

SCHOOLS WEEK

A digital newspaper determined to get past the bluster and explain the facts.

ACADEMY TRUST IN SIX-FIGURE
PAYOUT AFTER LEGAL BATTLE
WITH ... ANOTHER CHAIN!



P6

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My school leaders, academy members and loyal subjects. My inspectorate's priority is to deliver the best framework possible to judge schools while also reducing workload, ensuring schools in deprived areas get a better deal, and keeping parents happy. I pray you give your blessing to my wise reforms.

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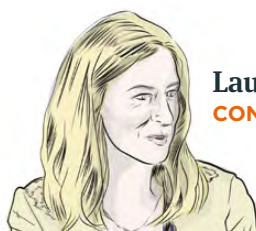
SCHOOLS WEEK

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Ofsted workers nabbed for Brexit planning

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

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EXCLUSIVE

Civil servants from Ofsted have been redeployed to help prepare for a no-deal Brexit, with more staff set to follow, *Schools Week* understand

It follows concerns that civil servants from the Department for Education could be transferred from as early as next week.

Schools Week understands the department has been looking at what schools will do if food supplies run low, and how food will be transported between sites if fuel runs low.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, addressed the impact of Brexit on the DfE at an accountability hearing before the education select committee on Wednesday, the day after parliament rejected the government's Brexit deal.

Hinds said the temporary shift of civil servants from the DfE was "the reality of no deal", but insisted that the department

had planned for "everything that is reasonably possible for us to plan for".

He told the committee that ensuring the government could collectively continue to deliver "truly mission critical" functions involved departments "like ours being asked who, if needed, we could release on a temporary basis to support other".

Schools Week understands the DfE is seen as a non-priority "no deal" department and is working with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and HM Revenue and Customs. They both need 1,300 civil servants, most of them on six-month loans from the DfE, in the event of no deal, it is understood.

Just three policy areas are said to have been protected – funding, safeguarding and teacher recruitment. The Brexit problems could also delay publication of the government's recruitment and



retention strategy.

Meanwhile, *Schools Week* understands Ofsted has already lost a small number of staff, but is set to lose more, depending on the outcome of Brexit negotiations. At present, inspectors are not expected to be involved.

It comes at a critical time for the inspectorate, which has just revealed proposals for its new inspection framework.

Ofsted is already struggling to maintain standards as funding falls. Its budget is expected to decrease by £22 million over four years, shrinking from £171 million in 2015-16 to £149 million in 2019-20.

In September, the parliamentary public accounts committee, which keeps government agencies in check, warned that cuts to Ofsted's budget have "undermined families' ability to make informed decisions about schools".

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

School Cuts website 'misleading', warns stats watchdog

The stats watchdog has rebuked the School Cuts website – run by a coalition of unions – for its use of "misleading" statistics that create a "worse picture" of school funding.

The UK Statistics Authority, in a letter published yesterday (Thursday), stated the website's claim that 91 per cent of schools are facing funding cuts gives a "misleading impression".

The site was used extensively by campaigners and opposition politicians during the last general election campaign. It allows individual schools to check how much they are said to lose in funding.

The rebuke also follows a series of interventions by the watchdog on the government's use of funding statistics.

The School Cuts website is supported by the National Education Union, the National Association of Head Teachers, the Association of School and College Leaders, Unison, Unite and GMB.

Sir David Norgrove, the UKSA chair, responding to a complaint from James

Cleverly, the deputy chairman of the Conservative Party, said there were "three main issues" with the website's figures.

The most significant factor was that the analysis "mixes reductions in school budgets that have already taken place and those projected to take place in the future".

Norgrove said some schools can expect future funding to help offset past reductions.

Secondly, the underlying calculations inflate the 2015-16 baseline funding to what it would have been with each school's 2015-16 per pupil funding, but using 2017-18 pupil numbers.

"This approach creates a worse picture where pupil numbers are increasing for a particular school," Norgrove added.

Finally, the calculation covers England only, whereas the website suggests it covers Wales too.

Norgrove acknowledged his team could only "replicate the high-level figures" on the School Cuts website as the exact figures and methodology were "not wholly clear".

But he ruled the statement "'91 per cent of schools face funding cuts' risks giving a misleading impression of future changes in school budgets".

However, in a joint statement, the unions stood by the claim, adding: "We are happy to clarify: the clear facts are 91 per cent of schools will experience real-terms cuts between 2015 and 2020."

They said the website makes clear that per-pupil funding has been cut, so "even those schools with rising pupil numbers will be required to do more with less".

As the data are not official statistics, the authors are under no formal obligation to comply with the code of practice for statistics. But the UKSA "encourages compliance with the high standards" of the code "wherever data are being used in public debate".

The DfE was caught out in October after claiming the UK's education expenditure was the third highest in the world after it emerged this included private school fees and university tuition loans.

Six-figure trust settlement angers union

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INVESTIGATES

A teaching union wants the government to investigate a possible waste of public funds after an academy trust paid a six-figure sum to settle a legal claim from another chain.

Newly published accounts for the Nova Education Trust, which runs 15 schools largely in Nottinghamshire, show another trust accused it of "breach of contract".

The trust, which has not been named, demanded Nova pay £623,000 in compensation. Although the accounts show Nova "was refuting the claim in its entirety", it later settled for £150,000.

It is not clear what the alleged contract breach related to. Nova refused to comment and the Department for Education declined to give further information.

Dr Mary Bousted (pictured), the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the Education and Skills Funding Agency had a "responsibility to step in".

"How can Nova simply refuse to answer questions about significant expenditure which has simply not been accounted for at a time when schools are desperately short of money?"

"That same sum could have paid for four experienced teachers."

The disclosure comes as trusts are being encouraged to work together and share resources, prompting sector leaders and experts to warn the cost to the public purse when relationships sour.



Antony Power, a partner at the law firm Michelmores, said it was rare for trusts to sue each other, but could increase "as academies become more commercial and contract more with other academies".

"The prospect of academies suing academies is very concerning. In most cases, this is public money we are talking about," he said.

"Legal action against other trusts should, in my opinion, be avoided in all but the most extreme of circumstances.

"Don't forget the mantra that every penny you spend on lawyers is money not being spent on children."

Nova, previously known as the Torch Academy Gateway Trust, was one of 78 trusts told to justify the pay of its chief executive by the ESFA in March. John Tomasevic, its chief executive, is paid between £260,001 and £270,000.

A report by the Forum Strategy, a group which represents 80 academy trusts, last year called for more trusts to share resources.

Michael Pain, its chief

executive, said the situation showed the importance of trusts setting up trading arms so they were kept "distinct from the core work" of education.

"It safeguards the core budget," he said. "You can take money out [to reinvest back into the trust], but I think it should be a separate entity. That's what charities do.

"There is a risk if trusts providing services fall below standard. There has to be accountability, but there is a risk that puts trusts and schools into financial difficulty."

Nova's accounts say the claim was "insufficiently clear" to allow a "more precise estimate of the financial effect of the claim (if any) to be made".

Nova has provided support to the Djanogly City Academy, run by Djanogly Learning Trust.

Until last year, Djanogly Learning Trust also sponsored the Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology (NUAST) alongside the University of Nottingham. NUAST joined Nova in April.

However, Djanogly and the University of Nottingham said they were not involved in any legal claim against Nova.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said any school in a similar situation "will weigh up matters very carefully and do its utmost to mitigate any costs".



FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

RSC's deputy to depart

EXCLUSIVE

A deputy to the interim national schools commissioner is to leave the civil service to head a teaching schools network.

The Surrey Teaching Schools Network – or STSN – has appointed Maria Dawes as its new chief executive.

She is currently deputy director to Dominic Herrington in his capacity as regional schools commissioner for the south east of England and south London.

She was one of a raft of deputy directors appointed to the RSC network in 2016. The roles were advertised with salaries of £95,000.

A former head of school effectiveness at Babcock Education, the school improvement consultants, Dawes will take on specific responsibility for STSN's "Universal Offer: For schools, by schools" programme. She will start her new job at the beginning of the summer term.

Ani Magill, the STSN chair, said: "We are very pleased to welcome Maria into her new role at a very exciting time for the Surrey schools' community.

"She brings with her a wealth of Surrey education sector knowledge and school improvement system leadership experience."

The Department for Education said Dawes's replacement would be named "in due course".

EXCLUSIVE



Trojan Horse case collapse leads to new 'witness charter'

JESS STAUFENBERG
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The Teaching Regulation Agency has drawn up a "witness charter" to protect teachers who give evidence in misconduct hearings.

The agency has produced "standards of care" for witnesses and beefed-up guidance for staff on how to engage and handle issues arising from such hearings, *Schools Week* can reveal.

It follows an independent internal review of its procedures around "complex cases" after the collapse of the Trojan Horse misconduct hearings in 2017. The review was ordered by the government.

Cases against five senior leaders accused of allowing undue Islamist influence in Birmingham schools were thrown out after the now-closed National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) failed to fully disclose witness statements that its cases were based on.

The cost of the hearings reached nearly £900,000.

During the case, the NCTL attempted to persuade the Department for Education to disclose the names of whistleblowers to the lawyers representing the five teachers. However, these attempts were dropped after an outcry from teacher unions.

Now the agency is working on a "witness charter" that will focus on the "standards of care for witnesses appearing before the TRA", *Schools Week* understands. It has also developed "clear" disclosure guidance, which will be published in the spring or summer.

Contract management has been strengthened and a new "learning package" will ensure all staff have "strengthened knowledge on the teacher misconduct unit".

The proposals are with unions for consultation.

Sarah Hewitt-Clarkson, the headteacher at Anderton Park primary in Birmingham, who gave evidence to the inquiry, said the new strengthened guidance was "not good enough". Anderton Park was not one of the Trojan Horse schools.

"These actions just look wishy-washy to me. Guidance doesn't mean much, it's like me writing on the back of a fag packet. They need to make sure this never happens again, and have legislation to back it."

The lack of a clear outcome was a "huge blow" to the profession, she said.

According to the NCTL accounts, the collapse of the Trojan Horse cases "posed a risk of challenge to teacher misconduct procedures, particularly around its disclosure obligations".

It followed an independent panel finding in May 2017 that the integrity of the process against the five leaders had been "called into disrepute" after witness statements from a government-commissioned inquiry into their schools had been withheld from the panel.

Lawyers for some of the witnesses said their identities should be protected, as agreed when disclosing evidence to the inquiry, but the five teachers' lawyers successfully argued their full statements should have been disclosed earlier. The witnesses' names were not disclosed.

Andrew Faux, a barrister who has represented teachers in hearings, said he "welcomed" the TRA's efforts to improve its procedures. "Disclosure failures were at the core of the frustrating outcome of the Trojan Horse cases and it is heartening those issues are being addressed," he said.

The Department for Education refused to release a copy of the TRA review to *Schools Week* under freedom of information, instead outlining four actions aimed at strengthening its procedures in regulatory cases.

Schools Week has asked for the decision to be reviewed.

Minister to remind trusts of careers duty

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Ten large academy trusts flouting the Baker clause will be sent letters from the skills minister to "remind them of their legal duty".

The announcement on Wednesday came just a day after Damian Hinds, the education secretary, said writing to schools wouldn't be "done lightly" and was a "rare thing to do".

Anne Milton, the skills minister, has been warning since August that the government would directly intervene if schools flouted rules, but the department said the letters were a "reminder" rather than an intervention.

The letters say the government will "take appropriate action" if there is further evidence schools are failing to provide their students with a full range of information.

The controversial clause requires schools to publish a policy statement online to show how they ensure education and training providers can access pupils to talk about technical education and apprenticeships.

This week Hinds used his appearance before the education select committee to insist he would not be "heavy-handed" on the clause.

He told the committee: "Ultimately, if there's total intransigence – and this isn't something we would do lightly – there's the option for the minister to write to the school to remind them of their duties to ensure compliance. But the intention of this is not that we're going to be getting into sending direction letters to schools, that's not the idea at all."

Asked by Ben Bradley, the MP for Mansfield, if the way to ensure compliance was a "strongly worded letter", Hinds said: "In this line of work that is quite a rare thing to do."

Schools must also publish details about their careers programmes, how the success of these programmes is measured and when the published information will be reviewed.

However, a report from the Institute for Public Policy Research last week found that two thirds of secondary school were failing to follow the rules.

A *Schools Week* investigation in September also found that the ten biggest multi-academy trusts in England had failed to comply fully with the requirements.

Ofsted | Seven-page special on the new framework

HOW INSPECTIONS WILL WORK FROM SEPTEMBER

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, has launched Ofsted's draft new inspection framework, which she claims will focus on the "substance and integrity" of education in England. The consultation runs until April 5. Here are the main proposed changes, due to start in September.

