

SCHOOLS WEEK

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

The CEO starting a leadership network with a twist



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Head suspended for 'being honest' about work-shy teachers



P14

Forget delaying exams, bring them forward!



P10

DfE silent on whether £1bn catch-up is new cash



P8

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Will the government's back-to-school bubbles burst?



- Top trusts say DfE's full-year-group bubbles are workable for Sept
- Leaders look at 100-minute lessons and cordoning off buildings
- But transport is sticking point, with rising costs warning for parents

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"BTECS RECOGNISE THAT THERE'S DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE BUT NOT IN THEIR POTENTIAL."

Teanna Maguire Midwifery Undergraduate at Manchester University and former BTEC student

P Pearson | BTEC

SCHOOLS WEEK

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Investigation

Revealed: How year-group bubbles could work

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

EXCLUSIVE

Top academy bosses have suggested “bubbles” of full year groups may be the only way to get all secondary pupils back in the classroom next year – aligning with government plans being formulated.

One trust is exploring cordoning off sections of schools for each year-group bubble in a bid to reduce the risk of transmission while delivering classes as normal, while another suggested running 100-minute lessons.

Prime minister Boris Johnson announced on Tuesday that “primary and secondary education will recommence in September with full attendance”.

Education secretary Gavin Williamson said the government would be looking to expand in-school bubbles of 15 pupils to include whole classes.

While bubbles of 30 pupils might work in primary, sources told *Schools Week* the government is considering full-year-group bubbles in secondaries.

Hamid Patel, chief executive of Star Academies, and Sir Jon Coles, chief executive of United Learning, both said this could be workable.



Hamid Patel

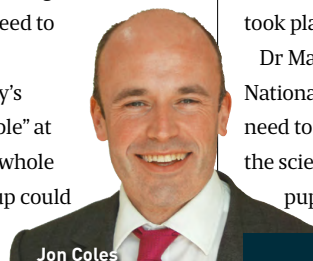


‘Complexity of options means year group bubbles required’

“The complexity of setting and options choices means secondary school bubbles should be based on year groups, with each bubble occupying classrooms in close proximity to each other to restrict pupils’ movement”, said Patel.

The influential trust boss said pupils could “move between rooms in their bubbles”, but would not move beyond their assigned area “unless there was a specific need to utilise another space”.

Coles – leader of the country’s largest trust – said a “big bubble” at key stage 4 and 5 for either a whole year group or half a year group could be installed.



Jon Coles

In this model, timetabling would be normal but that year group would be “kept separate from all others in school”.

Another option, he said, would be to go back to school as normal, but this was heavily dependent on “very low virus levels”.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said there needs to be reassurance and scientific evidence supporting the bubbles move, before it took place.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union (NEU), added schools need to see “a clearly thought-out plan outlining the scientific reasoning behind a return for all pupils” from the government in order to

Continued on next page

DfE ‘rewrote history’ on social distancing guidance

The Department for Education has denied it’s “rewriting history” after claiming schools have never had to keep pupils two metres apart.

In an email to schools this week, the department said primary schools do not need to keep children two metres apart from each other while in their “bubbles”, adding “this has been the cause throughout the outbreak”.

However, school leaders have criticised this as “rewriting history”. Current guidance for primary planning advises heads “if you can keep older children within those small

groups two metres away from each other, you should do so”.

Furthermore, a DfE blog published earlier this month also said “where schools can welcome more pupils back and maintain social distancing, we encourage them to do so”.

School governor Mike Cameron said the blog was an “attempt to rewrite history”.

He added: “The DfE obviously subscribe to Orwell’s oft quoted dictum ‘who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past’.”

The DfE denied the accusations, saying the

guidance has never been schools must follow the two-metre rule, but should if they can.

The blog was published as an attempt to clear up confusion about the wider reopening of schools being predicated on the two-metre social distancing rule being dropped.

