teachers' career is included, teachers' gross pay rose by 4.6 per cent last year – although this is an unusual way of calculating the change.

On average, teachers are paid £38,400, which is "considerably higher" than the national average salary of £28,600, a report written by the group notes.

But Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT, said teachers' real average hourly pay has fallen by 15 per cent in the last decade.

"Teachers in our schools work longer hours, for less money compared to their peers around the world," he added.

Whiteman based the claim on research by the National Foundation for Educational Research, which showed that teachers work 50 hours a week, and that salaries have not kept pace with inflation since 2010.

The TPA also suggested that schools have spent an "unnecessary" average of £298,599 on teaching assistants instead of learning resources.

Teaching assistants are themselves a learning resource," retorted the NAHT.

"Teachers deserve more and we reject this report entirely."



PAUL WHITEMAN

International opportunities 'will cause a UK teaching exodus'

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

Tens of thousands more teachers will move into overseas jobs during the coming decade as international schools seek to boost the number of staff they recruit from the UK.

International schools plan to hire an additional 145,000 teachers from the British isles, according to ISC Research.

This would more than double the number of British teachers working abroad. In 2014-15, around 100,000 full-time teaching staff from Britain were working in English-medium international schools.

Just under 28,000 people trained to become teachers in England in 2017-18. This means that international schools would have to snap up over half of all the UK trainee teachers over the next ten years to meet their targets.

ISC Research gathered its data from the 1,020 premium international schools, which make up 10.5 per cent of the total market. UK teachers currently make up around a quarter of staff in these schools, which include accredited British or American schools overseas, and international schools offering the International Baccalaureate.

Factors enticing teachers to take up opportunities in these schools abroad include higher salaries, free or subsidised accommodation and flights, medical insurance and career development.

In contrast, research by the National Union of Teachers found that around one in five teachers in England received no cost-of-living pay increase at the start of this academic year, while analysis from the Labour Party in September 2017 found teachers were more than £5,000 a year worse off than in 2010.

TEFL, a company that trains people from the UK to teach English as a foreign language abroad, has also seen increasing numbers of already qualified teachers take up its courses.

According to TEFL's annual graduate survey, the proportion of teachers taking the courses has risen from 4.5 per cent of the total cohort in 2012, to 14.2 per cent in



EXCLUSIVE

2015 and 17 per cent last year.

TEFL trains around 16,000 people annually but expects this to rise to 20,000.

Financial pressures like student loan repayments and the cost of property are driving teachers' decisions to leave the UK, according to Ros McMullen, the executive principal of the Midland Academies Trust, alongside "workload culture".

She has seen teachers moving abroad "once they'd got a couple of years under their belt".

"They went off to teach somewhere like Dubai to raise money so they could buy a house when they came back. That was happening in Leeds where house prices are not as high as elsewhere," she said.

Loxford School in Essex is losing three teachers to positions abroad this year. One member of staff has opted for a job in the Middle East to pay off his mortgage.

"They are asking if they can keep contact so they can go and get the benefits, then come back afterwards. The financial inducements are way above anything that can be offered here," said David Low, a national leader of governance and vice-chair of the Loxford School Trust.

"It is challenging because that is something that we just can't compete with,

especially with house prices as they are in our end of London."

Richard Gaskell, ISC Research's director of schools, said British universities could help fill some of the jobs abroad by increasing their intake of international students on education degrees and PGCEs programmes, to meet "the increasing demand for British education worldwide".

Meanwhile a DfE spokesperson said ensuring teaching is "an attractive and fulfilling profession in the UK" is a "top priority".

"We recently announced a strategy to drive recruitment and boost retention of teachers and are working with school leaders and unions to strip away unnecessary workload, on top of the range of financial incentives we already offer to help attract the brightest and best into our classrooms."



3
MINUTE
READ

Why every school needs to learn how to handle 'conduct disorder'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools have ineffective behaviour management strategies because they want a "quick fix" to a common disorder but don't understand the neurology behind it.

Some teachers don't know how to manage "conduct disorder" – a mental condition which causes disruptive and sometimes violent behaviour in pupils – because they don't know how to identify and respond to it, according to consultant psychotherapist Brenda McHugh.

Conduct disorder is the most common reason pupils are referred to mental health services, McHugh told a conference held by the alternative provision academy trust TBAP. But these services are often under-resourced and can end up referring pupils back to schools.

"Those children are coming back to teachers, but they're not getting the funds that should come with them," she warned.

The lack of understanding about neurology also means schools tend to keep mental health separate from learning, punishing pupils affected by conduct disorder and creating a "spiral of exclusion".

Between three and five per cent of pupils are known to have conduct disorder – although the actual figure is likely to be higher because many are undiagnosed. Most will have been in the care system.

Three months ago, the government told schools to appoint a "designated



EXCLUSIVE

teacher" to oversee the education of pupils in or formerly in care and train other staff in trauma issues.

But many schools still just want

behaviour "sorted out", Gemma Dixon, the headteacher of the TBAP 16-to-19 Academic Academy in west London, told delegates.

McHugh believes schools will benefit if they train staff to deal with these basic neurological disorders. Her own Family School London teaches pupils the language of neurology and awards points not just for learning, but for emotion control, empathy and impulse control. Parents are also taught how the brain works and have family visit days.

"Mental health shouldn't always be in the counselling department. It should be part of the school's whole work. Otherwise it's scary for kids. They don't know what's wrong with them," she said.

Fact box: What is conduct disorder?

Conduct disorder exhibits in two different ways.

Some pupils with the disorder will be "impulsive" and lack self-regulation. These will respond to good behaviour management methods.

But others, described as "callous-unemotional" because they show little concern for others' distress, a lack of remorse or shame unless prompted, and rarely express emotions, need more help.

These pupils also display a lack of concern about their performance in school work because they "do not buy into the idea of progression" and feel relative indifference about the possibility of punishment, according

to McHugh.

As a result of traumatic experiences in their past, pupils with conduct disorder take in stress chemicals more quickly. These chemicals can take up to three days to return to normal levels.

Because of their quick fear response, pupils will "lose minutes and days" in school scanning for threat, explained McHugh. Beyond that, they can seem "almost unreachable" because they are so closed off.

Punishment does not work on these pupils. Studies show that only consistent warmth can change the behaviour of callous-unemotional children.

3
MINUTE
READ

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

First-choice secondary school offers fall again as 'baby bulge' moves

The proportion of pupils getting into their first-choice secondary school is still falling as the so-called "baby bulge" moves up from the primary phase.

New data shows that 82 per cent of applicants to secondary school got into their first choice school this year, down from 84 per cent last year. This continues a downward trend seen since 2013.

At primary level, the proportion of pupils getting their first choice of primary school

rose by one point to 91 per cent.

The changes reflect the fact that a demographic bulge caused by an increase in the birth rate during the early 2000s is now moving from the primary to secondary phase.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the drop in first-choice offers "shows the pressure building on secondary school places" which will only continue in coming years.

The government must work with local authorities and trusts to make sure "no money is wasted on places which do not meet demographic needs".

Overall, there was a four-per-cent increase in applications for secondary school places this year, to 582,761. Applications for primary school places have fallen by two per cent to 608,180, the lowest level in the five years for which data is recorded.

1.5
MINUTE
READ

Knife offenders have the worst outcomes in schools

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Pupils charged with knife possession get worse GCSE results than those charged with different offences.

A joint analysis of 1,800 young offenders in years 6 to year 11 by the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Education showed that knife offenders are more likely to be excluded, come from poor families, have special educational needs, and be persistently absent from schools than any other type of offender.

Only 11 per cent of knife offenders got five GCSEs at A* to C including English and maths, compared with 18 per cent of all offenders and 61 per cent of all pupils.

Pupils charged with a knife possession are also much more likely to have been excluded from school, at 83 per cent compared with 69 per cent among all offenders.

Twice as many were permanently excluded as all other offenders.

However, the MoJ report noted that the proportion of knife possession offences committed within a year of exclusion is extremely small, at about two per cent.

"This suggests that exclusions cannot be a major short-term driver of knife possession offences," the report found.

But Dave Whitaker, executive principal of Springwell Learning Community, an alternative provision school in Barnsley, said a "chicken-and-egg argument" about whether exclusion or knife crime comes first will not slow the rising levels of pupils carrying knives.

"Saying it's not exclusion is not looking at the big picture. We need to understand what the cultural shift is," he said.

Meanwhile 41 per cent of knife offenders are eligible for free school meals, compared with just 17 per cent of all pupils. A third of all offenders are eligible for free school meals.

Pupils charged with a knife possession offence are also more likely to have a special educational need. Sixteen per cent of knife offenders have a statement compared with 10 per cent of other offenders.



Salford Academy Trust to give up its four schools and close

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

An academy trust that caters for some of the most disadvantaged pupils in Salford is to close and have all four of its schools rebrokered to new sponsors.

The Salford Academy Trust was founded by Salford City College, the University of Salford and Salford City Council in 2012.

The trust runs two primary schools: Dukesgate Primary Academy and Marlborough Road Primary School, and secondary schools Albion Academy, and Irlam and Cadishead College.

Its accounts, published in February, acknowledge that it has been "identified as high-risk" after a DfE review of the Albion Academy last spring identified "serious weaknesses".

It also acknowledged the potential risk caused by the addition of the 'inadequate' Irlam and Cadishead, which joined the trust in July 2017.

Albion Academy is currently rated 'requires improvement' by Ofsted. A monitoring visit in November congratulated principal Karl Mackey for having "completely transformed the school" since his appointment in June 2017, and noted improvements since the appointment of CEO Kevin Rowlands last January.

However, Lisa Stone, Salford city council's lead member for children's and young people's services, said it is "imperative that we ensure our schools can access the very best support to deliver the highest educational standards".

"Although we have worked hard over several years to create a Salford offer to schools forced or choosing to convert to academy status, despite our best efforts the trust has not delivered on the ambitious vision that the three sponsors had for it at its inception," she continued.