1 Inspections of 'good' schools will take two days



Short inspections of "good" schools are meant to confirm that it should keep its rating. That principle will not change, Ofsted says, but the timetable will.

The watchdog claims the two-day inspections will ensure there is opportunity for inspectors "to gather sufficient evidence while on inspection to confirm that a school remains good under the new criteria".

As they do at present, inspectors will still be able to upgrade to a full inspection if they feel a "good" school has got better or worse.

2 'On-site prep' plan means Ofsted could arrive within 150 minutes



Ofsted intends to send its lead inspectors into schools the day BEFORE they're due to be inspected, to prepare for the visit in "collaboration" with school leaders.

In practice, this will mean that schools will receive a call from Ofsted no later than 10am, informing them of the inspection, and the lead inspector will arrive on site no earlier than 12.30pm the same day.

This time with senior leaders will then be used "to gain an overview of the school's recent performance and any changes since the last inspection". The lead inspector will leave no later than 5pm.

3 Behaviour and pupil development will be considered separately

The current personal development, behaviour and welfare judgment will be scrapped, and replaced with two separate judgments: behaviour and attitudes, and personal development.

It means that a school's efforts to maintain good behaviour and discipline and its efforts to support the development of its pupils will be considered separately.

The watchdog hopes this will "enhance the inspection focus on each [area] and enable clearer reporting on both".

Ofsted believes the behaviour and attitudes that learners of all ages bring to learning "is best evaluated and judged separately from the provision made to promote learners' wider personal development, character and resilience".



4 New 'quality of education' judgment



Ofsted wants the existing quality of teaching, learning and assessment judgment (which the watchdog has admitted is too focused on outcomes) to be replaced with an overall quality of education judgment.

This, Ofsted says, will "de-intensify the inspection focus on performance data and place more emphasis on the substance of education and what matters most to learners and practitioners".

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment will still be judged, but will be "viewed in the context of the provider's curriculum".

The new quality judgment will be built around a "working definition of the curriculum", which is set out in the draft framework.

5 Ofsted won't use internal performance data, but will ask about workload



Inspectors will no longer use internal pupil performance data because of its "limitations" and because it does not present an "accurate and valid representation of pupils' learning across the curriculum".

Instead, they will gather "direct evidence" on the quality of education, and hold "meaningful discussions" with leaders about the impact of their curriculum.

However, inspectors WILL ask schools to explain why they collect the data they do, what they draw from it and how it informs their curriculum and teaching.

Spielman believes this will reduce unnecessary workload for teachers and will dispel the myth that schools must "collect data for Ofsted".

6 Emergency private school inspections will lead to quicker follow-ups

Ofsted's "additional inspections" of private schools will be more likely to lead to a standard inspection.

On the back of such inspections, Ofsted has pledged to "recognise and acknowledge sooner" where schools have improved or declined, meaning the watchdog will be more likely to bring forward the date for a standard inspection.

The specialist curriculum of a private school – for example any faith-based teaching – will be taken into account during routine inspections, but only if a "substantial" number of required areas are delivered through that curriculum, or if there isn't enough evidence that they are being delivered at all.



Ofsted

SCHOOLS WEEK
ON LOCATION

'I've done the best I can with what I have'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Ofsted's new inspection framework represents the "very best of what is possible", says Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, while admitting that funding constraints forced her to compromise on some of her wishes.

Launching a consultation on her draft new inspection framework on Wednesday, Spielman promised a "fair, reliable and valid" approach to inspection, with a focus on the "substance and integrity" of education

Alongside administrative changes to inspections and an increased focus on curriculum over pupil outcomes, the new framework will step up Ofsted's work to clamp down on illegal off-rolling and will seek to reduce the impact of inspections on teacher workload.

But the framework isn't perhaps everything that Spielman wanted it to be.

"I can get on and do the very best with what I have, or I can rail about what I haven't got," she told journalists on Wednesday. "Much better to get on and make the best with what I have."

Her admission follows an at-best muted response from school leaders, while unions have warned the new framework will not reduce stress or improve the reliability of inspections.

Heads have also questioned how Ofsted will honour its pledge not to "raise the bar", ensuring that roughly the same proportion of schools end up in each rating category.

It ruled out quotas and instead will seek to maintain the status quo through training and several pilots in schools before full roll-out in September, Schools Week understands.

It is hoped that this process, coupled with live quality assurance, will allow the inspectorate to keep the bar at the same level as now.

From September, the length of so-called "short inspections" of "good" schools will increase to two days. This follows warnings last year from the parliamentary public accounts committee that inspectors don't have enough time to make a "meaningful assessment" of performance in a one-day visit.

Meg Hillier, the committee's chair, told Schools Week she welcomed the move to increase the length of the inspections, but raised questions



about the watchdog's ability to staff them, given its current financial position.

"This has the potential to be a better system, but the question remains that without resources to do it, will they not end up spreading themselves even more thinly?"

Sean Harford, Ofsted's national director of education, confirmed this week that because the framework was "cost-neutral", Ofsted's most senior inspectors – Her Majesty's Inspectors – will have to be redeployed.

"Currently they carry out a lot of what we call quality assurance work, the complaints work that we do in and around their inspection work.

"By deploying that more smartly and thinking about how we do that quality assurance work, we can get the HMI specifically and some [other inspectors] in front of providers having the kind of conversations that we know providers actually value."

The proposals suggest that lead inspectors spend an afternoon at schools on the day before their inspections are due to begin.

Schools will be told of their impending visit by no later than 10am on the day before the inspection,

and the lead inspector will arrive no earlier than 12.30pm, staying until no later than 5pm.

Ofsted insists it will be "really clear" to school leaders that the extra time is for preparation and "collaboration" and said it was "really popular" during trials. But Nick Brook, the deputy general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said heads "won't buy it".

"Moving to a system with only a couple of hours' notice will send anxiety levels through the roof.

"Schools will absolutely not accept Ofsted's assurances that this is not the beginning of the inspection. They will see this as a move towards a no-notice regime."

Spielman sought to offer unions an olive branch on Wednesday, pledging to scrap the proposal if it caused problems.

"If [it] works, great. If, on the flipside, it creates more problems than it solves then I wouldn't pursue it. But it's a genuine effort to address something that a lot of people have flagged as being a concern."

She will be questioned by the public accounts committee about the framework on Wednesday next week.

Ofsted

SCHOOLS WEEK
ON LOCATION

EBacc target 'out of our hands', say heads

JESS STAUFENBERG

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Ofsted's decision to check schools are entering enough pupils for the EBacc suggests the inspectorate has a preferred "academic" curriculum and undermines school autonomy, say headteachers.

They also say the proposal is unfair as a shortage of modern foreign language teachers takes a school's ability to hit the government's target out of its hands.

Ofsted plans to introduce a new "quality of education" judgment that will allow inspectors to focus more on curriculum.

The draft schools inspection handbook says that "schools taking radically different approaches to the curriculum will be judged fairly".

However, it later says "at the heart of an effective key stage 4 curriculum is a strong academic core: the EBacc".

Inspectors will also check "what

schools are doing" to prepare to meet the government's national target that 90 per cent of pupils sit the EBacc "core" GCSEs by 2025.

Those preparations will be taken "into consideration" when evaluating a school's curriculum.

Ian Widdows, the founder of the National Association of Secondary Moderns, said the plan was "disappointing".

"Ofsted has made great moves to shift us away from accountability measures and place an emphasis on schools making their own decisions.

"But this looks like a step backwards from all that. This one-size-fits-all is very blinkered."

It comes as a survey by Teacher Tapp found that a third of teachers think an inspection isn't long enough to judge curriculum quality, and that only 4 per cent believe inspectors can judge a curriculum "well".

A study three years ago warned that 3,500 more languages teachers would be needed

to meet the EBacc goal, yet the government has repeatedly failed to hit teacher trainee targets.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "It is nonsensical to judge schools on factors that are clearly outside their control."

When judging quality of education, inspectors will assess the intent, implementation and impact of a school's curriculum.

They will check "curriculum leadership" shown by heads, including that the curriculum is "planned and sequenced" and equips pupils with "cultural knowledge".

Inspectors will look at how the curriculum is implemented and consider pupils' results, their work and their destinations, says the handbook.

Two years ago the government scrapped its target for 90 per cent target of pupils to be studying the EBacc by 2020, shifting it to 2025. Last summer only 38 per cent of pupils sat the EBacc.

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Audit culture will 'switch' to exercise books

Headteachers have dismissed Ofsted's claims that its new inspection framework will reduce workload, warning that a proposed shift from internal data to pupils' books will only create more problems.

The watchdog has proposed that inspectors no longer look at schools' internal assessment data, admitting that its collection can create extra work for teachers.

Instead they will look at "first-hand evidence" of learning, including "work in pupils' books and folders". The proposals "will not create unnecessary workload for teachers".

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, also backed the inspectorate's claim, which appears to be a clear softening in tone from August when he warned that overhauling the inspection framework could increase workload.

But Stephen Tierney, chair of Heads' Roundtable, said a move away from data

would simply "switch the audit culture" to exercise books.

"Pity the poor pupils and teachers who will be required to record every detail of a lesson."

Tierney also warned inspectors without expertise in a subject would now be "having a bit of a punt about what they see" in books.

Ofsted's proposed handbook also says that to be "outstanding", schools must "consistently go the extra mile" for the personal development of pupils.

But leaders must also ensure issues around workload are "consistently dealt with appropriately and quickly" to get the top grade.

The two requirements are "not necessarily compatible," Tierney said.

Hinds has previously admitted that "perceptions of what Ofsted wants" have unintentionally contributed to more workload – which he said was a key

issue that he wanted to tackle.

But he said this week "the fact this framework addresses this is a hugely positive step forward for all our schools".

Ros McMullen, executive principal of the Midlands Academies Trust, said a high-stakes inspection regime would "always negatively impact on workload".

"To announce they're going to be looking at the extent to which leaders are reducing workload is the greatest irony of all.

"It's symptomatic of the inherent contradiction in the whole process of inspection. It's bonkers."



Ofsted

SCHOOLS WEEK
ON LOCATION

Focus shifts to 'repeat' patterns of suspension

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Ofsted will look more closely at whether schools are "repeatedly" suspending or isolating the same pupils, under its new inspection framework.

A school found to be using suspensions or fixed-term exclusions "inappropriately" would only then be able to achieve a "requires improvement" grade at most.

But some teachers say schools need to be able to use internal exclusion such as isolation rooms or suspensions without being "afraid of being clobbered by inspectors".

A review of exclusions led by Ed Timpson, a former children's minister, was due to be published last year. It examined why certain groups of pupils were more likely to be excluded.

Ofsted's proposals say that inspectors will examine schools' use of fixed-term or internal exclusions.

They will then check whether there are



any "differences between groups of pupils" who are excluded, before considering "how well the school is recognising and acting to address any patterns that exist".

The effectiveness of suspensions and internal exclusions will also be checked.

Stuart Lock, the executive principal of the Advantage Schools Academy Trust, said he supported the framework, but added the proposal was "problematic because inspectors won't have the time to get into the reasons" for isolations and suspensions.

Governors and independent review panels already review exclusions "with all the evidence in front of them", he said.

Ofsted said it would recognise schools that made "tenacious" attempts to access

local services to help pupils, and those that developed "alternative strategies" to exclusions.

Adam Boxer, a science teacher at the Jewish Community Secondary School in north London, said all pupils must be supported properly, but if teachers had "tried everything" they "shouldn't be afraid they might get clobbered by inspectors" if they isolated or suspended pupils.

"If a school thinks a pupil needs a certain sanction, they need to be able to do that without thinking, 'that child is pupil premium'."

The proposals around fixed-term exclusions are part of the new "behaviour and attitudes" category, which belonged with "personal development" in the old framework. Now both stand as categories in their own right.

Ofsted has been accused of sending out mixed messages over exclusions. *Schools Week* also reported on Monday that the Magna Academy, in Poole, was rated as "outstanding" with inspectors praising its "relatively high" number of exclusions.

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

'You can't prove off-rolling without knocking on parents' doors'

Ofsted faces a dilemma over its efforts to clampdown on illegal "off-rolling", as officials weigh up how to check whether headteachers are telling the truth about children who disappear from their books.

As part of a beefed-up leadership and management judgment in the watchdog's new inspection framework, schools found to be off-rolling pupils are "likely to be judged to be inadequate".

From September, inspectors will investigate further if schools have high levels of pupil movement.

But *Schools Week* understands Ofsted is yet to decide exactly how far it will drill into concerns about the practice.