But Paul Whiteman, general secretary of school leaders’ union the NAHT, said: “Given the lack of clarity and the conflicting messages contained within the protective measures guidance, it is disingenuous to suggest that the position has ever been as definitive as is now being claimed.”

Investigation

“prepare effectively”.

Government data published this week reveals the scale of potential problems.

The average secondary school class size increased again in 2019 to 22 pupils – while almost a million pupils are in classes of 31 or above.

Schools are also preparing for the full return to be thrown off course.

Dan Moynihan, chief executive of Harris Federation, said if health guidance “did not allow” bubbles, then options may have to be moved online.

Leora Cruddas, chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said such a system would require “strong curriculum alignment” in order to be successful.

Dr Joshua Moon, a research fellow at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) studying Covid-19 testing systems, also said schools should prepare for blended learning.

He said while the expanded bubbles “all makes sense,



Dan Moynihan

in theory, from a scientific perspective ... it just breaks down when the rubber hits the road when faced with the realities of secondary education”.

‘100-minute lessons, regular cleaning and staggered starts’

Barton also warned logistical issues such as the number of wash basins available for pupils and how they would travel between lessons would also need addressing.

All three CEOs suggested the use of staggered start times and break times to reduce the number of pupils in social areas at one time.

They also recommended when one group moves room, cleaning and “thorough disinfection” takes place before the next group occupies it.

Coles suggested the blocking of timetables would minimise movement around school – with three 100-minute lessons scheduled each day on a fortnightly rota.

Moynihan and Patel said movement of pupils could be reduced through staff travelling between bubbles

to teach different subjects.

“Although this is strictly not a bubble, it cannot work otherwise”, said Moynihan.

While Patel added staff “may need to wear masks as an additional precautionary measure”.

Public transport increase needs to be addressed

Moon also said a return for secondary pupils would likely lead to an increase in use of public transport.

Coles said to manage this it may be necessary to start school later, therefore “relieving pressure on peak public time transport”.

But even with one-metre social distancing, public transport can only run at 35 per cent its normal capacity, he warned.

Finally, schools may look to increase school bus services and encourage a greater parental role in “supporting travel to school” – but this will put a strain on finances.

Patel added local transport plans are required to “best ensure the wellbeing of pupils who travel to and from school on buses and trains”.

Suspected covid-19 outbreaks in schools nearly double

The number of suspected coronavirus outbreaks in schools almost doubled last week, new Public Health England figures show.

PHE’s weekly Covid-19 surveillance report, published yesterday, shows the number of “acute respiratory outbreaks” in schools rose from 24 to 44 – 16 more outbreaks than were recorded at hospitals.

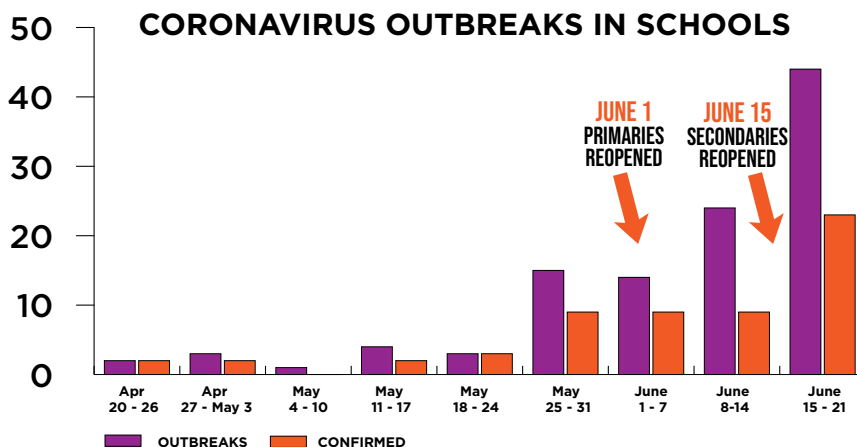
Last week, secondary schools started to welcome back some pupils in year 10 and 12. It was also the third week primary schools reopened to more pupils.