"We are therefore in agreement with the regional schools commissioner's office that another, more established sponsor with demonstrated experience of school improvement will be the best option for our schools and our pupils."

Salford City College retains 75-per-cent control over the trust, and Salford city council and the University of Salford retain 12.5 per cent each.

The four schools have capacity for a total of 2,500 pupils and currently cater for around 2,000, more than half of whom are eligible for free school meals and/or pupil premium payments.

According to accounts, a "significantly high percentage of children come from areas of significant social challenge and the wards serving our schools are the most deprived in the City of Salford".

"We have been working closely with Salford Academy Trust to consider best options for the future of the academies in the trust," said a DfE spokesperson. "In consultation with the trust, we are considering the options for transferring the academies to another trust. More information will be available in due course."

Salford Academy Trust, Salford City College and the University of Salford were all approached for comment.

2
MINUTE
READ

Council steps in to save 24-pupil special school

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A local authority has prevented an academy for high-needs pupils from closing, saving them from a 45-mile journey to their new school.

Unity Academy – Fenland in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire will now be moved to another site in the town as part of a development which will also house a new primary and secondary school.

Catering for just 24 pupils and operating from an industrial site, the special school had been ruled “not fit for purpose” in the spring by the TBAP multi-academy trust, which runs it. Pupils had been set for a move to a new site in St Neots.

However, plans to relocate the school in Wisbech were unanimously approved at a recent meeting of Cambridgeshire county council’s children and young people’s committee

It will join a new multi-phase campus expected to open in 2020, which was designed to fill a need for more secondary school places in the area.

A spokesperson told School Week that the council had been working closely with TBAP to “review a number of different options for the future of the school” since a consultation with staff, parents and neighbouring



RIVER NENE IN NORTH BRINK, WISBECH

schools earlier this year.

“TBAP Unity Academy’s current building in Wisbech is leased by the council and would require significant investment if it were to continue to be occupied by the school,” they said.

“The accommodation provided as part of this proposed new campus will offer high-quality purpose-built provision for secondary-aged pupils with identified social, emotional and mental health needs.”

According to committee minutes, Unity’s current site is leased by the council for an annual rent of £36,000.

“While we await the opening of the new site, TBAP is carrying out further consultations with all partners to ensure we maintain the highest quality provision for social, emotional and mental health needs learners in Wisbech,” said Angela Tempamy, the executive headteacher

of TBAP East.

The change does mean that staff will continue to have to travel between TBAP’s sites in Wisbech and St Neots for weekly professional development. Tempamy told *Schools Week* in March that the merger plan would be beneficial for staff, who would have had to travel less.

Niamh Sweeney, the president of the National Education Union, is “pleased with the announcement about improved school provision for children, families and the Wisbech community”.

“We hope that this will mean that there will now be an announcement from TBAP Unity making commitment to their continued provision in the town,” she said.

“Our members are committed to continue working with the school management to ensure that the complex and diverse needs of these children is supported in the community.”

3
MINUTE
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PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | [@PIPPA_AK](https://twitter.com/PIPPA_AK)

Bright Tribe Trust removes board chief executive

The Bright Tribe Trust has removed its chief executive from its board of directors in what it says is an effort to create a better governance structure.

Heidi Hoskin will remain as chief executive of BTT and sister chain Adventure Learning Academies Trust, but her tenure as a director came to an end on May 25.

A spokesperson for BTT said the move was part of an “on-going review of governance” and the board had “decided

that, to support a transparent separation between functions, executive roles will no longer incorporate ex-officio board membership”.

The trust has previously been criticised for lacking transparency. In 2015/16 it was found to have breached funding rules on related-party transactions, and in April it told *Schools Week* that it would no longer contract companies run by its founder Michael Dwan after paying out £681,000 to

his firms in 2016/17 alone.

Hoskin took over as chief executive following the resignation of Mary McKeeman, who departed after just six months in the midst of controversy over the way the trust was running schools in the north of England.

McKeeman’s predecessor, Kathy Kirkham, returned to the trust as a director in February, almost exactly a year after she resigned from the role.

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Suffolk council plots swingeing cuts to rural school transport

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Suffolk council is preparing controversial cuts to school transport that will "significantly impact" pupil numbers at schools around the county.

The council's cabinet will vote on Tuesday on whether to introduce changes that will mean children only get free transport if they attend their nearest school – the minimum service that must be provided by law – rather than to any school whose catchment area they live in.

Last month the County Councils Network warned that over 20,000 pupils in rural areas across England had lost out on free school transport, as 29 out of 36 county councils have reduced their expenditure on home-to-school transport since 2015.

Widespread opposition to the move means Suffolk council will aim to phase the change in from September, and it will initially only affect children who move house or start a new school.

A review into the educational impact of the policy has warned that even this phasing is likely to cause huge upheaval to schools.

One of the worst affected is Thurston Community College, as more than half of the pupils in Thurston's catchment area live nearest to the Ixworth Free School, which opened in September 2014.

The analysis warns Thurston's "school population could be significantly

impacted" and suggests it will lose eight per cent of its overall pupil numbers next year, a fall of 124. Ixworth's pupil population is expected to grow by almost a third, with an increase of 73 pupils.

Thurston previously warned that without phasing, as many as 812 pupils could be affected, costing it up to £3.5 million.

Rachel Gooch, a governor at Thurston, said she is "hugely disappointed" that the cuts are likely to be agreed next week.

"This policy will have far-reaching effects on the patterns of admission, which are going to cause serious upheaval for our schools," she said. "Rapid contraction and expansion of pupil rolls is very difficult to manage and this process will continue for years as the policy is phased in."

Suffolk county council said it has spent over £21 million this year transporting 12,700 children to and from school, overspending by £3 million. Even if the changes go ahead, it will spend £3 million from 2019/20 onwards and allocate another £4.7 million to meet the cost of phasing the policy in.

Gordon Jones, the cabinet member for children's services insisted that the council had "listened to and taken on board feedback" about the changes.

"It's about balance, and I believe we have found it," he claimed. "It is important that we work together to find solutions to ensure that Suffolk has a sustainable travel policy for the future."



Children's commissioner: 'Millions of pupils miss out on meaningful support'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Millions of vulnerable pupils have been denied much-needed support because the scarce resources at children's services have to be targeted only at the most vulnerable.

Half of the money spent on children's services – support provided over and above a child's education – goes to just 73,000 children in care, while the rest of the cash has to stretch to the other 11.7 million pupils in the country, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

The research, commissioned by the children's commissioner Anne Longfield, found pressure mounting on special schools and alternative provision for excluded pupils.

The majority of pupils miss out "because of the huge cost of helping a small number of children who are in crisis".

Altogether, 72 per cent of children's services budgets are now spent helping families in "severe need" – including those in care. As a result, other pupils who may not be in crisis but still need support receive help too late, and put pressure on school and care systems.

This is exacerbated by the "spiralling numbers of school exclusions" and an increase in younger pupils being linked to violent street gangs.

Meanwhile, high-needs budgets for pupils with SEND are under pressure as a result of an increase in the number of pupils with severe learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs in maintained special schools.

For example, the number of pupils with autism in maintained special schools has increased by 50 per cent since 2012.

At the same time, spending on preventative support, such as Sure Start early-years centres, has been cut by 60 per cent in real terms over the past decade.

Longfield wants the report to inform the government's spending review next year, and insisted a "cross-departmental service" is needed.

"Spending allocations should be seen through the prism of the child, not the prism of which bit of Whitehall thinks it can spend it best."

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'NO NEED TO FINISH YOUR A-LEVELS,' UNIVERSITIES TELL SIXTH FORMERS

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

Sixth-formers with unconditional offers are being told by universities that they don't need to finish their A-levels, it has been claimed.

Pupils are "increasingly the subject of persuasive strategies" from universities, according to Bill Watkin (pictured), the chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association. Some are even encouraging pupils to quit school early and take up foundation degrees.

Speaking at the Festival of Higher Education at the University of Buckingham, Watkin warned of the "unhelpful" impact on schools of unconditional offers, which promise university places to pupils regardless of their A-level results.

He chastised universities for their recruitment tactics, which include lowering entry requirements and offering funded places to attract more students.

In some cases, universities have even written to 17-year-olds asking them to ditch year 13 in favour of foundation degrees, which are combined academic and vocational qualifications equivalent to two thirds of a bachelor's degree.

"It has been reported that foundation degrees are being offered as a way of



locking prospective students into a full degree afterwards, and even advising a student at the end of year 12 to take a foundation degree rather than completing A-levels at all," Watkin told *Schools Week*.

"Some universities are now setting a lower bar in terms of entry-level criteria – so perhaps BBB instead of AAB – and even offering to cover a student's first year tuition costs."

In April, *Schools Week* revealed that the new universities regulator had made an investigation into the impact of unconditional offers one of its first orders of business.

The Office for Students has vowed to "take action" if it finds that unconditional offers adversely affect schools.

Unconditional offers issued to 18-year-olds in England have increased by more than 17 times in the last four years.

In 2013, less than one per cent of offers were unconditional. Last year, it was 17.5 per cent. That's a leap from fewer than 3,000 to around 50,000.

Watkin said the "significant" rise in unconditional offers means pupils are "less likely to feel a sense of urgency and determination to work flat out to get the very best grades in the final year of sixth-form study".

For example, he warned delegates that some pupils with such offers have been opting out of school assignments.

"You've got students in classrooms in the sixth form now who are saying 'I don't think I'm going to do the essay this week, I'm sitting on an unconditional offer'. I understand why universities are doing this, but I would say consider the implication on the mindset of 16-and 17-year-olds," he warned.

A spokesperson for Universities UK, the body representing higher education institutions in Britain, said unconditional offers "account for a very small proportion of all offers made by universities".

"They tend to go to mature applicants who already have qualifications, and to applicants with extensive practical and relevant experience for courses such as fine art or journalism," they added.