The inspectorate is considering asking schools to prove their pupil movement is legitimate. However, officials are also conscious that they must not turn "inspection into investigation", which would have "other

consequences".

Ofsted defines off-rolling as "the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil".

However, campaigners are worried that this definition will not help inspectors to identify the misuse of mechanisms that are technically lawful.

Dave Whitaker, the executive principal at Springwell Learning Community, which educates excluded pupils, said there was a "fine line between morally wrong and legally wrong".

"The problem is that schools are managing to change their cohorts without breaking the law.

"For example, if a school lost ten children

to elective home education in a school year, that school has technically done nothing wrong, but without knocking on the doors of the parents there's no way to tell. It's all going to be based on the school's word.

"I'm not criticising the intention of what they want to achieve, but how are they going to inspect that and get it right? I think they should look at cohort change and ask schools to justify why children have left between Years 7 and 11. They should be able to explain where they went, and why."

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, has also said that evidence of off-rolling at individual academies will help to inform any decision to look at the issue across the trust they belong to.

Spielman said inspectors would look out for "management tactics . . . where we can see a pattern across a chain of managing things in certain ways".

Ofsted: Headteachers' Roundtable responds



Headteachers' Roundtable

The Headteachers' Roundtable is a non-party political headteachers' group operating as a think-tank, exploring policy issues from a range of perspectives

STEPHEN TIERNEY

Chair, Headteachers' Roundtable

Inspectors need to move from evaluation to improvement

The focus on the curriculum is welcome (forgetting some of the specifics), but what is really needed is an overhaul of the whole process of inspection, says Stephen Tierney

The key to a national inspection system is that the judgments are reliable.

It shouldn't matter which team of inspectors goes into a school on which particular day; they should come up with the same simplistic grade – outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate – in an attempt to describe the richness of children's education.

Ofsted's proposal not to use a school's internal assessment data makes a lot of sense. It's disappointing, therefore, to see that the new framework says, "Work scrutiny is useful primarily for gathering evidence about the 'impact' of the quality of education." This will prove to be about as reliable as internal data. In reality, the inspector may well not have any expert knowledge and will basically be having a bit of a punt about what they see; the judgment might

as well be made on how neat the handwriting is.

Pity the poor pupils and teachers who are required to record every detail of a lesson to help evidence

place with staff at all levels and that issues are identified... in particular about workload." Again laudable and right, but not necessarily compatible; the absence of any mention of pupils or communities in the outstanding criteria for leadership and management struck me as a bit odd.

Ofsted continues its confused position over whether or not it has a preferred curriculum; it quite clearly does. "At the heart of an effective key stage 4 curriculum is a strong academic core: the EBacc." I've no problem with the first part of the sentence. However, the second part implies that the

Making a judgment on this is just about impossible.

What's missing is a view of elective home education. One solution: schools are held proportionately accountable for the time a pupil is on their roll.

This new framework contains the same substantial and significant flaws that are in the current and previous frameworks: an artificially precise, cliff-edged and high stakes grading system that lacks reliability; imprecise language and a very human set of inspectors with all the biases and flaws that make us all so wonderfully human.

Headteachers' Roundtable will respond to the consultation. My initial thoughts are: beyond a welcome focus on the curriculum – although some of the specifics are unacceptable – the process of inspection needs to be overhauled. We need it to move from a weak evaluative judgmental one, to focus on improvement first and foremost.

Grading should go; Ofsted's risk assessment process should be developed and the few schools that are stuck and struggling to improve benefit from a supportive, analytical and wise group of HMIs who accompany them on an improvement journey. Then we may see the education system move from good, stuck and increasingly fragile to one that is truly on the way to greatness.

“Work scrutiny? Inspectors will be having a punt about what they see

the sequential development of knowledge. The audit culture that drives the workload monster will switch from data to exercise books, as people feel the pressure to provide evidence of learning that occurred when an inspector was not present. That's 99 per cent of an academic year.

Schools are going to be required to "consistently go(es) the extra mile to promote the personal development of pupils so that they have access to a rich set of experiences" (very laudable and right), and leaders are required to "ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes

EBacc is the only definition of an academic curriculum rather than just an example of one. It opens up the potential for each successive HMCI to choose his or her preferred curriculum and impose it on the whole school system.

The inspectorate is rightly seeking to get to grips with off-rolling, which it defines as "primarily in the interests of the school rather than the best interests of the pupil". Permanent exclusions are often necessary and justified on the basis they are in the best interests of the school, accepting they may not be in the best interests of the child who is permanently excluded.

Ofsted: Headteachers' Roundtable responds



ROS
MCMULLEN

Executive principal,
Midland Academies Trust

The problem isn't the framework, it's judgment-based accountability

Ros McMullen gives 'a big thumbs-up' to the emphasis on curriculum – although, she says, she struggles with how inspectors will judge its impact

I have a confession – I really like Amanda Spielman, our HMCI, and I really like her intentions. I am also one of those who believe schools should be all about curriculum. I remember when I was an inner-city SENCO, seeing all the children queuing with their reports outside the head of years' offices and thinking to myself, "these aren't pastoral problems; these are curriculum problems".

When I was deputy head at a boys' secondary modern I worked to remove a curriculum that I dubbed as "hammering, nailing and failing" to one that enabled the pupils to have the same choice of destinations as their peers who had "passed for the grammar". And then in my various headship roles (always in challenging schools) I

have been very clear that we move away from "cuddle and muddle" into aspirational curriculum

“Those five little words will crucify any agenda to reduce workload

territory. So I should be delighted at this new emphasis on curriculum, shouldn't I?

Unfortunately each Ofsted framework has the same problem: because of the high stakes nature of the accountability system where what is seen as a poor Ofsted can finish a head's career, damage the financial sustainability of the school, further exacerbate the problem in recruiting staff, etc, etc, schools treat the framework as a school self-evaluation form and as an improvement plan. Just as in Brexit ("The problem isn't Theresa's deal; the problem is Brexit"), we

don't need to tinker about with frameworks, we need to rethink the whole nature of our judgment-based accountability system.

But, hey ho, that wasn't within the brief they were given and they have clearly had to do some truly unfortunate things such as EBacc. (Is there anyone other than Nick Gibb who believes putting 90 per cent of kids through EBacc is a sensible target? Or even that EBacc is "a thing"? I'll be generous, however, to the spirit of the new framework and give a big thumbs up to the emphasis on the curriculum intent and

delivery; although I am struggling a little with how they will judge curriculum impact.

Here's the thing: you build curriculum up over a coherent five-year journey and when schools have had poor quality in the past and are being "turned around" those first few cohort results are unlikely to demonstrate incredible impact (unless, of course, you have thrown everything at Year 11 to the detriment of getting curriculum and pedagogy excellent from Year 7 onwards). So I have looked particularly closely at how this curriculum impact will be

evaluated. Oh dear ... We have two main problems. First, the reliance on "nationally generated performance information about pupil progress and attainment". I have seen so many inspections where we have been told "everything you are doing is right, but it is too early to judge impact so everything is requires improvement". In rapidly improving schools this can lead to heads going and the whole improvement journey being undermined. Second, and this one is the real killer, "work scrutinies and documentary review". These five little words will crucify the agenda in many schools to reduce workload.

It seems to me that the story of frameworks is that after each one Ofsted has to correct the behaviour that the high-stakes nature of the system has drawn from that framework: preferred styles of teaching, triple marking etc. I'm willing to bet that within a short period the same will be true of this framework. It saddens me. The problem really wasn't the framework guys, and it is only too easy to predict the stifling and ridiculous processes and systems and additional workload this one will produce.

I would have liked them to look at the real problem and get rid of the high-stakes nature by removing the ridiculous four-point scale for judgments, because that is the real problem.

Ofsted: Headteachers' Roundtable responds



VIC
GODDARD

Principal,
Passmores Academy, Essex

It's a Wonderful Life (otherwise known as the new framework)

The vast knowledge of HMIs should support and improve schools rather than tell them what they already know, says Vic Goddard

Most of you will have seen the film *It's a Wonderful Life*, but a quick summary: we don't know the full impact of our own behaviour on others' lives – think ripples in a pond. When I heard that some of the decisions in the new framework are to counteract off-rolling and the spike in inappropriate permanent exclusions it made me think of that film.

The behaviours mentioned have developed into practice as a response to the current framework; whether that is through misconceptions or observing which schools are receiving the highest grades. The ripples created across the system by our accountability regime have real-life consequences on staff wellbeing, recruitment, workload and retention.

I know how hard Sean Harford, Ofsted's national director for education, has worked to try and

tackle the "misconceptions", but sadly they are still widespread and resistant to change. Harford, I am sure, would recognise the truth of this, even if he is clear that it has never been the intention. Also whether it was ever the intention of

“ Heads expecting ‘the call’ will not want to be too far away from school

our inspection regime to create the stress it does is less relevant than the outcome of it.

So what are some of the ripples that the new framework will cause?

1. A 150-minute notice period before the inspection team arrive on site to begin preparation

Heads expecting “the call” will not want to be too far away from school, which will have an impact on the shift to system leadership. It's ridiculous to say that the inspection hasn't started and they

are here to prepare. We all want to show the best of ourselves when being inspected and senior leaders give a huge amount of support to staff to enable them to do just that. This is under threat as the SLT will be tied up with the Ofsted team's “preparation”.

2. A more ‘holistic’ approach with the curriculum at the centre

The subjectivity of the current framework has always been an issue and the human factor isn't going away. This will become starker under the new one and lead to even more uncertainty and concern about which lead you get – a listener or one that has already made up his or her mind.

3. Separate behaviour judgment

For teachers in challenging areas it is vital that the judgment is on the work the school is doing to improve behaviour and not an expectation that all children will behave perfectly at all times or the school is not doing a good job. Guess what? Our young people do not always make the right choices and we have numerous systems in place to help them make better ones over time. Do the systems stop them from ever happening? No. Do they work over time? Mostly! Any disincentive

for working in challenging areas would be a disaster.

4. A much greater expectation of the EBacc being the core of “an academic curriculum”

The amount of stress caused by trying to find teachers is enormous. This will simply add to it. To expect schools to deliver a particular curriculum when teachers are being driven out of the profession by a variety of government-led decisions in many of those subjects is unreasonable. Who said that a particular suite of subjects is what constitutes the right curriculum for every child in the country? Tosh!

5. A decrease in the focus on data to show progress and an increase in the use of work scrutiny

I can see a head under pressure saying to his or her staff that minute detail of a child's learning journey must be evident in their books. I see another “everyone must record the learning objective” car crash on the horizon.

There are things that should have been in the new framework but aren't, such as the removal of the separate grades and a deliberate shift so that the vast knowledge of HMIs is used to support and improve schools rather than to tell them what they already know. Place-based teams are the way forward.

News

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Lord's chain ignores governance guidelines

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER
@SCHOOLSWEEK

A former academies minister's trust is failing to meet government guidelines over good governance – and has seemingly been allowed to expand without having to update its arrangements.

Newly published accounts for Future Academies, founded by Lord Nash, show a majority of the trust's members are also trustees.

One governance expert said this level of overlap was "not robust", and went against the department's recommendation for best practice.

The 2017 academies financial handbook – signed off by Nash who was academies minister at the time – advises trusts that most members should be independent of the board of trustees.

Of Future's four members, three are also trustees.

The 2017 handbook, which recommended trust boards have five members, says that if members also sit on the board of trustees this "may reduce the objectivity with which the members can exercise their powers".

Nash wrote a foreword for the handbook explaining how advice had been "strengthened" to emphasise how "having separation between those individuals who are members, trustees and employees promotes objectivity and reduces concentrations of power".

Emma Knights, chief executive of the National Governance Association, said there was "too much overlap" in Future's structures.

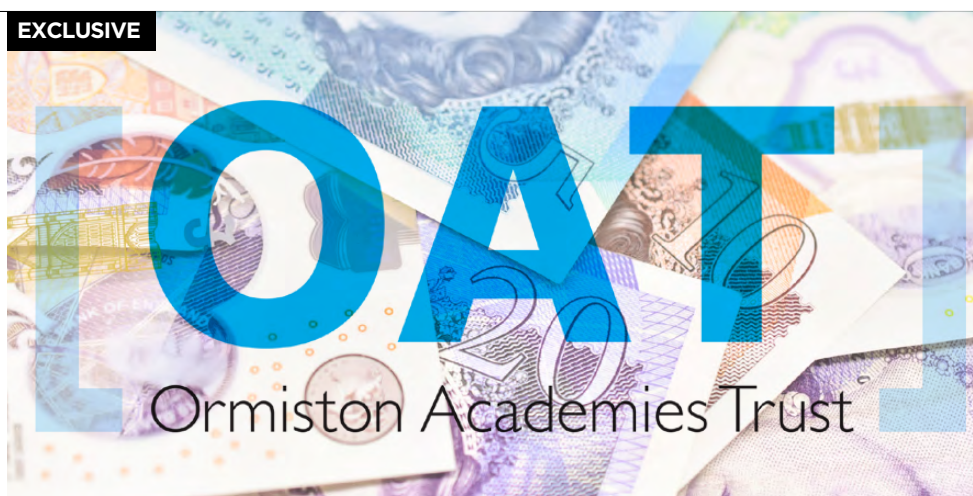
"The handbook is going in the right direction, and Nash oversaw some of that. But we need to be consistent about what makes for good governance."