"They can also be awarded where evidence suggests applicants are clearly on track to exceed the required entry grades, and to applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds with the potential to do well at university with additional support."



PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA_AK

Teachers need resources to help pupils identify 'fake news'

A report into children's ability to identify so-called "fake news" wants teachers to get more training, resources and time to help tackle pupils' "dangerous lack" of critical literacy skills.

The study, which warned that just two per cent of pupils have the skills to understand whether a news story is false, revealed that half of teachers (53.5 per cent) do not believe the national curriculum equips children with the necessary literacy skills to identify fake news.

The report from the commission on fake news and the teaching of critical literacy in skills, compiled by the National Literacy Trust, argues that "close links exist between

an individual's literacy skills and their ability to engage with democracy as an active and informed citizen".

However, just half of teachers surveyed explicitly teach critical literacy, and 29 per cent of those who teach it do so very often.

According to the report, an "updated framing of literacy skills, and indeed critical literacy skills, that reflects the changing digital landscape is now required", with emphasis on core skills including reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as comprehension and inference. However, this needs to come from the government, and can't be achieved without extra training, time and resources for teachers.

Sixty per cent of teachers said fake news is having a harmful effect on pupils, increasing their fears, causing confusion and mistrust, and allowing "skewed or exaggerated views" to spread.

The report included surveys of 388 primary pupils, 1,832 secondary pupils and 414 teachers, as well as group discussions, expert witnesses and written evidence.

Jonathan Douglas, director of the National Literacy Trust, said the report uncovered a "dangerous lack in the literacy skills" required to "navigate our digital world and identify fake news" that risks "damaging young people's democratic futures, along with the wellbeing of an entire generation".

News: NGA conference

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Hinds' crackdown on related-party transactions and academy CEO pay

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

The education secretary has promised to clamp down on academy trusts which hand lucrative contracts to family and friends, as well as excessive chief executive pay.

From April 2019, all so-called related-party transactions worth more than £20,000 will need to be declared to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for approval, Damian Hinds has announced.

Academy accounts returns will need to detail staff earning more than £100,000 and the "percentage of teaching time those individuals undertake".

Related-party transactions are deals between academy trusts and linked private companies. For example, a trust buying services from a company run by one of its members or trustees, or one of their family members, counts as a related-party transaction.

In a damning report on the state of academy spending released in March, the public accounts committee warned that the DfE's current rules, which allow such transactions as long as no-one profits from the deals, are "too weak".

Mr Hinds told delegates at the National Governors Association's conference in Manchester that every pound of school funding needs to be spent on "providing children with a world-class education".

He wants to make academy trusts more accountable for the money they spend in



general by taking a "tough approach" on the "rare cases" where those involved in running schools break the rules.

"I want to make sure that every pound of public money for our schools is used in the best possible way for the good of our children and society," he told the conference. "That means taking a tough approach and this includes a new, more robust process to manage related-party transactions made by academy trusts."

"I think pretty much everyone would agree that a situation where board members could hand out unjustified contracts to companies that they or their friends and business associates have an interest in is not okay."

He wants the DfE to be "clear about our expectations" on high pay.

"There is no doubt that our school system has many great leaders, and for

large and complex organisations pay must reflect the scale of the task," he continued. "However, pay needs to be proportionate – and pay rises for non-teaching staff should not exceed that awarded to teaching staff. And where salaries aren't justifiable – we will say so."

Schools Week has reported extensively on excessive chief executive pay. Sir Dan Moynihan of the Harris federation was the best-paid of all CEOs last year, with a £20,000 increase to a minimum of £440,000.

Academies minister Lord Agnew has in recent months been working with Eileen Milner, the chief executive of the ESFA, to challenge 117 academy trusts found paying individual staff more than £150,000 to ensure they are clear that pay must be justifiable and based on a transparent process.

Following a "series of correspondence and meetings with these trusts", 18 have so far confirmed to the DfE they no longer pay a salary over £150,000, and "many more have indicated they will work to revise high salaries and prevent unjustified salary inflation in the future".

Trusts are required to report the number of staff members with salaries of £60,000 and over in bands of £10,000 as part of their annual accounts return.

From £100,000 and above, staff jobs must be included in the return. Schools will also have to report the percentage of teaching time in this year's accounts return, to be published in October 2018.

2.5
MINUTE
READ

And he's writing to 30,000 businesses, seeking new governors

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Professional workers have been urged to "play their part" to improve the education of children by signing up to be school governors and trustees.

The education secretary Damian Hinds used his speech to the annual conference of the National Governance Association for a "call to arms" to "businesses and skilled professionals" to get more people from industry involved in running schools.

He also announced that a £3 million funding

pot for training and support of governors will be doubled and kept available up until 2021.

Praising "the army of volunteers" who help out on school boards, he set out plans to write to more than 30,000 businesses, urging them to encourage employees to step up.

Hinds urged people from "different backgrounds and different professions" to come forward to "offer up your time, your energy, your skills, your expertise".

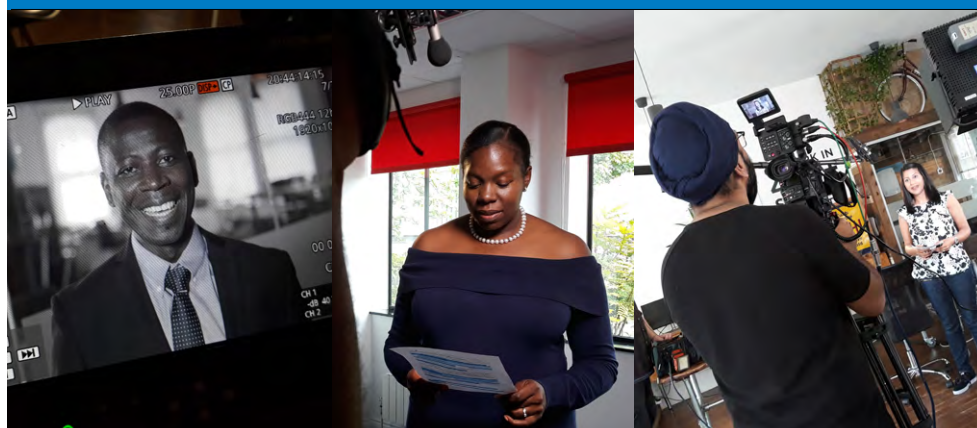
"I'm also making an appeal to the nation's

employers today," he will continue. "Because of course to become a governor, people with full-time jobs will need their employer's support. I believe businesses can make a contribution to society here."

"That's why I'm writing to the 30,000 members of the Institute of Directors, urging them to encourage employees to take on this role, and give them the time it needs."

News: NGA conference

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Ethnic minorities and young people urged to volunteer as governors

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

A new campaign to tackle the "historic underrepresentation" as governors of ethnic minorities and younger people has been launched.

'Everyone on Board' has been jointly created by the National Governance Association (NGA) and Inspiring Governance.

It centres on a film which features six governors explaining how volunteers from "different places who think different things" can bring "diverse perspectives and a balance of views to conversations so that barriers, biases and stereotypes do not go unchallenged".

According to last year's school governance survey, just four per cent of school governors and trustees are from an ethnic minority background. Around a third of pupils are from a diverse background, and 13.5 per cent of teachers identify as ethnic minority.

Ten per cent of school governors and trustees are aged under 40, and just one per cent aged under 30.

There are roughly a quarter of a million school governors and trustees volunteering at state-funded schools in England, though one in 10 school governing positions is vacant, according to the NGA.

Research from 1999 commissioned by the then-Department for Education and Employment on the composition of school governing boards revealed that five per cent came from an ethnic minority

– "indicating that there has been no significant progress in almost two decades".

The governors in the campaign discuss how diverse governing boards can create "a culture of inclusion, starting at the top" providing role models for pupils to "give them confidence in what they can achieve and demonstrate the school's commitment to diversity at all levels".

The education secretary Damian Hinds welcomed the campaign at the NGA national conference in Manchester last Saturday, and said a "range of voices around the table leads to good governance".

"Education is so powerful, and one of the biggest tools for social mobility, so people making decisions about education need to be the best and the brightest and, by rights, should be diverse," said Yinka Ewoula (pictured), chair of governors at Cobourg Primary School, who is participating in the campaign.

Jordan Holder, a governor at Copleston High School, said: "In my community, young people often have low aspirations. Seeing me, a young governor from an ethnic minority background can really inspire them and change their perceptions of what they can achieve."

Emma Knights, the chief executive of the NGA, said the campaign will "counter the stark underrepresentation that has persisted for two decades".

"Governors and trustees donate their skills, time and expertise to ensure all children can achieve their full potential; having diverse and balanced governing boards avoids groupthink and results in better decision-making," she added.



Rayner: Labour promises an end to 'chaotic reforms'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

A future Labour government won't make the lives of school governors and academy trustees harder with "chaotic reforms", Angela Rayner has pledged.

The shadow education secretary told the annual conference of the National Governance Association last weekend that governors too often had to deal with institutions "that seem to prod, push and punish" rather than "enable and empower" them.

Rayner thanked governors for their "incredible contribution" to schools, but said that too often the work of those volunteers who help run schools is "unappreciated" and "unsupported".

"Any politician can come here and make our appreciation clear," she said. "But ultimately, it is what we do rather than what we say that will make the biggest difference. You have been at the heart of a school system that has not only faced constant top-down reorganisation but the first cuts to school budgets in a generation.

"Our vision for education is different. Of course, a Labour government will bring change. But I don't want to make to your life harder with more chaotic reforms, driven by dogma, delivered to deadlines in the hope of headlines.

"Too often, you are dealing with institutions that seem set up to prod, push and punish rather than enable and empower. Often because they themselves are not resourced to offer the carrot instead of the stick."

Rayner used her speech to promote Labour's plans for a National Education Service, an umbrella term for a raft of reforms, including increases in schools funding, free adult education and the return of the Education Maintenance Allowance for 16- to 19-year-olds.

She wants to "encourage everyone" to have their say on Labour's plans.

"Please do go to our website and help shape the national education service of which I hope you will all one day be a part," she told delegates.

Labour's consultation closes on June 24.

Queen's Birthday Honours 2018

Reporting by Freddie Whittaker, Alix Robertson, Pippa Allen-Kinross and Jess Staufenberg

Queen's birthday honours: 49 awards for notable educators

A leading academic and a renowned classicist are at the top of the list of those recognised in the Queen's birthday honours for their services to education.

Chris Husbands, the vice-chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University and a former director of the UCL Institute of Education, has been knighted, while Mary Beard, a professor of classics at the University of Cambridge and a campaigner for classical education in schools, has been made a dame.

Husbands, who started out as a teacher before moving into academia, said he is "extremely fortunate" to have had "a career beyond the imaginings of my parents and grandparents".

Beard, who wants more classics taught in schools, told *Schools Week* it is a "smashing honour", and "a tribute to all my wonderful colleagues in schools and universities who also do so much to keep the study of classical civilisation as vibrant as it is".

Matthew Coffey, Ofsted's chief operating officer, has been made a companion of the order of the bath, a special honour reserved for civil servants.

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector of schools, praised his "intelligence, energy, determination and integrity" that have seen the inspectorate "through many challenges and complexities".

Overall, 49 people with links to schools in England have been recognised this year. Eleven headteachers are on the list, including Diane Rochford, the executive headteacher of the John F Kennedy Special School, who led the government's review of SEND assessment. She has been made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE).

Richard Jarrett, the headteacher of Oldfield Primary School in Maidenhead, has been made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to education. His school is in Theresa May's constituency, and recently had its new site opened by the prime minister.

"I'm absolutely flabbergasted and hugely honoured," he said.

Professor Sam Twiselton, a leading authority on teacher training, who leads the Sheffield Institute of Education and was involved in the Carter Review of ITT, has also been made an OBE. She described the honour as "exciting".

Medals also went to eight governors or chairs of governors, including Robert Symonds, chair of the WISE Academies Trust, and Michael Wall, chair



MARY BEARD



CHRIS HUSBANDS



MATTHEW COFFEY

of the Federation of Moorlands and Park Lane Primary Schools in Reading.

Honours also go to three academy trust chief executives. Patricia Smart, the chief executive of the Create Partnership Trust in Birmingham, has been made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).

"I didn't expect to receive this award, but it's lovely to be recognised," she told *Schools Week*.

Dave Dickinson of the Waterton Academy Trust has been made an OBE. "I'm a little bit humbled," he said. "I'm a great believer that you don't do anything by yourself, and I have been blessed to work alongside many dedicated and far more talented individuals than myself."

Nitesh Gor, the founder of the Avanti Schools Trust, also received an OBE. His trust is currently in talks to take over schools run by the Floreat Education Academies Trust, which was founded by the health minister Lord O'Shaughnessy but ran into problems.

"I feel humbled knowing all the great work that others within Avanti Schools Trust are doing to make it such a success," said Gor.

Helen Fisher, a project lead in the office of the regional schools commissioner Dominic Herrington, is to be made a MBE, as is Anne-Marie Canning, the director of social mobility and student success at King's College London. She was recently appointed chair of the government's opportunity area in Bradford.

Diane Harrill, the head of PSHE at Newent community school and sixth-form centre in Gloucestershire, has been awarded an MBE. She has worked at the school for 32 years and has a "real passion" for PSHE. She also runs the Gloucester Healthy Living and Learning website.

Harrill said she was "really pleased that a subject that's so often overlooked is being recognised".

"I've always tried to champion this area and it's really important schools feel supported and have the resources they need. I've been really lucky to do it," she said.



SAM TWISELTON



DIANE HARRILL



NITESH GOR



DAVE DICKINSON



ANNE-MARIE CANNING

Queen's Birthday Honours 2018

Who was recognised for their services to schools?

Knights Bachelor

Professor Christopher Roy HUSBANDS
Vice chancellor, Sheffield Hallam University and former director, UCL Institute of Education. For services to higher education.

Dames Commander of the Order of the British Empire

Professor Winifred Mary BEARD, OBE
Professor of classics, University of Cambridge. For services to the study of classical civilisation.

Companions of the Order of the Bath

Matthew COFFEY
Chief operating officer, Ofsted. For services to education.

Commanders of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Professor Rosemary Genevieve DAVIS
Professor emeritus, University College London, Institute of Education. For services to education.

Ms Patricia Mary SMART
Chief executive officer, Create Partnership Trust. For services to education.

Officers of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Dr Anne BAMFORD
Lately director of education, Archdiocese of Southwark. For services to education.

John Oswald BOYLE
Governor and lately chair of directors, The Blackpool Sixth Form College. For services to education.

(Margaret) Elizabeth, Mrs CRAWFORD
For services to education.

Patrick Sibley Jan DERHAM
Headmaster, Westminster School, London. For services to education.

David DICKINSON
Chief executive officer, Waterton Academy Trust. For services to education.

Nitesh GOR, DL
Founder and chief executive, Avanti Schools Trust. For services to education.

Miss Karen HOE
Parent participation coordinator and volunteer, National Network of Parent Carer Forums. For services to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Steven Edward LEONE
Headteacher, Stone Hill School, Doncaster. For services to Education and Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Diana Barbara, Mrs MCKENNA
Head, specialist disabled children's services, Derbyshire County Council. For services to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Ms Claire Elizabeth ROBINS
Headteacher, Scholars' Education Trust, and member of the north-west London south-central headteacher's board. For services to education.

Diane Mary, Mrs ROCHFORD
Executive headteacher, John F Kennedy Special School and chair, Rochford Review. For services to education.

Robert SYMONDS
Chair, WISE Academies Trust. For services to education.

Professor Carole Samantha TWISELTON
Director, Sheffield Institute of Education. For services to higher education.

Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Dr Christopher Andrew BARNETT
Lately headmaster, Whitgift School, Croydon. For services to education.

Miss Mary Angela BEATTY
Law and politics teacher, Whitefield School, Cricklewood. For services to education.

Derek James BLAKE
Lately vice-chair of governors, Stour Valley Community School, Clare. For services to education and to the community in Suffolk.

Alison Mary, Mrs BROWNING
Teacher, Varndean School, Brighton. For services to education and the personal development of young people.

Susan Alayne, Mrs CAMPBELL
Principal, Magherafelt Nursery School. For services to education.

Ms Anne-Marie CANNING
Director of social mobility and student success, King's College London. Chair of the Bradford opportunity area. For services to higher education.

Linda, Mrs CHAMBERS
Early years co-ordinator, Ballybeen Women's Centre Pre-School. For services to education.

Sheila, Mrs CLARIDGE
Lately specialist maths teacher, The Mead Community Primary School, Wiltshire. For services to education.

Dr John Dixon CRAGGS, DL
For services to education and the community in Birmingham.

Beverley Emma, Mrs DEAN
Founder, Special iApps. For services to exports in educational technology for people with learning disabilities.

Ms Helen Mary FISHER
Project lead, academies regional delivery group, regional schools' commissioner's office, south east and south London. For services to the Department for Education.

Ms Diane Patricia HARRILL
Teacher, Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre, Gloucestershire. For services to education.

Mark Stephen HARTLEY
Headteacher, Barnes Primary School. For services to educational pedagogy.

David James HEATHER
Headteacher, Pulford Church of England VA Lower School, Bedfordshire. For services to education.

Thomas Dieter Dirk HOFFMAN
Member, Court of Common Council, City of London Corporation. For services to secondary and tertiary education and the arts in London.

Carol Ann, Mrs JACKSON
Chair of governors, Fordingbridge Infant School, Hampshire. For services to education.

Richard Andrew JARRETT
Headteacher, Oldfield Primary School, Maidenhead. For services to education.

Terence John KITTS
Headteacher, Marchant Holliday School, Somerset. For services to education.

Patricia Eve, Mrs LANDER
Lately deputy headteacher, Colnbrook Special Needs School, Watford. For services to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Stephen LESTER
Member, Education Funding Agency academies finance and assurance steering group and business manager, West Lakes Academy. For services to education.

Melanie Barbara MANSFIELD
For services to young people, play and education.

Kenneth Alan MORCOMBE
Governor, St Giles School, Croydon. For services to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Roberta Jocelyn, Mrs NARROWAY
Headteacher, Valley Primary School, Solihull. For services to primary education.

Marcella Caterina, Mrs OLIVE-BALLESTRA
Founder and lately chair, Board of Asperger, East Anglia. For services to children, young people and adults with special educational needs and disabilities.

Ms Barbara QUARTEY
Principal, Insights Independent School and Skills Academy, West Ealing, London. For services to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Ms Patricia QUIGLEY
Head of school, The Garden School. For services to education.

Christine Stanley, Mrs SHAW
Governor, Eaglesfield Puddle CE Academy. For services to education.

Ms Alison Jane VAUGHAN
Chair of governors, Rhodes Avenue Primary School, Haringey. For services to education.

Michael WALL
Chair of governors, Federation of Moorlands and Park Lane Primary Schools. For services to education.

Medallists of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

Michael Francis BURKE
Peripatetic caseworker, Staffordshire County Council. For services to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Edward HUDSON
Founder and chairman, Bibles for Children. For services to education.

Howard ROSE
Funding and publicity director, Balsall Common Primary School, Coventry. For services to education.

Leigh, Mrs YATES
Chair of the Porthleven School Association of Friends, Helston. For services to education.

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

How much is too much for this vanity project?

At a time when school budgets are tighter than ever, the knowledge that over £23 million has been spent on failed studio schools might be slightly hard to swallow. But the fact this is the tip of an iceberg of unknown proportions may well be a choking hazard.

Eventually the DfE will have to hold up its hands and admit how much has been spent on this struggling scheme. And as the number of failed schools edges closer and closer to overtaking the number of those still open, the real question is how much longer it will make us wait.