While Future was founded before the government starting issuing such advice, regional school commissioners are forcing many trusts to update their governance arrangements before they are allowed to expand.

Future took over the Laureate Academy in Hemel Hempstead last year and is set to take over Barclay School in Stevenage next month – despite opposition from teachers and parents.

The trust did not respond to a request for comment. However a Department for Education spokesperson said it was now "working closely with the trust to make sure their governance arrangements meet the department's guidance".

EXCLUSIVE



Ormiston gets another cash boost

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

One of the country's largest multi-academy trusts was lent more than £1 million by the government to help "cash flow management" last year, the second such settlement it has negotiated to takeover struggling schools.

Ormiston Academies Trust, which runs 37 schools across England, received an extra £1.1 million from the Education Skills Funding Agency last year to take on two schools built under private finance initiatives.

The interest-free loan, one of two the trust has received in recent years, does not have to be paid back for nine years.

Some interest-free loans paid to trusts are accompanied by a financial notice to improve that is made public.

However Ormiston said the loans were not to help with financial problems.

Phil Reynolds, a senior manager at education accountants Kreston Reeves, said that as there was no indication that Ormiston's financial trouble was caused by "poor performance, governance or management", it was not unusual that it had not received a financial notice to improve.

A report by auditors last year warned there seemed to be a "pool of money" available to certain trusts because of their "powers of persuasion".

But Reynolds said it was the "right thing" to notify the ESFA if a trust was struggling with its cashflow or falling pupil numbers.

"I'd imagine there has been some discussion going on. There would have to have been as the ESFA don't just give large sums of cash out," he said.

"I see it as a positive story, that you can get the ESFA to work with you."

Ormiston's 2017-18 accounts, published

earlier this month, state that the "financial environment ... continued to be challenging", with all academies identifying "economies and efficiencies wherever possible".

A spokesperson for Ormiston said the latest loan was to "support the conversions" of two academies, built using PFI contracts.

She said the trust would not have been able to take on the Ormiston Meridian Academy, near Stoke-on-Trent, in September 2017 without a loan from the ESFA because of the school's precarious "financial position".

Wodensborough Ormiston Academy, in the West Midlands, joined in 2013 when its pupil roll was "well below capacity". Although it was now oversubscribed, the trust approached the ESFA for a short-term loan as it "takes several years for those student numbers to feed through into funding".

But accounts show the trust has had another interest-free loan from the ESFA. It has four years to pay back a £320,000 loan to help with low numbers at the Endeavour Academy.

They also show that the pay of Nick Hudson, its chief executive, rose to £184,000, up from a £160,000 to £170,000 bracket in 2016-17.

Ormiston's spokesperson said it was an "extremely well-run trust" and the loans would be repaid "over the agreed periods".

It is not the only trust to receive such loans.

For example, in 2016-17 Delta Education Trust received a £480,000 government advance to its general annual grant as part of a "recovery plan".

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said "in the most serious cases, the ESFA may provide additional funding to protect the education of children.

"Academy trusts are expected to repay any additional funding once they have reached a stable financial position."

News

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One in three trusts tackles pay after DfE warning

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

More than a third of academy trusts targeted by the government about their chief executive pay have chosen to review their policies or to commit to future salary cuts.

Of the 213 trusts that received letters asking for justification of top level pay, 131 said they followed a "robust evidence-based process" for setting executive salaries.

However, 11 have since said they will reduce salaries in the future, and two have made "an immediate significant reduction in salaries following negotiations" with the government.

Forty-three have committed to reviewing their pay policies and processes "to ensure that levels of pay accurately reflect the level of educational and financial challenge faced by the trust, and the responsibilities of the individual being paid".

Fifty-two trusts have also been "taken out of scope" of the clampdown, either because they have already reduced executive salaries

or because they have closed.

Some are included in the above figures twice, but it means at least 82 of the 213 trusts (38 per cent) have taken or have pledged to take action.

The new figures emerged from the Department for Education's supplementary response to the public accounts committee, published on Monday, as part of its academies accounts inquiry. The trusts were not named.

Some in the sector suggest the letters have had little action – pointing to the two trusts that have actually reduced pay on the back of the intervention.

Michael Pain (pictured), the chief executive of Forum Strategy, which represents a group of 80 multi-academy trusts, said the issues around executive pay "stem from a general lack of guidance and training for trustees that goes right back to the inception of the first trusts.

"A lack of investment in trustees' professional development has only recently

been properly recognised as an issue by government, yet trustees are the frontline of accountability and scrutiny in the MAT system," he said.

A government clampdown on academy executive pay began in 2017, with ministers and school funding chiefs writing a series of letters to single and multi-academy trusts.

Pain added where chief executives were "performing consistently well" they should be "rewarded in a way that has parity" with senior executives in comparable roles outside education.

However, some bosses are now turning down pay rises. Newly published annual accounts for the top-performing Outwood Grange Academies Trust show that its boss, Martyn Oliver, "voluntarily rejected" a rise for the second-year running.

The trust also lowered the upper limit of the salaries earned by Oliver and his chief executive principal for secondary schools, with Oliver's upper limit dropping by £32,000.



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DfE consults on £830m pension cost changes

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The government has launched a consultation this week on plans to provide extra funding to cover an estimated £830 million rise in pension contributions for state schools.

But the funding only covers the state sector – private schools face having to foot the bill for their £110 million increase.

Schools' contributions to staff pensions are set to rise in September from the current 16.48 per cent to 23.6 per cent.

The Department for Education (DfE) has launched its promised consultation on plans to fully fund the increase, which it estimates will cost £1.1 billion across the sector.

The pledge to state schools will cover 2019-20, after which funding will rely on the government's spending review.

Non-maintained and independent special schools, local authority centrally employed teachers and music education hubs will be funded.

Although the government doesn't plan to cover the rise for private schools, the consultation "recognises these costs will also place a pressure" on the sector and invites responses to "understand the effect these changes will impose".



Private school leaders have previously said some institutions were now looking at hiking fees or leaving the teachers pension scheme (TPS), with others may be forced to close.

Julie Robinson, the general secretary of the Independent Schools Council, said the unfunded rise would damage the sector. "An increase on this scale would make the TPS unaffordable for many schools, colleges and universities – regardless of sector – harming already strained budgets and ultimately diverting money away from the education of children and students."

The consultation, which also proposes that pension cost rises in higher education

are not funded, added that while it "values" these sectors and is "committed to seeing them thrive", schools and colleges were in "high levels of need for additional support".

Union leaders have said they are concerned that other budget pressures will stop the government fully funding the increase for state schools. They have asked for assurances the funding will extend beyond 2019-20.

A previous email sent from the government to headteachers said the biggest impact on the contribution rate was a change to the SCAPE discount rate, which is used to assess the current cost of future benefit payments.

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Academies official to preside over DfE's £63bn

A top government academies official has been appointed as the Department for Education's new director of funding.

Kate Josephs, director of national operations for academies and regional delivery, will start in the new role at the Education and Skills Funding Agency in April.

She will head a funding "centre of excellence" team. Plans for the new team and role, the first to preside over the DfE's £63 billion budget, were first revealed by Schools Week last week.

Josephs, a former Treasury official who also worked in delivery at Downing Street, will take charge of delivering the national funding formula for pre-16 schools and the post-16 funding agenda, including apprenticeships.

Eileen Milner, the chief executive of the ESFA, said Josephs would report to her as part of the

agency's executive team.

"She will lead and oversee the creation and operation of a single funding centre of excellence that is solely responsible for all schools, academies and post-16 funding," Milner said.

It would "bring together existing functions to deliver an excellent and expert funding service" and would be responsible for the "development, implementation and maintenance of an ever more efficient system across the agency with potential to grow and develop the scope of work undertaken still further".

However, there are "no current plans to recruit staff to this new function" and vacancies will be filled "through existing posts".

Josephs said she was "thrilled" to take on the role and create a "truly 21st-century funding system".

"Our job is to make it as straightforward as

possible for schools, trusts, colleges and work-based learning providers to engage with us and, while we do this, provide rigorous scrutiny and oversight to ensure that every £1 of public money spent is invested wisely."

Sir David Carter, the former national schools commissioner, said it was a "brilliant appointment". He described Josephs as the "most talented person" he had worked with at the department, who "understands schools and leadership as well as the current challenges schools are tackling".

Josephs takes up the post at a time of change for the ESFA. The delayed national funding formula for schools will not be rolled out until at least 2021, with the government facing increasing pressure from schools for more funding.

News

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No leniency on GCSE grades this year, says Ofqual

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Ofqual has warned school leaders to think carefully about which tier they enter pupils for in GCSEs – with last year's "exceptional" leniency on grade boundaries no longer on offer.

Sally Collier (pictured), Ofqual's chief regulator, has clarified arrangements for grading this summer's higher-tier GCSEs in combined science and modern foreign languages.

These exams were taken under the new specification for the first time last year when an allowance let some pupils receive the grade 3-3 on the higher-tier combined science paper.

This affected about a third of schools, but Ofqual says exam boards will not be allowed to award 3-3s this year.

The higher-tier combined science paper is supposed to only include the grades 4-4 through to 9-9, with a small proportion who "just miss" the lower grade now allowed a "safety net grade" of 4-3 and all others



receiving an "unclassified" result.

Collier also clarified that a "narrow safety net grade 3 for students who just miss a grade 4" in higher-tier modern foreign languages would be set at half a grade, and anyone who got lower marks would receive an "unclassified" result "as per our existing rules".

In July, Ofqual warned that pupils aiming for a grade 4 – a "standard" pass and the equivalent of the old C grade – should only be entered for foundation-tier papers.

In a series of three letters published on Tuesday, the chief regulator also warned schools against following advice from "third-party organisations", which she said had recommended pupils predicted to achieve a 4 in both subjects should be entered for the higher-tier exam.

She said such students would be "at risk" of missing out on two GCSE grades for combined science, or one GCSE for modern foreign languages.

Schools Week understands Collier's warning related to PiXL, an organisation that shares practice to raise attainment in its more than 2,000-member schools.

However PiXL told *Schools Week* that it did not offer any advice on tiers of entry.

Rachel Johnson, PiXL's head of strategy, said: "It is up to individual schools to decide which exam board, which courses and which tiers of entries they decide upon."

"Headteachers are skilled people who, with their heads of departments, make these decisions. PiXL does not tell schools which exam boards to follow, courses to do or tiers to enter. Schools should seek advice from exam boards or from Ofqual on such matters."

The regulator confirmed in August that it had dropped the pass threshold for GCSE science higher-tier exams to 3-3 after exam boards said "there were more students than expecting getting an unclassified result on higher-tier combined science".

Headteachers' Roundtable

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TV series kicked us into action, says head

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

EXCLUSIVE

A headteacher from the BBC series *School* says she's glad nothing was "glossed over" and credited the programme with having "galvanised" the school community.

Angela Browne is head of the Castle School in south Gloucestershire, one of three secondaries run by the Castle School Education Trust and filmed for the BBC show over a year of falling funding, over-stretched teachers and Ofsted visits.

Speaking to *Schools Week* at the Diverse Educators event in Oxfordshire on Saturday, Browne said she found parts of the documentary "obviously quite difficult to watch", but had wanted to "give a voice to what was happening in schools at this time".

"The thing mentioned most is how brave we were, how courageous we were or how honest we were," she said. "As though there would be something to gain from not being honest or being brave or courageous about what happens in schools."



Angela Browne

"I'm glad that it wasn't glossed over and things weren't hidden."

Browne said her school's small parent-teacher association, which had "petered out over time", was reformed into the "Friends of Castle School" after the series was aired in November, leading to "masses of fundraising" and a DIY event in which volunteers helped to paint, decorate and tidy. The group had raised more than £2,000 in the past few weeks alone.

"It's just galvanised people massively," she

said. "What has emerged is this real sense of pride and sense of community; a real sense that we're all on the same side."

The trust, which also runs four primary schools in Gloucestershire and has 5,000 pupils on its roll, warned in its 2016-17 accounts that it would "not be feasible" to rely on reserves to balance its in-year budgets beyond 2018, and that "further cost reductions will be necessary to achieve a sustainable budget position".

Last year, the trust made £1.8 million cuts across its seven schools, including cutting teacher pay and postponing building repairs.

But Browne believes that the sector needs more than money to improve.

"It's also about determining the 'why'. It's about determining what it is we want from an education system for children in this country.

"Once that's articulated, we can say 'let's cut our cloth accordingly, let's get behind that', and we will have to say what we can or can't do. At the moment we're trying to do all of it, and I don't think that's do-able."

CATH MURRAY | @CATHMURRAY_

AP SCHOOL OPENS WITH EIGHT PUPILS

The first alternative provision school to be run in the UK by a major charity that believes in personalising learning for each child will open next week – with eight pupils.

The Big Picture School, which is based on a philosophy of adapting the environment to each child, is due to open in Doncaster on Monday.

Jessica Hughes, an English teacher, told the IncludEd festival at Oasis Academy South Bank on Saturday that the school would create personalised timetables using a "wants, needs and avoids" principle.

"The concept of the Big Picture schools is that you wrap the school around the children," said Hughes, the former head of professional learning at School 21, a much-lauded progressive free school in east London. "When a flower doesn't bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows. You don't blame the flower."

The charity Big Picture Learning, which will run the school, was established in the mid-1990s in the US, and now operates in 12 countries.

"This school won't be like any other Big Picture school, because it's in Doncaster," said Jeffrey Boakye, its founding principal and a former head

of English at School 21. "It's very context-based. You won't find a Big Picture model per se, you'll find a Big Picture ethos."

The starting cohort of eight was selected through a referrals process developed with Doncaster Council, which has 454 pupils that met the eligibility criteria.

The independent school will double in size at various points during the year, up to its 60-pupil capacity, and will be commissioned on a pupil-by-pupil basis by the local authority.

Rather than investing in a "raft of subject specialists", its focus will be on staff who can form a "mentor-coach relationship" with students, Boakye said. "The personalised approach doesn't make it any more expensive. It's a case of what you choose to invest in."

In terms of capital investment, the school will receive £6.4 million over six years, of which £1.7 million is from the government, £750,000 from the social firm Big Issue Invest who will take a "percentage return" after six years, and about £4.5 million from the local authority.

The 11-16 school will set up internships and work placements for students, and hopes to develop

Jessica Hughes leading a workshop at the IncludEd conference



supportive relationships to help them when they leave school.

"Sixteen is a very artificial time to be thinking about an end point," Boakye said. "There's a longer-term relationship with families I'd like to develop."

The IncludEd festival was organised by The Difference, a charity that develops teachers' and school leaders' expertise in working with vulnerable children.

News

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Grammar schools still shun poorer pupils

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

The head of the school admissions watchdog says grammar schools are still not doing enough to ensure they enrol disadvantaged pupils.

The Office of the Schools Adjudicator's annual report, published on Thursday, also flagged how schools said funding concerns made them "reluctant" to take in pupils with special educational needs.

Shan Scott, the chief adjudicator, also highlighted council reports that schools were "coercing" parents to home educate, producing a "standard letter" to sign.

The report said the number of cases referred to the watchdog rose from 163 in 2016-17 to 198 in 2017-18.

But Scott used her report to highlight arrangements for vulnerable pupils, adding that "some of the children who can least afford to miss any part of their education are out of school for too long".

Just 260 local authority schools took



pupil premium into account when deciding admissions, the report said.

Of these, 150 were secondary schools, including 118 grammars that, when oversubscribed, often gave high priority to children eligible for pupil premium who met the required academic standard.

Scott raised "concern" that the proportion of children eligible for the pupil premium securing places at grammar schools "has not increased in the ways hoped for".

"A few grammar schools use the

premium, but as a low priority or even as a tie-breaker," she wrote. "I note that such limited use is unlikely to alter the intake of a school significantly."

In August, data collected by the anti-selection campaign group Comprehensive Future showed children eligible for the pupil premium secured 4.5 per cent of all grammar school places last year.

Twenty-two grammar schools failed to admit a pupil premium child in 2017, despite 28 per cent of children receiving the premium this year.

A number of local authorities said that some schools were reluctant to admit children with SEND, which Scott said was largely due to concerns about the resources needed to meet children's needs.

There has been a large rise in the number of pupils home-educated. The OSA said this was partly because some parents were "seeking to avoid a potential exclusion".

There were also reports of parents being "coerced" to electively home-educate, with schools "preparing a standard letter for parents to sign".



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Schools shut out from DfE music panel

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

INVESTIGATES

The government has come under fire for choosing just three serving school leaders for its 14-strong panel that will develop its new "model" music curriculum.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, announced the panel members on Friday, saying that they would develop a non-compulsory "sequenced and structured template" in music for key stages 1, 2 and 3. They include Julian Lloyd Webber (pictured), the cellist.

The government said the model curriculum should help to reduce workload and make it easier for teachers to plan lessons.

The number of pupils taking exams in music has fallen from 41,511 in 2012 (0.9 per cent of all entries), to 35,531 last summer (0.7 per cent). The move also comes as Ofsted proposes to up its focus on curriculum.

Emily Crowhurst, head of 4-18 music at School 21, a free school in Newham, east London, said a music curriculum developed mostly without teachers was "disempowering".

"There are already incredible music curriculums out there, developed as a result of a career's worth of conversation trying different things. It's not very empowering to find a panel of experts is doing it."

The panel (see list on right, with serving teachers highlighted in bold) was picked by Gibb and Vanessa Wadley, the panel chair. She is the co-founder of the London Music Fund and a former editor of London's Evening Standard.

Wadley is also a governor at the Yehudi Menuhin music school in Surrey. The Guardian reported last year that two pupils whose families earned more than £170,000 had been given financial help to pay the £43,000 annual boarding fees, using a government scheme aimed at helping youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds attend top music schools.

The government said its panel would provide schools with

a framework for their own programmes of study, "safe in the knowledge that it is backed by some of the most influential and expert figures in music education".

Tom Sherrington, a founding trustee of The National Baccalaureate, a broad curriculum framework for schools, said the move could help schools to decide what to include in a curriculum.

But Dr Anthony Anderson, a research assistant in music education at Birmingham City University, said he was concerned the panel would produce a traditionalist curriculum that focused on reading music with little emphasis on music-making.

Steven Berryman, the director of music at the independent City of London School for Girls, also warned that schools could feel they had to follow the model curriculum, even though it was not compulsory – especially given Ofsted's new focus.

But Gibb said he wanted to "make sure lessons are of the very highest quality and pupils leave school having experienced an excellent music education so those who wish to do so can take up opportunities to pursue musical careers".

He also announced a further £1.33 million for the Department for Education's music hubs programme. *Schools Week* reported in November that there was huge regional variations in the hubs; many commentators said they feared a "postcode lottery" of provision.

The new panel will start work immediately. It plans to publish the model curriculum online by the summer.

THE PANEL

- Veronica Wadley (chair), Former chairman of Arts Council, London, council member of the Royal College of Music, governor of the Yehudi Menuhin School and co-founder of the London Music Fund
- Carolyn Baxendale, Head of Bolton music service and lead for Greater Manchester music education hub
- Karen Brock, head of the Tower Hamlets arts and music education service
- Michael Elliott, chief executive, Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music
- Peter Garden, executive director performance and learning, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic
- **Naveed Idrees**, headteacher, Feversham primary academy, Bradford
- Julian Lloyd Webber, cellist, conductor and principal, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
- Professor Linda Merrick, principal, Royal Northern College of Music
- Paul Roberts, national council member, Arts Council England
- Ian Rowe, principal, Bromley Youth Music Trust
- James Thomas, head of Hackney Music Service
- **Simon Toyne**, executive director of music, David Ross Education Trust and president-elect, MMA, the National Association of Music Teaching Professionals
- **Ed Watkins**, director of music, West London Free School
- Bridget Whyte, chief executive, UK Association for Music Education – Music Mark



HIGH-QUALITY' PILOT COSTS £2.4M

"The government has suggested new "high-quality" curriculums for several subjects are in development.

A £2.4 million pilot in schools with knowledge-rich history, geography and science programmes is due to run this year.

The pilots, which were announced in July and form

part of a five-year £7.7 million "curriculum fund", will allow schools to find ways to deliver the national curriculum, tackle workload and develop resources.

Once the pilots have ended and results are analysed towards the end of this year, the government says it will decide whether to roll out the scheme to other subjects.

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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For Ofsted, the real test lies ahead

Despite the dark clouds of Brexit overhead threatening to rain on her parade, Amanda Spielman's moment in the spotlight came this week as she launched her plans to shake up inspection from this September.

But despite growing anticipation in the schools community that Spielman's evident pragmatism and collegiality would translate into a bold and radical inspection framework, aimed at ending Ofsted's troll-under-the-bridge role in education, what we actually saw was compromise, and underwhelming compromise at that.

Perhaps we should not be surprised that the scope of the new framework is limited. Like schools, Ofsted is an institution in dire need of more funding, and if the government isn't prepared to dig deep to support such an integral part of its education accountability system, then it's understandable that reform will be muted.

And we have no doubt that Spielman has been lobbying hard for the powers and finances she needs to meet her ambitions for

the schools community. But despite the warm words of education secretary Damian Hinds, it is quite clear that the chief inspector's calls have fallen on deaf ears.

However, Ofsted's greatest challenge with this framework is not its intentions, which most experienced school leaders say are well-meaning (if a little unambitious), but its implementation.

In this, the inspectorate faces a difficult task. It must persuade an already-cynical sector that it can adequately judge the curriculum of thousands of schools, whilst also meeting its pledge to tackle the evils of off-rolling and the distractions of unnecessary workload.

On these issues, the proposals in the framework don't really do that. As you'll see from our coverage this week - leaders have lots of concerns.

The true test of Spielman's leadership will now be in her work to flesh out the details and bring schools on-side in the remainder of what promises to be another difficult year for education.

SCHOOLS WEEK



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Profile

CATH MURRAY | @CATHMURRAY_

**“I’m in no doubt
I’m in this role
fundamentally
on merit”**



Clive Webster, chief executive, Kent Catholic Schools Partnership

Clive Webster has vivid memories of the day Muhammad Ali visited his family home in Harlesden, a north-west London neighbourhood that he describes as “Afro-Caribbean-Gaelic”, sometime in the mid-1970s.

He drops this into the conversation when I ask him the three people – dead or alive – he’d invite to dinner.

Ali would be there, he says, with two of the literary icons of the 20th century:

Philip Larkin and Linton Kwesi Johnson. But wouldn’t Ali feel out of place in the company of three poets (Webster published an anthology when he was younger)? “He’s actually been in my dining room,” he replies. “He’s stood in our hallway on our Bakelite black telephone and taken the poetic mickey out of my sister’s boyfriend.” Webster was 8 or 9.

We’re ensconced with tea and biscuits in an old country house just outside Maidstone now leased as office space to organisations such as the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership, which Webster heads.

Back to Ali. The heavyweight champion was in Wembley sorting out a fight. Webster’s oldest sister (he’s one of six) was hanging out with her boyfriend, who knew one of Ali’s entourage. The boxer was intrigued by the stories of her family and decided he wanted to meet them.

“He got on the phone, spoke to my mother, suggested that she put us all in a taxi and take us to Wembley. My mother, being the diminutive but very determined lady that she was, said ‘You must be joking, if you need to see us, you’ll have to come down to us.’ ”

Webster’s dad was on a carpentry job in

Profile: Clive Webster



Brighton, but his sister sprinted around the neighbourhood corralling the family. One brother, Philip, was at the youth club with his best friend, a kid called Cyrille Regis and a keen footballer like himself. In the family photo of Ali striking a fighting pose in the hallway with Philip, Regis – who would go on to play for West Bromwich Albion and England – is peeking out from behind the boxer.

Webster's mother was from Galway and his father migrated from Guyana as part of the Windrush generation. "Being a mixed couple in the 1950s and 60s, they lived through going to find rented accommodation and seeing the posters that said 'No Blacks, No Irish, No dogs'. My mother used to joke to my dad: 'Thank goodness, Bertie, you haven't got a dog!'"

He cites his parents' strong work ethic and high expectations as a huge driving force in the lives of all their children. His older brother was "the first from that whole community to even aspire to go to university – and to go there".

After his own undergraduate degree, Webster was accepted on to a four-year course to become an educational psychologist, which involved a PGCE year, two years of teaching and a year at the

University of Southampton.

He then zipped off to southern Spain to teach English for two years (he thought learning another language was important) before returning to the south of England to work his way up through various local authorities. By 1996 he was the country's youngest principal educational psychologist, in the London borough of Hillingdon.