Universities should be more careful what they wish for

Universities are surely setting themselves up for a fall by encouraging sixth formers to give up on their studies at A-level and cruise through the final months of school on the free ticket of an unconditional offer.

Removing the need for 17-year-olds to reach a bar before they can access the next stage of learning is likely to result in a cohort of undergraduates who already feel the next three or four years are going to be a breeze.

Teachers work hard to keep their pupils focused, enthusiastic and diligent. If universities want these attitudes too they must think carefully about the tone they are setting.

I for one welcome our new NSC overlord

Congratulations to Dominic Herrington, who will replace Sir David Carter as national schools commissioner.

As well as those big, Welsh conference-presentation-giving shoes to fill, Dom has his work cut out for him.

At a time when academy transparency and accountability are top of the agenda for the government's critics, his job is to prove that the schools commissioner network has a future.

Following the government's move to block commissioners from inspecting schools, it's up to our illustrious new leader to find a way of intervening in schools that doesn't create extra work for them. And he only has six months to do it.

Good luck!

SCHOOLS WEEK



Get in touch.

CONTACT:
NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK
OR CALL 0203 4321 392





**LAURA
MCINERNEY**

Contributing editor

Forget the 11-plus. Is a world without selection at 18 possible?

In a warm marquee tent on Wednesday, I was one of four people debating a motion: “Academic selection is wrong at 11, and it is still wrong at 18.”

Having spent the past two years debating the considerable evidence against grammar schools, my arguments on the first part of the debate were sound. But I’ve spent much of the week considering the latter assertion.

Is it wrong for universities to select students based on their academic grades? Or, to put it another way, what would happen if we did university entry by lottery?

The biggest problem for selection at 11 is that the tests are unreliable, the net effect is virtually nil, and the disbenefits accumulate most heavily to the poorest.

But some of these issues also stand at 18. A-levels are somewhat more reliable than the 11-plus, but there is still error in the test scores, and *Schools Week* has reported that private schools send back substantially more exam papers for remarks compared to their state counterparts, meaning the error is not evenly spread.

As for the benefits of sending

pupils with different grades to commensurate universities; we don’t actually know what would happen if lots of lower-attaining pupils suddenly attended elite

“ **Why can’t a pupil getting three Bs in their A-levels also benefit from a tutorial system?** ”

universities, because we’ve never tried. One might believe that universities like teaching pupils who all received A’s as it means they can start with harder knowledge and propel their protégés more quickly, but one might equally believe there are many other ways of running degrees. What’s to stop Oxford having standard and advanced-level courses? Why can’t a pupil getting three Bs in their A-levels also benefit from the tutorial system? And why must a child from the north always head south in order to experience it?

Let us imagine that a dictator



has taken over the country. She has decided that, from now on, university entry will be decided by lottery. There are no limits on who can choose which university. If the young person gets pulled out while there is still a place available at their first choice university, then they can have it. Job done.

University bods will say this is unacceptable. They cannot possibly teach every type of person! But our dictator is undeterred. Not only must the universities all teach every student sent to them, she says, but also they must hit high levels of student satisfaction on annual surveys. There will be no shunting off the weakest to a broom cupboard and telling them to teach themselves.

In a state of shock, the professors start planning. Some create programmes that can reach a broad range of students, with additional lessons for those falling behind

and stretch components for those at the top. Others create universities-within-a-university – separating students by ability into different colleges all on the same campus.

No matter the way the universities manage it, we can imagine a world in which every university offers provision covering a broad range of abilities and, in so doing, opens their facilities and cultural capital to anyone who makes the choice to enter their doors.

What have we lost in this transition? Arguably, young people will no longer work so hard at school. Without the drive to achieve the highest grades in order to win a place at a university there’s a danger they will become lazy. On the other hand, some children who currently believe they will never go to university will now see that, in future, they could be learning in a beautiful space one day, and so become more motivated.

In time, the country would probably lose its “best” universities. Or, perhaps, the brand would change, and the title of best would go to those universities that genuinely deliver for all their students, rather than to those who merely suck in and incubate top attainers.

A loss for elitism? Perhaps. But a win for linguistic accuracy.

Despite all this, I nevertheless find the idea problematic, as if there must be a reason why selection at 18 is correct. Is that my own biases talking? I’m going to need longer to ponder.

What do you think?

Profile

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

8.25
MINUTE
READ

Head of School, Q3 Langley

I emerge from the loo at Q3 Langley to find my path blocked by a single-file procession of year 7s snaking through previously deserted corridors.

The line is bouncing with exuberance. Heads bob this way and that, apparently seeking adults to greet, a merry cacophony of kids greeting me with "good morning miss".

It's a pleasant surprise, as I'm here as a somewhat reluctant visitor to the school, having been effectively sent to Oldbury to set the record straight.

In December, *Schools Week* ran a news article on how the school's headteacher Peter Lee, having borrowed strategies from the (oft-divisive) Michaela Community School in London, declared in a conference speech that having "very young members of staff" had made it easy to put the strict – some might say "militaristic" – systems in place.

He was unhappy with the coverage, and pushed and pushed for a chance to have his say. I'm expecting to meet a proud man, a self-promoter wanting more coverage (but positive, this time, please!) for his Michaela-in-the-Midlands project.

But as Lee runs through a slideshow, with his SLT sitting in, reviewing the press coverage and the attacks they received on social media, explaining the context and background of his school, I feel something like compassion. It also feels a little like I'm being asked to be the judge and the accused at the same time.

"Michaela is one of a significant number of schools we've been to, and diametrically opposed..." he trails off, changing tack. "We've been to Harrop Fold before it hit the news. We've been to grammar schools, my head of maths went to King Solomon Academy yesterday. For us it's about learning."

The point he was making in his speech was, he insists, to explain how wonderful it is that other schools are so generous with sharing their learning. And he was referring not to how easy it is to mould young



teachers, but to the difference between being able to start a school from scratch, against trying to change the culture of a functioning school.

"If I became head down the road and said 'right, we're going to do a strict pencil-case equipment policy', I'd have 10 staff who would love it, while 20 would go 'that's the most ridiculous idea in the world'. Sixty in the middle would just go whichever way the crowd is going."

Lee spends a while skirting round the issue of Michaela, until I relieve the tension by telling him that I had recently visited

and was impressed. There's palpable relief, which reveals a confession: "Katharine is amazing!"

He's visited three times.

Those who see the education community as split into two ideological camps may have trouble getting their heads around Q3 Langley, which has taken a somewhat pick'n'mix approach to school policies.

It does family lunches, with tables named after aspirational universities, and public "appreciations" marked by the (slightly cultish) "double clap" that seems popular with the no-excuses, Knowledge is

Power-inspired schools. It uses the SLANT technique for maintaining pupils' attention in class (although only for a minute at a time) and has stationery checks in tutor time, with five minutes of detention for each missing item.

But it also enlisted Hywel Roberts, a stalwart of the progressive, creative teaching movement, to help with curriculum planning. The SLT are fans of developing students' "personal learning thinking skills" (a much-maligned framework from the previous national curriculum that aims to develop "independent enquirers, creative

thinkers and team workers").

"You mention that on social media and you're ripped down," says Lee – who isn't planning on giving up group work, or sitting in tables, rather than rows, any time soon.

The trust to which they belong, Q3, specifically calls itself "progressive", which is a loaded term in education. Yet the same trust adopts very corporate language, with the school houses called "companies" and teachers dubbed "learning consultants". So what exactly are they?

"Our behaviour policy is ridiculously

"SLANT, for me, is not interrupting, and tracking the staff member. Well, that's just manners."

positive," says Lee. "SLANT, for me, is sitting up straight, it's not slouching, it's not fiddling with a pen. It's listening, it's answering, it's not interrupting others. Not talking over the adult talking, and tracking the staff member. Well, that's just manners."

Lee himself is a former police officer, the son of two left-leaning teachers, who jokes that he joined the force to rebel against his family: "I was delivering Labour party leaflets aged 11, I was going on CND marches to Greenham Common and so forth."

His grandad on his mum's side was a shop steward, who stood for the Communist Party in Small Heath, Birmingham, in the 1960s. His dad's family is from Liverpool.

"My dad took me to Villa vs Liverpool in about 1982, and said 'you can support Villa like your granddad, or you can support Liverpool'. And Liverpool won 3-0, so unfortunately that was my football allegiance from then on."

Lee applied to his dad's home town to study history and politics, "for two reasons. One, I had a season ticket for Liverpool, and two, my nan cooked my Sunday lunch every week for me."

Describing himself as "probably quite academic", Lee feels his years in the West Midlands Police – which he joined straight after university – showed him a "different side of life". Nevertheless he was keen to escape the seven-day shift pattern – if only to be able to play football on a Saturday.

After applying for and being rejected from CID, he joined the police training team instead, "which is a really odd thing to do, because training is seen as the lowest of the low in the police. It's seen as the people who can't do it out on the street.

"And I loved it. I mean, I've had my nose broken twice out on the streets, and I wasn't very good out there, I don't think. I could run fast, but I found I was much better in a classroom.

With a taste for teaching, at 28 he applied to the University of Warwick on a fast-track teacher training programme, in 2004.

His first job was at Queensbridge School in Birmingham. In addition to being on an accelerated promotion scheme, Lee was very driven.

Profile



“I volunteered, I did all the head of department jobs, I ran the website, I asked to teach A-level at the neighbouring school – Bishop Challoner, an outstanding school – and they got me a three-month secondment to do that on a Friday morning. Because I always knew I wanted to progress and I needed to look at gaps on my CV,” he recalls.

Lee cites his headteacher at the time, Tim Boyes, as a “tremendous influence on my career” – especially in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. It was here that he met his wife, a primary practitioner who worked on the government’s ‘Wasted years’ report, and whom Lee describes as “the biggest influence on my teaching career. I watched her teach in my NQT year and she just blew me away. She was just the best teacher I’d ever seen teach, and she still is.”

To broaden his experience, he did a term teaching A-level at a sixth-form college, then got a part-time post as assistant head at Moseley School, which Boyes had taken on as an interim headship, in what turned out to be a failed attempt to unite the schools in a single trust. With many staff working across both sites, there was an “awful day” in January 2011 when Ofsted visited both schools simultaneously. Both schools dropped a grade – Queensbridge went down to ‘satisfactory’, and Moseley fell to ‘inadequate’; “basically we all got pulled from Moseley.”

Lee returned to Queensbridge but soon applied for an assistant vice-principal role at Q3 Academy Great Barr, and after four years, was offered the headship of Q3’s new school, to be built 20 miles to the south in the same deprived West Midlands borough, Sandwell.

The start-up team were hired while they were all working full-time teaching posts, and they fitted planning in on evenings, holidays, and “the middle of the night”, jokes assistant vice-principal Grace Cox.

Staying this close to day-to-day school issues kept them “grounded”, however. They would meet for three hours every Monday night and discuss how they might do things differently at the new school. This is where their rule on handing in mobile phones at the start of each day comes from.

“I think we’ve designed the school around the disadvantaged child”

“I spent seven hours searching for a stolen iPhone,” says Lee. “It’s my fault – as an ex-police officer, to my shame, I didn’t take his shoes off when I searched him – and he’d had it in his shoe, and it burnt his foot, because he’d had it for seven hours in there. I came to the meeting the next Monday and said ‘right, we’ve got to do something with mobile phones. I’m not wasting seven hours of my life that I could have been helping teachers or doing other stuff.’”

Sandwell ranks in the worst 30 local authorities for all the government’s indices of deprivation – a factor the team has taken into account as a matter of course: “I think we’ve designed the school around the disadvantaged child without realising it, in lots of ways. We give everybody breakfast for free. Toast, cereal and water. No one knows here, who is on free school meals as we all sit and eat together.”

He also takes a “very paternalistic approach” to changing behaviours, for example, by suggesting ways the kids can help out at home, and making them articulate “appreciations” of people who’ve done nice things for them, which Lee admits “can be a bit forced”.

He doesn’t apologise for this approach, however.

“I think at times we’re a bit scared as teachers to go down that route, but ultimately that, I think, is our job in society,” he insists.

In what can seem like a polarised new-schools landscape, there will no doubt be some purists who consider Q3 Langley a messy compromise. Yet others will see a very human attempt to take the best of what they’ve seen in other schools, and adapt it to what sits well with the leadership team, and what chimes with their own experience.

It’s a personal thing

Favourite book?

I was talking to a student the other day, she’s reading *Animal Farm*. Mine is *1984*. It’s probably the political historian in me. I first read it at 13 or 14. It’s the book I enjoyed most from Orwell – I’ve read *Homage to Catalonia* and didn’t really enjoy it as much.



What kind of schooling do you want for your three children?

I’m not one of these heads that stands up and works in an academy and sends their kids to private school. My children walk to their local school. I think every child and every parent deserves a good local school that they can walk to.

My two youngest will go to Queensbridge, absolutely. Although our closest school is a grammar school, King Edwards, but no, I believe 100 per cent in comprehensives.

Who challenges you?

My 14-year-old, probably, Grace, in particular. Grace is phenomenal really, the kind of ying to my yang. My wife and my chief executive do, definitely.

If you could escape anywhere for a month, where would you go?

Somewhere hot. There’s nothing I love more than going on holiday with my family and sitting by the pool in Tenerife, that would be fine with me! It’s the only time I read books, actually.



What influence did your parents have on you?

My mum is a head teacher, my stepdad was a head teacher. My mum was my chair of governors at my secondary as well, so my tie was never out of place, I was never in trouble, never had a detention once!

My dad passed away nine-and-a-bit years ago, and I wish he’d be able to see this. He’d be proud. My dad was a sixth-form teacher, one of those old-school teachers who would pick up *Romeo and Juliet* and make it come alive. Very charismatic.

CV

2016-present:	Head of school, Q3 Langley, Sandwell
2015-2016:	Vice-principal, Q3 Academy, Sandwell
2012-2015:	Assistant vice-principal, Q3 Academy, Sandwell
2010-2012:	Assistant head, Queensbridge School
2009-2011:	Assistant head, Moseley School
2005-2009:	NQT, head of history, head of humanities, Queensbridge School
2004-2005:	PGCE, University of Warwick
1997-2004:	West Midlands Police
1994-1997:	History and politics BA, University of Liverpool

Opinion



MARY MYATT

Education advisor,
speaker and author

Making the case for a coherent curriculum

The curriculum at so many schools has narrowed as the government lays down more and more core targets. Mary Myatt believes that pupils will only benefit if we widen their horizons correctly

There is a wonderful word, “gallimaufry,” that means “a confused jumble or medley of things”. It perfectly captures the mixed picture we get of the curriculum in much of the schools community. Of course, knowledge has always been taught. However, the conversations about what is taught, why material is taught and how that material links to our overarching ambition for what we want pupils to know have not been consistent. The focus has largely so far been on how content has been delivered, as opposed to the purpose, quality and impact of that content.

The varying attitudes to curriculum, and its purpose, design and impact on pupil achievement, have subject choice narrow in the later years of many primary schools, in order to focus, understandably, on English and maths. These subjects are important; schools are judged on how well pupils do in them, and the pressure is on. But

it is a mistake to neglect the other subjects, not least because pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced range of learning, but also because a wider curriculum will support outcomes in English and maths anyway.

“ Why should only some of our pupils have access to important knowledge?”

The impact in many secondary schools has meant that pupils stop studying some subjects at the age of 14. A further consequence of this lack of attention has been that content coverage has sometimes trumped understanding of that content.

The impetus for shifting the narrative has come from a number of sources. The first is a drive for justice and social equity – why should only some of our pupils have access to important knowledge? Second is the influence of the findings from cognitive science: educators are now asking what it means to really know something, what it means to retain important



ideas in the long-term memory, how we create conditions for pupils to have meaningful conversations about what they are learning, how knowledge connects to other ideas, and where else it might go.

There is also something of a movement towards a more

scholarly approach for pupils, as well as a drive to increase the cognitive demand – supported through appropriate scaffolding, support and talk.

History teacher Richard Kennett provided his year 7 pupils with sections from a scholarly text, in this example *The Norman Conquest* by Marc Morris. Morris's text had been chosen to compare with Simon Schama's account of the same period, and pupils were expected to read extracts and answer questions such as “what does Morris argue most people think about the Norman Conquest?” and “what does Morris say about the impact of the Norman Conquest on women?”

Kennett's careful use of a stimulus for these pupils took them into demanding work. The task was characterised by high challenge and low threat: “Read these and answer all the questions. This is supposed to be hard. If you can't answer all the questions don't worry!”

Another great example I've seen in a primary school is of year 1 pupils learning about the Christian concept of incarnation. It focused on etymology as the key concept to be taught, to ensure understanding that Christians' core belief is that “God became human in the form of baby Jesus at Christmas”. Then all the twinkly stuff around Christmas is understood in terms of this.

If you think pupils aren't capable of this, consider how many four-year-olds are fluent in dinosaurs. Most of these know that the word comes from the Greek for “scary lizard”. The focus on curriculum depth and clarity provides intrinsic engagement for pupils. It doesn't need to be dressed up, distorted or diminished. Our pupils can cope.

So as we revisit the quality of what we teach, let's not get precious about it. The process of unpicking is messy, unsettling and sometimes sticky. But it is possible to get to a place where great content like a great text becomes, to quote Andy Tharby, “the beating heart of the lesson”.

Mary Myatt's book, *The curriculum: Gallimaufry to coherence*, is published by John Catt

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DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEET.CO.UK

Nearly a quarter of teachers leave the profession in their first three years. Cat Scutt believes a focused programme of professional development can stem that tide

We know that new teachers' expertise develops extremely rapidly. As Rebecca Allen and Sam Sims point out in *The Teacher Gap*, the learning curve for teachers is at its steepest in their first few years in the classroom.

We know, too, that the quality of teaching a student receives makes a huge impact on their outcomes. According to the Sutton Trust, the difference between an effective teacher and an ineffective teacher for students from disadvantaged backgrounds over a school year is a whole year's learning.

But with nearly a quarter of new teachers leaving the profession within their first three years, many never fully develop their knowledge and practice. There is clearly a moral imperative to provide new teachers with high-quality support, drawing on everything we know about effective teacher development. But given the cost of recruitment and retention in the sector, there is also a practical one.

Recognising this, the DfE has committed to boosting the provision for early-career teachers in their recent 'Strengthening QTS' consultation. The chartered college sees this a vitally important move for the profession, and I'm delighted to have been part of the advisory group looking at these developments. But what should schools actually be doing to support new teachers?



CAT
SCUTT

Director of education and research, the
Chartered College of Teaching

Five 'best bets' for teachers' early-career development

Introduce instructional coaching...

Instructional coaching, where a teacher is supported to develop their classroom practices by a trained coach, has one of the strongest evidence bases for improving teaching quality.

Instructional coaching can be effective both when external

The approach also works when a video coaching approach is used – allowing greater flexibility for both parties. A video library of clips can be effective, where teachers can see specific skills in action – and it's a powerful way for a teacher to witness new approaches.

“ These ideas have benefits for more experienced teachers too

specialists act as coaches, and when teachers at the school are trained to take on the role – so there are also opportunities here for meaningful development for more experienced teachers. Those who act as coaches often gain a huge amount.

...and deliberate practice

Closely linked with the idea of instructional coaching is the model of “deliberate practice”, where teachers engage in cycles of practice, observation, and receiving feedback before further their practice refining. To be most effective, teachers need multiple cycles over a sustained period with regular input from their coach.

Make professional development collaborative and subject-specific

Ensuring new teachers feel part of a community of practice is a good way to avoid the cliff edge of support at the end of ITT. Collaboration opportunities are also associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, and collaborative professional development can lead to improved outcomes for students, too. Pairing teachers with complementary skills and areas for development can work particularly well.