"People are a little bit tired of the race debate"

After five years in senior posts at Surrey, he applied for the newly created role of director of children's services, in Southampton. "Post-Climbie and Baby P, the drive was to bring education and social care together under one umbrella. All local authorities were appointing their first directors of children's services as opposed to directors of education.

"Given my background and experience and dare I say it, by then, expertise, I was

successful in becoming the first director for Southampton, almost certainly the youngest, and definitely the only black director of children's services at that time."

He stayed for seven years, through a "very turbulent time" at the peak of austerity. "I became quite uncomfortable because you don't go to work to make redundancies. . . what you really get out of bed for is to protect children and make a difference to their educational outcomes."

As he talks about his new role in multi-academy trust leadership and "the idea of spearheading an organisation that is solely focused on turning some of the rhetoric of giving children the best chance in life into a reality", you wonder how many good people were lost from local authorities all over the country as a result.

Webster was the founding chief executive of the Kent Catholic Schools Trust five years ago, mandated "to turn it from an aspiration into a reality". The aspiration was to bring all 32 of Kent's Catholic schools under one umbrella. To date, five secondaries and 19 primaries are on board, with eight schools "yet to be persuaded".

Webster has always made sure he's "supremely well qualified. I've also taken bold steps to acquire the experience I need . . . I'm

Profile: Clive Webster

in no doubt I'm in this role fundamentally on merit, which is very important."

We're talking about diversity and, more specifically, black representation in education leadership, which is why Webster approached me. He'd been at the Ofsted annual report launch in December, and been disappointed by the whiteness not only of the panel, but also the audience. This is purely anecdotal, of course – a more objective measure is the proportion of black and minority ethnic headteachers in England (3 per cent, although 8 per cent of teachers are black).

"The fact that it's still very unusual to see a black headteacher or a black chief executive or a black director of children's services is sad and significant," Webster says.

"We haven't made progress at a number of levels. If we were getting things right further down the line, we should be seeing far more black representation coming through the middle and senior leadership of all manner of public services."

He finds the current trend for a broad focus on diversity somewhat unhelpful. "There's a sense in which the black element of black and minority achievement is being lost under what might seem a more palatable heading of diversity – which are issues that are really fundamental to how we operate as a cohesive society. But the extent to which it is still about how well black children are doing, or the extent to which you see black professionals, is lost."

So how many black and minority ethnic heads does he have in his trust?

"We don't! Leadership positions come up



Muhammad Ali and Philip Webster, with Cyril Regis in the background



every so often. You're always having to work incrementally, you can't run roughshod over the entitlement of everyone to every position. You can't positively discriminate in a way that would be unfair to others."

Mentoring, coaching, and role-modelling are "still very much remedial responses", he says, and recruitment strategies a "tactical operational response to a deep-seated issue that we're all grappling with".

So how can the more deep-seated issues,

which can lead to racist abuse, discrimination, or a lack of aspiration, be addressed?

"We're at a very important juncture in terms of race in this country. It's far more about having a race resolution than just a race debate. People are a little bit tired of the race debate."

Speaking out is one step. The next, he concedes, would be to look more closely at how his own trust could address the issues of creating aspiration in young black men and women, which is "a debate we're yet to have".

"It would be remiss of me in the relatively privileged position I've got, not to use that to say I and many others need to do far more, so that if you fast-forward 30 years we are not having another version of this debate."

CV

- 2013 – present** CEO, Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership
- 2005 – 2013** Director of children's services, Southampton City Council
- 2000 – 05** Assistant director for children and young people then assistant chief executive, Surrey County Council
- 1999** MBA, Kingston University
- 1996 – 2000** Principal educational psychologist, London borough of Hillingdon
- 1993 – 96** Senior educational psychologist, London borough of Wandsworth
- 1991 – 93** Educational psychologist, Essex County Council
- 1989 – 91** ESL teacher and head of English, The English Centre, Cadiz, Spain
- 1989** Masters in educational psychology, University of Southampton
- 1986 – 88** Teacher and SENCo, Sutherland Middle School (now Sinclair Primary), Hampshire County Council
- 1986** PGCE, La Sainte Union, Southampton
- 1985** 2:1 Joint honours in philosophy and psychology, University College, Cardiff
- 1967 – 80** St Joseph's Catholic Primary and Cardinal Hinsley Catholic Secondary (now Cardinal Newman Academy), Harlesden, north-west London

Opinion

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AMANDA SPIELMAN

Ofsted chief inspector

How Ofsted is trying to tackle the culture of teaching to the test

Inspection should capture the things that no data measure can, says Amanda Spielman. 'We need to look at how a school has achieved results, not just take them at face value'

I hope that most of you will have seen that we have now published a consultation on our new education inspection framework that we intend to bring in this September.

We are proposing a shift so that inspection looks harder at the real substance of education, at what children are really learning.

We know a data-heavy culture has led to perverse consequences, consequences that are actively detrimental to the substance of education. We've seen curricula being narrowed and a culture of teaching to the test sometimes trumping real learning. This, in turn, has had implications for workloads. I understand why these practices have emerged, and I acknowledge that we have played a part. But these are the things we are now trying to tackle.

It is clear that we have reached the limits of using data alone as a proxy

for educational quality. Inspection should capture the things that no data measure can, no matter how well constructed. We need to look at how a school has achieved results, not just take them at face value, and

“ There will be no Ofsted-approved curriculum

at the things that aren't and often can't be measured.

That is not to say that outcomes don't matter. They matter hugely to children who take them, and to their parents. That is why we will still look at external performance data to ensure that schools are setting children up to succeed in the next stage of their education or future careers. But we will look at that outcomes data in the context of what is being taught and how, through a focus on the substance.

Because it is only by emphasising substance that we can contribute to true standards. Real standards come from children being taught a rich and broad curriculum, and



the way that this is achieved is through a relentless focus on what is taught and how it is taught. Doing that will require some extra time in schools, which we will manage within our current budget. As before, we will be going into lessons and looking at students' work, but also having deeper discussions with curriculum and subject leaders, or

heads of department, talking about curriculum intention, coherence and sequencing as well as its translation into the classroom.

We have also taken pains to be clear that there will be no Ofsted-approved curriculum. There are a variety of approaches to the curriculum and we do not have a preference among them. Equally, we do not want to see schools turning to consultants, or jumping through hoops to start creating curricula from scratch unnecessarily: for many, the national curriculum provides the right baseline. At the same time, I know there are those who want to innovate and try new approaches. I certainly don't

want to stop those people, or those who want to innovate or participate in trials, such as those run by the Education Endowment Foundation.

And on the topic of research and evidence, the proposals we outlined this week are built on our collective experience from 26 years of inspections and sector research. When I became chief inspector I promised that everything I did would be evidence-led. That's why for the first time we have published a research commentary alongside the framework, which explains the evidence base for the proposals.

We've also done more development work, more testing, built in a programme of more than 200 inspections, and published more explanatory materials than for any other framework. That's why we're confident that this is the right time to introduce this framework. Any delay would be an unnecessary delay in improving children's education.

But to reiterate how I started. This is a genuine consultation. Ofsted is not the sole repository of wisdom here. That is why we want to hear what you think about the proposals, what you like about them and what you think could be improved. Ofsted is committed to being a force for improvement in education. I believe that this framework, and your response to it, will take us further in making that real than ever before.

Opinion

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ADAM
BODDISON

Chief executive, Nasen

Does the draft framework pass the inclusion test?

The beefed up focus on special needs and disabilities in Ofsted's draft inspection framework is welcome, but there's more they could do if they really want to incentivise schools to be inclusive, notes Adam Boddison

to directly compare their outcomes given their vastly different starting points and pathways.

There are several references to ensuring that learners with SEND are prepared for adulthood and

pupils' outcomes are improving as a result of the different or additional provision being made for them, including outcomes in communication and interaction, cognition and learning and physical health and development".

Whilst I welcome this broader notion of outcomes, I find myself puzzled that some, but not all, of the broad areas of need defined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 were included. Notably absent from this list is the area of social, emotional and mental health needs, which is odd given the meteoric rise in the number of learners being identified with these needs in our schools. Despite this, there were

“Ofsted could go further by providing examples of what would be considered as non-inclusive

employment, with statements such as “pupils with SEND must have the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life” and the school “consistently goes ‘the extra mile’ to promote the personal development of pupils, so that they have access to a rich set of experiences”.

There is also some progress in relation to setting out a much broader notion of outcomes beyond simply academic results. Paragraph 294 sets out that inspectors will consider “how well the learning and development of pupils with SEND are assessed, and whether

other references to learners being physically and mentally healthy within the wider document and the grade descriptors for personal development.

Paragraph 234 outlines Ofsted's expectations in relation to inclusion by describing some of the features of an inclusive culture in a school. This is welcome guidance, but could go further by providing examples of what would be considered as non-inclusive and unacceptable. For example, it is unacceptable to exclude children and young people with SEND before they even enrol by suggesting they would be better off in



a different school that could better meet their needs. This is a form of gaming the system, which Ofsted has also highlighted in the EIF.

Paragraph 43 states that Ofsted will “report on any failure to comply with statutory arrangements when they form part of the inspection framework and evaluation schedule”. It would be useful to be explicit here that this includes reporting on breaches in relation to the SEND Code of Practice 2015. Such a reference would be helpful in emphasising the importance of the Code of Practice and would provide a mechanism for ensuring compliance.

In summary, I welcome the significance and prominence of SEND and inclusion within the EIF and the draft school inspection handbook. However, if Ofsted really want to incentivise schools to be inclusive, they could include a fourth grade descriptor under the category of overall effectiveness: “the school is inclusive”. This would make inclusion a limiting factor, as is the case with safeguarding, and it would truly mean that no school could be graded outstanding unless it was also inclusive.

Opinion

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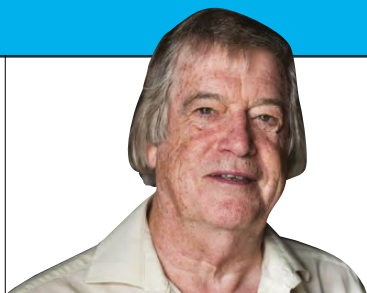
The expert panel set up to look at tablets and apps for children under five is all very worthy and traditional, says Tony Parkin. But it's a modern problem that needs a modern solution, such as crowd-sourcing classroom expertise

So the Department for Education has decided to set up an expert panel to identify high-quality educational tablet or smartphone applications, aimed at children in the early years. Hopefully this marks an end to the era of Goveian “we have had enough of experts” thinking that seems to have been prevalent at the department for the past decade.

You might think that I am uncharacteristically over-optimistic, but I would point to the new Centre for Excellence for Languages at York University, and the new funding directed towards sharing expertise in computing or, rather, computer science. OK, both are seen by education experts in those fields as inadequate responses, and not as good as what we had before, but at least they are moves in the right direction.

The really good news on the technology panel is that a key criterion for recruitment was “practitioner experience in early years teaching, with particular emphasis on use of technology with young children”. The experts need to be expert in learning in early years – and should include those wary of excessive screen time in children five and under. Education technology always needs to maintain a relentless focus on the first word of that phrase – the education is always more important than the technology!

It does seem odd that the initiative aims to inform the home market,



TONY PARKIN
Education technologist

Let's ask the real experts about apps for the early years

rather than schools. The expert panel will draw up quality assurance criteria, and then produce a list of “quality marked” apps. It will also draw up guidance for parents in how to maximise the effectiveness of their children's use of apps, and be asked to advise on the best means of promoting this guidance to reach as many parents as possible. So that's

to maximise learning and develop strategies to tailor the use of apps for maximum benefit. So here's a more modern solution: why not crowd-source this expertise to inform the expert panel? Why not use web technologies to create a reactive and dynamic resource that capitalises on this learning?

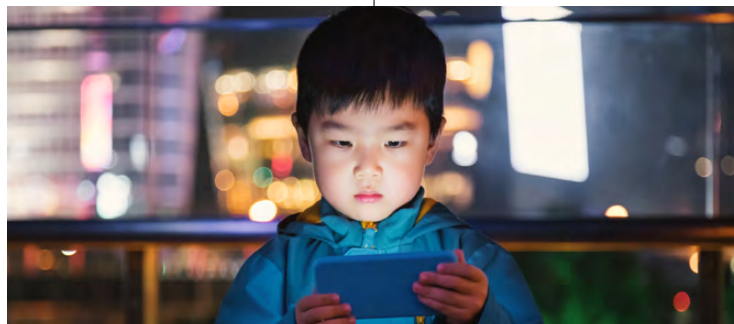
Teachers are always hard-pressed

“Naysayers may think that we've tried this before

quite an expectation of publishing and marketing expertise, alongside the pedagogy.