Wherever possible, professional development should also be tailored to their subject or phase. Engagement in subject-specific

professional development can improve teacher retention; subject associations are a great source of subject-specific CPD.

Use technology, critically

While online learning approaches for adults do not typically have significantly different outcomes to face-to-face, they can provide flexibility of access, consistency of content and cost-effectiveness.

Teachers often think of online learning as a rather inflexible “click next” model, but the video coaching and library above are great examples of how technology can be used more thoughtfully. Social media and MOOCs can play an important role here too, and should be recognised as valuable forms of professional development.

Set a school-wide culture of development

The ideas above are unlikely to work in isolation. They need whole-school buy-in as part of a culture of ongoing development – but luckily, they'll have benefits for more experienced teachers too.

And where teachers have excellent preparation during initial training, and then receive excellent provision as NQTs, they will develop high expectations for professional development for the rest of their career – raising the bar for us all.

Cat Scutt will chair a panel about how schools can support early-career teachers at the Festival of Education at Wellington College on June 21

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Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



An educator's guide to mental health and wellbeing in schools

By James Hollinsley

Published by John Catt Educational

Reviewed by Seth Wilkins, teacher and wellbeing coach, Witton Park Academy, Blackburn

I recently presented a series of assemblies focused on my failures as a young person, and was touched by the positive responses I received from the children and staff with whom I work. This suggested to me that stripping away anxiety and misconceptions about failure may be one of the most empowering things we can do for each other.

Somewhat serendipitously, that same week I was invited to review James Hollinsley's *An educator's guide to mental health and wellbeing in schools*, a compendium of ideas from a range of contributing authors.

With years of specialist experience behind him, Hollinsley's passion for his subject is obvious. He writes: "I came to the conclusion that no matter what I write, it cannot emphasise enough the importance of wellbeing in schools..." I'm inclined to agree.

It's hard to think of a more urgent, relevant, and fundamental question than how we successfully respond to the growing crisis of mental ill-health. How do we enable the children and young people we teach to become more resilient? And isn't staff mental health and wellbeing an equally critical aspect of this quest?

Hollinsley and his associates approach these questions from a range of different starting points: from the value of creative arts in the curriculum, to the significance of attachment styles, and from the unexpected benefits of playing football to an invitation to reconsider the value of failure (possibly my favourite chapter

of the book).

The inclusion of personal, frequently anonymous, teacher anecdotes, serves both to validate bad experiences and to remind us to be reachable and circumspect in our judgment of colleagues. We all suffer sometimes, and the stories provide human, authentic reminders to be compassionate. In terms of audience, the book will be of interest to anyone invested in solutions to mental ill-health in schools, though many of the best ideas are only fully actionable by school leaders.

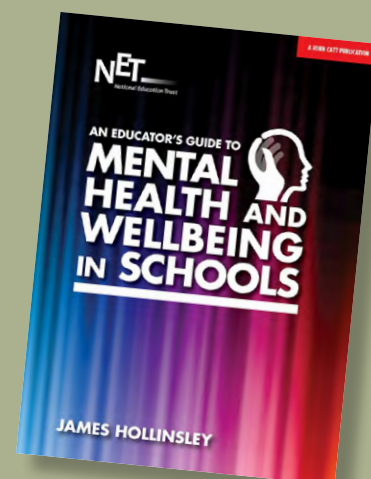
While the tone of the book is passionate and includes valuable content throughout, at times it does read as though the author were under pressure to meet his publication deadlines. The writing and scholarship is uneven in places, and there are a distracting number of typographical errors one would expect to have been caught in the copy edit. I appreciated the personal stories but found the way they are sprinkled throughout a little confusing. A clear introduction, outlining and justifying the development of the book would have provided helpful direction and an improved understanding of thematic progression.

There are also significant gaps in the discussion. One, for example, pertains to the very important work currently done in tandem with the NHS in the field of trauma-informed care, a philosophy and approach that enables schools such as my own to more fully recognise and act on the implications of the significant

distress, disruption, and dysfunction that arises from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that many children and young people endure.

Nevertheless, there are many bright moments. As a humanities specialist, I liked the brief history of stigma. Understanding and challenging the problem of stigma (and its fascinating past) is significant if we are to succeed in reshaping cultural attitudes towards mental health, and the chapter on attachment styles is useful for school leaders and class teachers alike.

An educator's guide to mental health and wellbeing in schools is not a game-changer, but it does contain authentic, humane and passionate calls to action from a range of expert voices. Though the book's ideas apply to all education settings, it is probably most relevant to school leaders working in the primary phase.



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

@HFLETCHERWOOD

The trolls under the bridge: Leadership resilience

@TheHopefulHT

Hannah Wilson hit the front pages over half term when an angry parent's complaint to a local newspaper reached the national press, and then the trolls. Wilson's list of offences included "serving water, banning packed lunches, insisting on family dining", and she notes that these policies have been in place since the school opened in September.

In the face of vindictive and personal attacks, Wilson's response is characteristically calm, collaborative and constructive. Her values are her "shield", she explains, not because "I do not have feelings, that I am not taking it personally, that words do not hurt me. It is not that I am not taking this seriously, because I am, but I will not allow the loud shouty voices nor the hateful insults sink in."

She carefully controls her reactions: "I have held my head up high. I have sat on my hands and I have bitten my tongue" and focuses on the positive and supportive messages she has received. She models a positive response to an extremely challenging situation.

TOP BLOGS of the week

What if we cannot measure pupil progress?

@profbeckyallen

Becky Allen is worried about progress. We're pretty good at measuring attainment, she notes, but "relatively short, standardised tests that are designed to be administered in a 45-minute/one-hour lesson are rarely going to be reliable enough to infer much about individual pupil progress". Having examined a number of tests, she sets out the reasons why she is "no longer sure that anybody is creating reliable termly or annual pupil progress data by subject", noting the way that tests distort teaching and pressure on teachers distorts testing.

She challenges us to reconsider whether we can really measure progress: "What if we all – teachers, researchers, heads, inspectors – accept that we are not currently measuring pupil progress? What then?"

No feedback, no learning

@P_A_Kirschner, @MirjamN

Paul Kirschner and Mirjam Neelen begin by reminding us that "feedback is one of the most, if not the most important tools for supporting learning" and take us to the logical consequence: "Let's just give as much feedback as we can to improve learning, right?"

They highlight why it's more complicated than this: "There are many types of feedback, it's not unambiguous what

we mean when we say 'feedback'. A number of factors influence the effectiveness of feedback. And last but not least, although we know feedback is one of the most important ways to improve learning, we know from research that it can negatively affect learning."

They provide clear guidance around what helps, what hurts, and how "the right feedback at the right time, acted upon by the learner and the learner works".

What sales reps can teach about altering behaviour

The anonymous author began their career in sales, where "we were taught a number of 'closes', which should be deployed at the time when the customer was getting near to making a decision and just needed a nudge over the line." These include the "Ben Franklin" – "you sit next to your customer and help him or her compile a list of the pros and cons of doing what you are proposing. Hey presto! The list of pros is longer. Much longer."

Then there's the positive choice "at the point at which the customer is teetering on the edge of a decision, you tacitly assume he has already made it, and you give him a choice. 'So would you like the doors in glossy white or chrome?'"

The author shows how these approaches can be used with Harry, one of their students, such as the prophecy of doom: "I know you want to chill Harry, but the trouble is that if you don't do what I'm asking, then it all starts to get serious fairly quickly: I give you a demerit, then you get a det..." and so on.

Or try the "positive choice": "Hi Harry. I can see you're having some difficulty starting. Tell you what, you don't have to start right at the beginning – do you want to start with exercise two or exercise three and then you can go back to the beginning later on?" As in sales, the author concludes, "these won't always work, but they offer you the chance to be a little creative in challenging situations where you're finding it difficult to move forward with a student. So, will you start with the Ben Franklin or the puppy dog?"

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CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +



Inaugural FestABLE becomes a celebration of SEND

Mark Watson, Comment

This sounds like a wonderful and worthwhile event that challenges but importantly also celebrates.

As a Gloucestershire resident, and having been to the National Star College on several occasions for meetings, tours, lunches etc, it is a truly amazing and inspirational place and I cannot recommend it highly enough.

Ex-children's minister Timpson lands new £550-a-day safeguarding review job

Simon Smith, @smithsmm

Why not employ someone who, oh I don't know, has a background and understanding of safeguarding? Yet more jobs for the boys.

Without more money, the EHCP dream will become a nightmare

Kirsty @Krusty101

Great article, whilst cost of education plays a huge role in my experience the attitudes towards an EHCP also needs to change. It seems many feel the issues are solved with the provision of the EHCP but it is the start of intervention not the conclusion.

Ministers' school visits show 'ideological obsession' with academies

Mark Lehain @lehai

I enjoyed reading Freddie Whittaker's article about ministerial visits to types of schools. I'm not sure that they show the "ideological obsession" with academies that Kevin Courtney suggests they do though.

Mark Watson

Well what on earth do you expect? If we had a Labour government, how many grammar schools and independent schools do you think Angela Rayner would visit in her first four months? Don't you think she would visit proportionally more LA schools than academies (taking into account the ratio)?

The Conservative government (as did the coalition) has a policy of academisation. Whether you agree

REPLY OF THE WEEK Martin Matthews

Without more money, the EHCP dream will become a nightmare

EHCPs have the potential to reduce lifetime

costs for those of us with a disability instead of shunting costs from one budget heading to another.

This needs both more cash and the buy in from many different organisations (most of which are in crisis due to lack of funding).

It's a good idea, well-intentioned but shackled by the inertia of the systems already in place.



with the principle of academisation or not, to feign surprise when a politician visits more places that align with their policies is naive at best.

Janet Downs

The Department for Education is supposed to support all schools, not just ones promoted by ministers. Pointing out favouritism by politicians doesn't make it a non-story just because they can all be accused of this partisan approach.