All very worthy, and very traditional. Meanwhile, all over the country, early years' teachers are spending their valuable time exploring and testing apps with their charges. Seeing what works and, more importantly, how

for time. Evaluating ed tech resources such as apps takes considerable time and effort. Each year, in the US, Jane Hart uses her digital learning survey to produce a league table of the top tools for learning, including for use in schools (see EDUI00 at <https://www.toptools4learning.com/home/>). This helps teachers to see what tools have



been found worthy of use by fellow educators, and can help them to decide which to explore next.

Still in the US, EdShelf, another one-person operation, offers a practitioner-curated discovery engine of websites, mobile apps, desktop programs and electronic products for teaching and learning. This has voting and feedback systems to allow practitioners to indicate the apps that they have found useful, and even gather collections of apps to address specific learning outcomes to share with peers, children and parents.

I am sure some naysayers are thinking “Hang on a minute, haven't we tried this before, isn't this reinventing Curriculum Online”? (If you weren't around then, you can get up to speed via the National Archives at <https://bit.ly/CurriculumOnlineArchive>). Well, no... that was a typically bureaucratic, top-down, government online initiative to support eLearning credits, with an unusable first version improved only after massive practitioner intervention.

What I am suggesting is a lightweight, practitioner-led, crowd-sourced, collaborative learning tool that would massively help to reduce teacher workload in the area of app discovery. Something like EdShelf, maybe under the management of the expert panel?

Although maybe I am being uncharacteristically over-optimistic in thinking that the DfE would ever put THAT much faith (or funding) in practitioner expertise?

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Sustaining Resilience for Leadership

Author Julia Steward

Reviewed by Mike Hartnell, headteacher, Warblington School, Hampshire

Published by John Catt

I began reading this book in the Christmas break, having just finished my first term as a headteacher. It helped to energise me and make me ready to lead again, come January. Workload and wellbeing are hot topics in education and Julia Steward uses recent research, with some (often amusing) anecdotes, to remind headteachers to look after themselves if they are to maintain their impact and energy.

Early on she describes the role as “being a little like having your first child” – you don’t get a manual and are expected to know what to do on day one.

Throughout she issues challenges such as: “Who are you when you are not being a headteacher?”, making you question your authenticity in your role and contemplate the energy used in “acting”. Contemplations on “what time are you most productive?” and “who drains your energy?” help you to carefully analyse yourself and your practice as a leader – and, more importantly, the impact it has on your ability to lead and the message it sends to those you are leading. At no point does any of her work feel patronising or judgmental.

Each of the book’s six key chapters offers practical advice and exercises to help you to reflect on your leadership, with a “worth remembering” section at the end. The humorous, brilliant illustrations by Karen McMillan really add to Steward’s work.

Chapter one discusses the reasons for looking and focusing on emotional resilience. Many of the tips on sleep,

exercise and health in chapter two are not new, although they serve as a timely reminder.

Chapter three explores “energy”. Steward writes of taking “a moment’s hesitation” when replying to that difficult email, to allow time to compose the considered response; knowing who your “drains” and “radiators” are so that you can interact with them

“
You are expected to know how to be a head from day one”

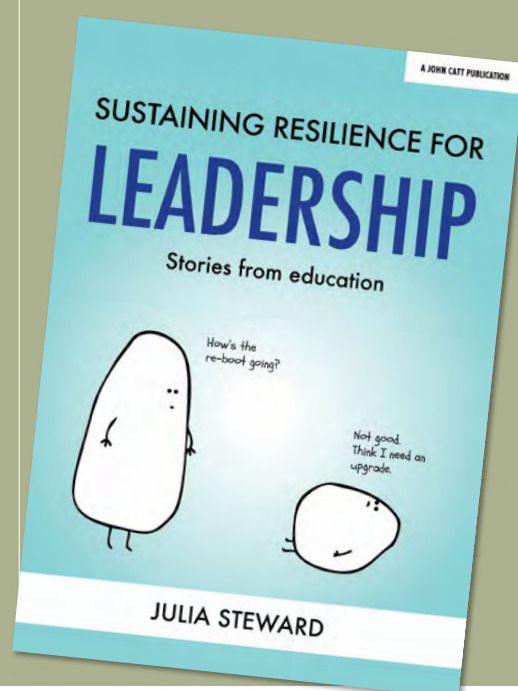
at appropriate times; and a really thought-provoking anecdote exploring compassion, in which a woman rethinks her attitude towards a father and his children who have noisily interrupted her thoughts.

Chapter four, titled “Agency”, discusses changing habits and how difficult that can be, particularly if you are a serial ruminator who struggles to find an off switch in those stressful moments.

I found chapter five of most interest. Here Steward explores core beliefs and values and the impact these have on behaviour. I particularly enjoyed looking at the drivers of behaviours, which build on work by Eric Berne, as it brought together a lot of the book’s other themes.

It made me reflect on my behaviour when I’m in control, but also when I’m outside my comfort zone and revert to my preferred traits. Steward’s anecdote regarding waiting for a conference call made me smile. This happens regularly throughout as you self-reflect and relate to her examples.

She says that “you owe it to yourself and to the organisation you lead, to take care of your health and wellbeing”. With that in mind, this book is definitely worth a read and worth keeping in your desk drawer for those “stand and stare” moments she describes. It is something that should be read and passed on by leadership teams around the country – I plan to pass it on to mine this term. Steward also includes suggestions for further reading. A great book and a good refresh for any senior leader.



Research

Every month Evidence Based Education trawl through their greatest research hits to offer practical implementation tips for using evidence in practice

Look for the story behind the statistics

C.J. Rauch is head of teaching and Learning, Evidence Based Education

Humans are not naturally good at understanding abstract statistics. As teachers, sure, we can easily understand the idea that 65 per cent of our students answered the hinge question correctly or that the average mark on an essay was a 72.4/100. But when we read reports on education interventions, it can be harder to get a grip on the meaning behind things such as correlation coefficients, p-values, and effect sizes.

Statisticians and researchers have tried to put qualitative labels on some of these quantitative measures. Take effect size, for example – a quantification of the extent to which an intervention had an impact. When Jacob Cohen proposed the Cohen's d test for effect size in the mid-20th century, he proposed a set of labels to suggest small, medium, or large effects.

It's a handy rule of thumb. If I were told that giving my students extra tutoring had "a medium effect" on increasing their scores, that would mean a lot more to me than "a Cohen's d of 0.58".

But is this helpful to educators? How could I decide whether an intervention is worth trying? Is something with a "small effect" worth the effort? Or is something with a "very large effect size" worth the time, energy and financial costs?

Matthew Kraft (2018) at Brown University has proposed five considerations to interpret effect sizes in education – a way to go beyond "medium" in favour of a more meaningful understanding. These questions are useful for examining any research, but are also a great way to unpack effect size. While he goes on to propose new bands of labels for Cohen's d levels (interesting for those with a keen interest in statistics), the guidelines are useful just in themselves.



1. An effect size is not necessarily a causal effect

It's easy to associate the word effect with thinking that something is causing another. But the mantra about correlation remains just as true: correlation does not mean causation. The effect sizes for correlational studies tend to be high, so don't be lured by this alone.

2. How an outcome is measured can impact effect size

Short-term, quick interventions tend to have higher effect sizes; the same is true of outcomes that are measured immediately after an intervention. This phenomenon will seem familiar to any teacher who has seen their students try to cram before an assessment – you may get an immediate bump in a score, but the long-term learning may be lacking...

3. Choices a researcher makes can impact effect size

Even the most empirical studies share a very human, subjective element: the researchers themselves. Selecting who constitutes the sample group, its size, the treatment the participants get, can all affect the findings. Is the intervention aimed at one particular group of students? Could the intervention "bleed" from the treatment group into the control group?

4. Cost is key

Research sometimes comes with a rough estimate of the costs and potential returns. A small impact with a small cost (monetary as well as time and effort) can be very worthwhile.

5. Scalability is key

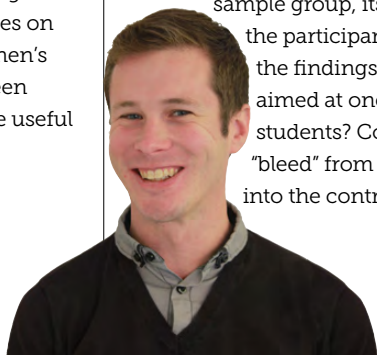
In education, smaller studies of heterogeneous groups are likely to find a larger effect size than when the intervention is applied at a larger scale. There are practical difficulties at reproducing many aspects of an intervention to a larger, different context.

It's essential to consider the context and the meaning behind the numbers reported with research. It can be tempting to see "large effect size" and rush to attempt to implement it – or to shy away from costly interventions with a small effect. Instead, as educators, we need to look at the story behind the statistics into something we can better naturally understand.

Gail M. Sullivan, & Richard Feinn. (2012). *Using Effect Size – or Why the P Value Is Not Enough*. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, 4(3), 279-282. doi:10.4300/jgme-d-12-00156.1

Hill, C. J., Bloom, H. S., Black, A. R., & Lipsey, M. W. (2008). *Empirical Benchmarks for Interpreting Effect Sizes in Research*. *Child Development Perspectives*, 2(3), 172-177. doi:doi:10.1111/j.1750-8606.2008.00061.x

Kraft, M.A. (2018). *Interpreting Effect Sizes of Education Interventions*. Brown University Working Paper.



Reviews



Julia Skinner is a retired headteacher, who is now a trustee and founder of the 100 Word Challenge

@TheHeadsOffice

It has been so good to see more governors starting to blog to share their opinions. More please!

I've been a (wild) governor for many a year

@ChrisChivers2

Chris Chivers will be known to many in education and on Twitter for his reflective approach, so it was great to read his take on governance. He uses the analogy of education being like an Airfix kit: "the bits have to go in the right place, with the right amount of glue, if the finished model is to look like the picture on the box", and explains how a governor is always one step removed – which allows for that reflection for which Chivers is known. He outlines the various aspects of the role, including visiting the school and the purpose of such visits.

The post was shared on a governors' Facebook group and, interestingly, the comments that followed were mainly about the picture that accompanied it. Strong opinions were shared on the fact that Chivers's specific role is detailed on his governor badge. Some commenters asked whether it was really necessary.

TOP BLOGS of the week



"The average person who takes on a school governor role is really being thrown into a massive deep dark cave and asked to map its insides using nothing but a lighter"

@miss_mcinerney

Asking good questions and having challenging conversations can provide fresh "blood" to leadership teams, says Laura McInerney, who recently became a school governor for the first time. Despite her extensive experience within education, she has found governance completely different and it is refreshing to see that she would recommend the role. There have been times when she has felt out of her comfort zone, although aspects such as data interrogation felt easier for her, while fellow governors struggled. It is interesting to read that the training she did was not particularly engaging: providers should take note. After all, they are training volunteers!

A view from the other side

@ballater6

It was so refreshing to be approached by a retired headteacher who wanted to share her experiences as a governor. Like many of us, she has found it time-consuming,

but rewarding. Having been on the senior leadership team side of this particular table, the dedication and efforts that governors make have been eye-opening. Although she says "governors are such an integral part of a successful school", it would be interesting to know if this is a change of opinion from her previous role.

Diary of a new governor

@Eduwarble

Another newbie blogger writing about governance, but this one has something different. Did you know that "young" governors are being recruited? The thirtysomething writer explains that this is a group that the National Governance Association is keen to get hold of. The post starts at the beginning of the process, from applying as well as selecting a school. Just like getting a job, not all schools suit all those who want to be governors. The writer clearly has thought about what she can bring to the role, as well as what she can learn – and there is a huge amount of learning going on. The point is made that if we want (and need) more governors in our schools, the process needs to be easier and more transparent, and appeal to all ages and cultures.

The governor's role from a non-governor perspective

@ChallenDr

This is a post with a twist. The author is not a governor, but has clearly had experience of governance within education, so writes from the viewpoint of a "service user". The blog starts with a definition of the role as "critical friend" and explores the possible tension that this could cause. I'm sure many headteachers would agree. Given the huge tasks facing education, the writer repeats the need for governors to understand their role and use it effectively.

CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +



Tory peer's academy trust seeks unpaid workers

... John Connor, comment

PA to the chief executive a volunteer? Really? This is such a bad idea. Privy to confidential information on aspects such as payroll, budgeting, exclusions, safeguarding, disciplinary proceedings, appointments. Why would anyone want that level of responsibility and not expect to be properly contracted and remunerated? They'll have pupils answering the phone next.

School budgets raided of £22m to replace scrapped ESG funding

... Tracy Doyle

It wasn't a "difficult decision" by the Department for Education – the deletion of ESG was part of the plan for all schools to be academies in MATs. That requirement was dropped, but the cut to ESG continued.

Academics accused of 'unconscious bias' against grammar schools

... Janet Downs

Three academics have criticised the HEPI report on the Bath university blog. They say it was incomplete, inaccurate and naive. No doubt Mansfield [report author] would say these academics suffer from unconscious bias.

School CPD spending plummets by £23m as funding pressures bite

... Tom Burkard

I have delivered a fair amount of CPD, so recognise that it can be of considerable assistance when schools are rolling out unfamiliar initiatives. However, most CPD provided by commercial sources is little more than a rehash of fashionable nostrums such as collaborative learning; all it does is waste the time of experienced teachers whose should be mentoring new staff. Even in-house CPD can be little more than an excuse for the senior leadership team to justify their salaries by presumably showing teachers what might impress the next Ofsted team.

How can schools lodge a complaint against an Ofsted judgment?

... @HarfordSean

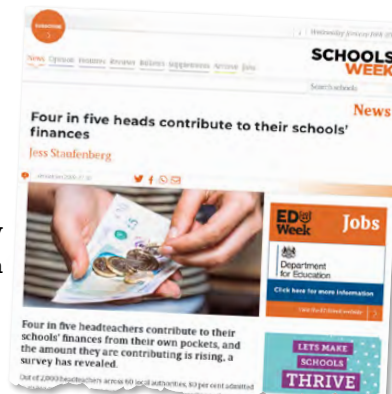
This is a fair article, although it stops at step 2 of our complaints process, which also has a third step, including consideration by a person external to Ofsted and unpaid by us, save for expenses. This step can also lead to a change of judgment.

REPLY OF THE WEEK John Viner

Four in five heads contribute to their schools' finances

I did almost 30 years as a primary head and saw some lean times as well as some that were better. However, as a governor I am filled with respect for the way that heads manage with a diminishing pot in the face of government cant that "we've never put so much money

into education". I don't recall a time in which we have been lied to so much and worked with so little. In my main role as a teacher trainer I am no longer surprised at the rapid increase in the numbers of new teachers leaving the profession within five years.



THE REPLY OF THE WEEK WINS A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG. CONTACT US AT NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK TO CLAIM

How can schools reduce teacher sickness?

@HoldHeadUpHigh

Not really a practical solution, given budgets and the constraints on term dates for community schools. Also, there are far too many variables about the teacher's diet, well-being, immune system and fitness levels.

OGAT and isolation rooms: what the data shows

@OGATrust

The number of "disadvantaged" students in our academies has risen by 4 per cent since sponsorship. That's 672 MORE disadvantaged students being educated in good/outstanding schools.

Some free schools were always 'bound to fail', admits former minister

@lechain

The @SchoolsWeek headline "Some free schools were always 'bound to fail', admits former minister" gives a different impression to what Lord Hill was actually getting at. Quelle surprise! Worth reading his actual contribution . . . very considered and insightful.

@Anfieldexile

I was in the Department for Education in 2011-12. Lord Hill told me that "the market" would prevail and that he wasn't too concerned about state schools going under as that's how it was in the independent sector. I demurred and advised that state education should not be a marketplace.

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

FRIDAY

Just when you thought politics couldn't get any weirder, we found out on Friday that Nick Gibb not only knows who the Arctic Monkeys are, but knows the name of their frontman.

The schools minister namechecked Alex Turner in a comment about the importance of music education (alongside Adele and violinist Nigel Kennedy).

Of course, it's entirely possible* the list was put together by slightly-more-pop-culture-savvy advisers, but we prefer the image of Nick bopping to *I Bet You Look Good On The Dancefloor* and quietly sobbing along to *Someone Like You*...

*definitely the case

MONDAY

He may be striving to improve the education of millions of pupils across the country, but Damian Hinds's geography could use some improvement.

The education secretary used a series of emojis in a tweet to inform his followers about more boring Brexit stuff.

However, he inadvertently used the Icelandic flag to illustrate the Norway option, prompting more comments ridiculing his mistake than actual retweets.

And, like a naughty pupil who has been caught out by their teacher for not listening, Hinds came up with a rubbish excuse.

"Oops. I plead deteriorating eyesight," he tweeted shortly afterwards.

WEDNESDAY

Kudos to skills minister Anne Milton (who is clearly an avid reader of WiW) for picking up on our top banter that Amanda Spielman is basically the Hermione of the education sector.

During a speech to the Sixth Form Colleges Association conference, Milton referred to the chief inspector of schools as Amanda Spellman, delighting education journalists and cartoonists alike.



Meanwhile, WiW has picked up a few concerns about the impartiality of Spielman's new curriculum focus in the proposed framework (knowledge, EBacc, etc).

While we're sure all the trades are pleased, it's been suggested there's nothing in the framework stopping a new government (yes, we're talking about you Mr Corbyn) suddenly deciding it would be peachy to see a curriculum full of 21st century skills.

But Spielman seems unfussed. She told us: "I think this framework is carefully and thoroughly grounded in the evidence base around education effectiveness precisely to make sure that it's not my take, what this particular chief inspector wants or what this particular minister wants."

"The whole point of Ofsted being independent is what it does is not about pursuing individual ministerial preferences. I've set out here to

establish something that will of course iterate as the education evidence base develops, but which I hope can be a living thing that can successively improve rather than need drastic change."

We'd also like to give a special WiW shout-out to education select committee chair Robert Halfon for brightening the Brexit gloom this week with some fabulous velvet blazer/jazzy ties combos during the accountability hearing today, and the SEND hearing on Tuesday.

THURSDAY

Education unions are the first to hurl criticism at the government when it gets one of its (semi-regular) letters from the UK Statistics Authority.

Mary Bousted, for example, rightly called the DfE's dodgy school funding data use "appalling".

But, what's this? We hear today the unions are seemingly up to the same tricks.

Following a complaint from James Cleverly, the deputy chair of the Conservative Party, the stats watchdog rebuked the School Cuts website, run by a coalition of six unions, for producing "misleading" figures. That included a claim emblazoned across the website that 91 per cent of schools face funding cuts.

The website is credited with changing hundreds of thousands of votes in the run-up to the 2017 election.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, reacted gleefully to the slapdown, and pointed to previous concerns raised by the government.

Bizarrely, the unions have dismissed the letter and stood by their figures.



Department
for Education



School Teachers' Review Body – Vacancy

The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) is an independent body which makes recommendations to the Government on the pay and conditions of school teachers in England.

The STRB assesses evidence from Government and organisations representing schools and the teacher workforce, and visits schools and local authorities to develop its understanding of issues facing teachers. In recent years, the STRB has been asked to report on a variety of matters, including establishing a stronger link between teachers' pay and performance, and providing greater flexibilities for governing bodies to produce individual pay policies for their schools.

Further information on the STRB is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/school-teachers-review-body

The STRB is now seeking to fill a vacancy, and is looking to recruit a member that demonstrates the following criteria:

Essential Criteria:

- Recent senior leadership experience within an educational setting, for example, a former headteacher.
- A detailed knowledge and understanding of workforce issues and operations within an educational setting, including recruiting, retaining and motivating an effective teacher workforce.
- An understanding of pay, remuneration, performance management and reward issues and an appreciation of the policy, financial and operational constraints that impact on remuneration decisions.
- The ability to analyse and interpret a large amount of complex and sensitive information, providing insight and a working knowledge over the impact of any potential decisions on the teacher workforce.
- An ability to communicate effectively in collective decision making, providing sound argument and assessing/debating conflicting opinions within a group to form a coherent set of recommendations.
- A sound understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities, public service values and principles of public life and the ability to act impartially and uphold the independence of the STRB.

Eligibility and disqualifications from appointment

Serving teachers and headteachers

Serving teachers or headteachers may apply but can only be appointed if they resign from their post. Serving civil servants may also apply but can only be appointed if they resign from their Civil Service post.

Consultant headteachers

The eligibility of consultant headteachers very much depends on the nature of their work. Advisory work as a consultant headteacher would not in itself disqualify a candidate, as long as the work is distinct from actually being a headteacher.

Most importantly, consultant headteachers work should not be able to be interpreted as benefiting from the decisions taken by the STRB or taking payment for providing an STRB perspective. All candidates must declare actual or potential conflicts of interest as part of their applications.

Appointment

This position will provide an influential and intellectually stimulating challenge for the right individual, who will contribute to the recruitment, retention and motivation of an effective teacher workforce. As a member of the STRB you will bring your own expertise, alongside a high degree of analytical ability, strong communication skills and, ideally, an appreciation of public sector reward issues.

The time commitment for this position is approximately 25 days per year, for which an attendance allowance of £300 per day is payable, along with reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence costs. This is a ministerial appointment and will initially be for up to three years.

The closing date for applications is 7 February 2019.

We value and promote diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity for all and appointments made on merit.

Please visit the public appointments website for full details of this vacancy and information on how to apply, available at:
[Home - Centre for Public Appointments](http://Home-Centre-for-Public-Appointments)

DO YOU WANT TO LEAD WITHIN SCIENCE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR STUDENTS?

Science Teacher

(added allowance on salary of £2,500)

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DO YOU WANT TO RETRAIN AS A SCIENCE TEACHER?

Calling all teachers, come and retrain as a Science teacher

(added allowance on salary of £2,000)

We are looking to build leaders of the future and this is attractive to those who feel the lid is on the jar of ambition and promotion. The Academy will invest in your 'retraining' for 2 academic years. Half-term 1 you will undertake training in science knowledge, health & safety, pedagogy and practice. Half-term 2 will see you in an Academy to gain experience in team teaching, leading to observed and mentored lessons. Half-term 3 & 4, a block placement on 75% teaching allocation and the same in half-term 5 & 6 in another placement for experience. Second year (1st year of Science teaching) will see a 80% teaching allocation with the retention continued (£2,000) and you will be offered a place on a relevant NPQ programme, either NPQML or NPQSL.



We are looking to build leaders of the future

The journey starts at **Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst** as part of the **Tudor Grange Academies Trust**. We have a designated Training and Research Centre and this will be the central base for developing Science teachers of the future.

How To Apply

Please contact Mr Darren Turner, Executive Principal, with an email detailing your interest in any of these tiers of ambitious science teaching strands by February half term 2019. dturner@solihull.tgacademy.org.uk



**Tudor Grange Academy
Kingshurst**

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before 24th January 2019.



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Should you require any additional information please contact **Carolyn Hobbs** on **01843 864941** or ask to speak to **Kate Greig**, the Executive Headteacher. Pre-application visits and/or discussion are welcome. To apply please complete the online application form and submit a covering letter.

**Applications should be submitted no later than
Monday 28th January.**



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If you have any questions, or would like to visit the academy, please contact **Katherine Anderson** on **01582 211 226** or academyrecruitment@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk



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RDFZ KING'S
COLLEGE SCHOOL



RDFZ King's College School Hangzhou is one of two new school development projects in China initiated through partnership between the highly successful Chinese education management group, Dipont Education, and the prestigious King's College School, Wimbledon. A third partner in Hangzhou is The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China (RDFZ), one of China's leading schools.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school opened in September 2018 with over 700 pupils enrolled. A remarkable starting number which is testimony to the quality of the project, its exciting vision and the support of partners, parents and the wider community. There will be significant further growth in student numbers for 2019/20 and the opening of new classes from early years to secondary grade levels. At capacity, the school will cater for more than 3,000 students.

The facilities at RDFZ King's College School are outstanding. We have successfully developed an educational environment that makes the most of our world-class campus and combines the best of Chinese and western approaches to learning and academic excellence, in a context of first-rate pastoral support and opportunities to excel outside the classroom.

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We are currently recruiting for:

- Teachers of Early Years (multiple grade levels)
- Teacher of Grade 2
- Teacher of Primary English
- Teacher of Mathematics (Middle and High School)
- Teacher of Early Years/Primary PE
- Head of Music
- Teacher of Music (whole school)
- Teacher of Early Years/Primary Art
- Teacher of Art (whole school)
- Teacher of Drama (Early Years/Primary)
- Teacher of Physics (High School)
- Teacher of Computing
- Head of Boys' Boarding

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salaries are excellent with a benefits package that includes: accommodation allowance, annual return airfare (employee and dependents), medical and accident cover (employee and dependents), bonus scheme and full tuition coverage for employees with school age children

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please send a CV to oliver.knapman@dipont.com and contact for further information. Interviews will be held in January at King's College School, Wimbledon for UK based applicants with online interviews arranged for candidates in other locations.

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