DfE won't offer free sanitary products to counter period poverty

Suzanne Norman

Why is it a school issue? Blame the school for everything. Not parents, nor society or government!

Kirsty Matthews

I knew this was going to happen. Use your own paltry budget to buy sanitary items, shoes, clothes, washing items, etc for the children whose parents can't or won't do so. Why do the children always have to suffer? It's not a straightforward case of social services helping in disordered families where children aren't getting basic care.

I just can't even remember the amount of times I've used my own salary to buy essentials for my students: deodorant, food, shampoo, bus fares, electricity tokens, and the list goes on. My current bugbear is GPs referring students who have gone to them for help with depression being referred to us for "school counselling" which is paid out of our education budget. Public services are crying out for some joined-up thinking.



REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

FRIDAY

Another year, another set of honours for the Queen's fake birthday.

Among the deserving recipients this year was Dave Dickinson, chief executive of the Waterton Academy Trust, which back in January was formally reprimanded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for the lack of transparency on its website about who was in charge of the school.

Good to know the DfE doesn't hold grudges!

SATURDAY

In Manchester, school governors received one of those well-meaning pats on the back for which Damian Hinds has become so famous.

Having told heads how wonderful they are at conferences throughout the spring, the education secretary headed to the National Governance Association annual conference to sing the praises of governors and academy trustees.

He announced more training for governors and support to recruit new volunteers – but there was a sting in the tail. From next April, the Education and Skills Funding Agency will need to sign off on related-party transactions larger than £20,000.

Good news for transparency, bad news for any governors who currently get companies they own or which are run by family members to perform services on behalf of their schools. OH WELL.

MONDAY

Asleep.

TUESDAY

Scoop of the day went to *Schools Week*, which exclusively revealed that Dominic Herrington is to be England's next top national schools commissioner, albeit only for six months. And he's going to stay as a regional schools commissioner too.

Could this be because the entire role of commissioner is doomed and the department is having a serious rethink about its future?

Or could it be that Dom's lack of teaching and school leadership experience means he won't cut it in the top job? School leaders practically threw their underwear at former national commissioner David Carter when he got out his famous "spaghetti graph" of school improvement and made everyone wet-eyed about his tales of being a headteacher. Herrington's epic tales of how he sat the civil service entrance exam and once gave himself a paper cut are not quite the same.

Still, Herrington did come top of last year's *Schools Week's* commissioner league tables and featured in a front page spread showing him dashing over the front line. *Week in Westminster* likes to imagine he took a photocopy of it into his interview. We also wish him all the best: it's a tough job but someone's got to do it!

WEDNESDAY

The billionaire American education secretary Betsy DeVos was in town this week to catch a glimpse of England's school system in action.

During her visit, DeVos met with her opposite number, Damian Hinds, the schools minister Nick Gibb and Lord Agnew, the academies minister – but also found time to visit some schools.

The first school was Grey Coat Hospital School, the Church of England comprehensive academy attended by the offspring of former prime minister David Cameron and ex-education secretary Michael Gove.

In 2015, the year Cameron submitted his daughter's place, the school was forced to apologise after *Schools Week* revealed their admissions letter appeared to break the law by soliciting a one-hundred-pound donation to be sent in along with the acceptance letter.

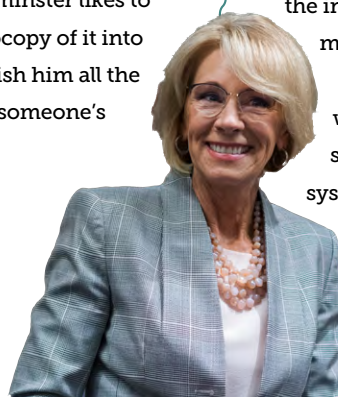
The second school was Pimlico Primary, which is in the academy trust set up by Lord Nash, the former academies minister, and which – for the briefest of times – counted current minister Lord Agnew as a trustee.

According to the US education department's press release, the UK is undertaking reforms that "allow for a more diverse school system that serves the individual needs of students, no matter their background".

It's cheering to know that Betsy's whistle-stop tour of English schools was as diverse as the system they operate in!

THURSDAY

Busy.





HARRIS PROFESSIONAL SKILLS SIXTH FORM

Harris Federation 

About Harris Professional Skills Sixth Form

Harris Professional Skills Sixth Form will open in September 2018 as a brand new state of the art academy in South Norwood. The Sixth Form academy will offer an excellent, focused and bespoke vocational provision to students for whom traditional pathways may not be appropriate. This will be a unique new sixth form campus, established to provide an outstanding vocational education and preparation for skills-based work, or transition to university, for students in Croydon and the surrounding boroughs.

Integral to this new academy will be an alternative provision centre, Harris Aspire, made up of both key stage 3 and key stage 4 pupils. Aspire will take a welfare driven, pastoral approach to supporting students in reframing attitudes to education, without sacrificing educational progress and attainment.

This is an exciting time for the academy and a fantastic opportunity for experienced teachers to join a new academy. We are looking to appoint a number of teachers across several departments.

- Business Teacher
- Media Teacher
- English Teacher
- Humanities Teacher

Start date: September 2018

Closing date: 22nd June 2018

The Harris Federation offers exceptional opportunities for personal and professional development.

Discover more at:
www.harriscareers.org.uk

Harris Academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check.



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Southway is on a campus that includes The Regis School (secondary); Arena Sports Centre; Stepping Stones Nursery; The Phoenix Youth Centre and the West Sussex Adult Education Service (Aspire). Good collaborative working between these groups already exists to serve local people and is developing fast. Southway's Principal would have the opportunity to contribute to that cooperative growth.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the school by contacting Caroline Smith on 01243 810202, who will arrange for you to meet with Diane Willson, the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

To apply please go to
<http://www.unitedlearningcareers.org.uk/vacancies>

For more information about United Learning click here
<http://www.unitedlearningcareers.org.uk/leadership>

Closing date: 22 June 2018, Midnight.

Shortlisting date: w/c 25 June 2018.

Interviews will be over two days, 12 and 13 July 2018.



Where teaching is better shared

United Learning comprises: UCST (Registered in England No: 2780748. Charity No. 1016538) and ULT (Registered in England No. 4439859. An Exempt Charity). Companies limited by guarantee. VAT number 834 8515 12. Registered address: United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB.

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Primary School

A journey of discovery, faith, friendship and learning

**Discovery Schools**
Academy Trust

HEADTEACHER

Kibworth Primary School

Salary: L20 – 25 (£62,863 - £71,053)

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The successful candidate will work with many of our school improvement experts such as subject lead professionals, executive Headteachers and other cluster leaders to improve outcomes for children.

We would welcome applications from experienced Headteachers, aspiring leaders such as those who are currently in a Deputy headteacher or Head of School role.

Discovery Schools Academies Trust offers:

- A peer network of like-minded professionals
- Recognition that all schools are unique, with an approach that encourages local accountability and governance that is responsive to community needs
- A commitment to excellence in education, grounded in a shared moral purpose of ensuring high quality provision for all learners
- An established track record of high quality education and experience of leading rapid school improvement
- An employer committed to offering all staff high quality professional development opportunities
- Shared resources and expertise
- Effective business management systems, ensuring that our academies are able to focus on delivering inspirational teaching and learning



We would encourage potential applicants to arrange an appointment to discuss the role informally and visit our school. Please contact **Sam Adams**, to arrange a visit before the application deadline – sadams@dsatkibworth.org

For an application pack, please contact **Emma Perkins** – eperkins@discoveryschooltrust.org.uk or telephone **0116 2793462**

Closing Date for applications: 25th June 2018

Interviews will take place on: 4th & 5th July 2018

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up to £38,745

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The A Level Centre will offer a transformed student experience that will:

- Demonstrate exceptional levels of teaching and assessment so that students' progress and achieve at or above their targets
- Use cutting edge delivery to develop expert and autonomous learners;
- Use a range of technologies and resources to enhance learning;
- Be delivered by a team of specialist A Level staff who bring their subject to life through visiting practitioners, national and international competitions;
- Demonstrate a golden thread of skills development through all activities
- Involve the implementation of best practice in the sector.

Our team of A Level Specialists will deliver a high quality learning experience and exceptional outcomes for learners. They will inspire our students to engage, achieve and progress; whilst promoting the development of employability skills throughout the learning experience.

Our ambition is that during their time with us students will develop the skills, insight and independence that will consolidate their plans beyond university. We will be tasking ourselves with an aspirational level of skills development and wrap around support that will distinguish us from other A Level providers.

Closing Date: Midnight 11th June 2018

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£37,714 - £40,010

The Learning Technology Coach will promote innovation in the use of technology to enhance teaching, learning and research throughout the curriculum and provide staff training in Learning Technologies (LT). Support teaching staff to utilise new technologies and learning materials to enhance teaching, and the learning experience to secure consistently good and outstanding learning and progress.

You will be based at one of our main sites (Stourbridge, Matthew Boulton, James Watt or Sutton Coldfield) but may be required to travel to other College sites.

Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet) is a great institution, home to thousands of bright and enthusiastic students and many talented and experienced staff. We are passionate about providing the qualifications and training that local employers and communities need.

Our goal is to prepare all of our students for the world of work, both now and in years to come. Our facilities are world class: with many employers helping us to invest in the latest equipment so that our students gain the most up-to-date skills possible. This offers them an enhanced learning experience, one which better prepares them for their chosen employment and careers.

At BMet we are ambitious for our learners and the employers and economies we serve. Our staff and governors are committed to a relentless focus on quality and continuous improvement to further drive up standards and deliver even greater success.

Closing Date: Midnight 20th June 2018

To apply for these vacancies, please visit:
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SCHOOLS WEEK

We hope you've enjoyed
reading your new look
Schools Week.

Let us know what you think of this week's edition on twitter
(@schoolsweek) or email the editor Shane Mann,
shane.mann@lsect.com.