While the PHE report stated the rise “coincides with wider school reopening”, they pointed out it also follows an “expansion of testing and contact tracing”.

An outbreak is defined as two or more people experiencing a similar illness, which appears to be linked to a particular setting.

The 44 cases last week mark a sharp rise since schools reopened. In the week starting June 1, there were 14 acute respiratory outbreaks, then 24 in the following week.

Barring the week before schools opened, the number of suspected outbreaks did not rise above four.



PHE guidance states, as the winter season is left behind and infections like flu become “less prevalent, we would expect most outbreaks in community settings to be related to COVID-19”.

Of the 44 outbreaks recorded last week, 23 tested positive, up from 12 confirmed cases in the previous week.

Overall, the number of new acute respiratory outbreaks rose from 199 to 223. It means schools made up nearly 20 per cent of the outbreaks last week, compared to 12 per cent

in the previous week.

Dr Joshua Moon, a research fellow at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), previously told Schools Week: “I would be fairly confident the opening of schools has increased transmission within schools, but that is also what you would expect – the question is whether or not you can jump on that and get it under control.”

The Leicester Mercury reported earlier this week that five schools in the city had to close following confirmed coronavirus cases.

Social distancing on school buses comes at a price

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The national body representing Catholic schools is lobbying the government for help with school transport, warning that charges could rise by more than £20 a day.

Social distancing rules have forced school buses to reduce capacity, with some only able to carry a fifth of the usual number of pupils.

With the government expecting all pupils to return to school from September, transport presents a particular issue for schools with large catchment areas.

At St Francis Xavier, a joint Church of England and Roman Catholic secondary in Richmond, Yorkshire, at least 260 of its 540 pupils usually travel on the school's own coach service.

But their parents could face a hike in transport fees from £4.05 a day to £25.71, after the school was told it could only fit 14 pupils on to 70-seater buses.

"Even with this news [of a switch to one-metre distancing], they're still saying it's not going to make any difference," Stuart McGhee, the school's head, told Schools Week.

"If we suddenly became exclusive because it was only those who could afford this extortionate transport, that would just be wrong."

Current guidance states that pupils should walk or cycle to school "where possible", but that if they do need to go by bus, they should follow travel safety guidance that requires social distancing.

McGhee said social distancing rules for school transport should be relaxed or financial support introduced. He has written to Rishi Sunak, the chancellor, who is also the local MP, to ask for help on behalf of parents.

However, even with additional resources, McGhee admitted the school might struggle to get all pupils in because buses were "in short supply".

Kevin Duffy, the director of schools for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, said St Francis Xavier was not alone. It was an issue "for quite a few of our secondary schools".

The Catholic Education Service has intervened, calling on the government to "work with transport providers and local authorities to



St Francis Xavier secondary school

Andy Waddington, Creative Commons



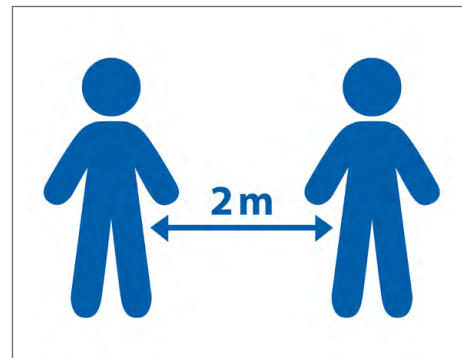
ensure practical measures are available to support the continuation of home-to-school transport".

Grammar schools and many rural secondaries also rely on bus services.

At five schools run by the King Edward VI Academy Trust in Birmingham, pupils are served by The Green Bus, a company that also provides transport for two grammar schools in Walsall.

Ian Mack, the managing director, told Schools Week a virologist had helped his company to work out that under the one-metre rule its double-decker buses would only be able to operate at about half of their current capacity.

"At the moment we're budgeting for 37 people travelling on our buses from September. We're probably going to cap our sales initially at that -



we sell annual bus passes - and then just see how we go with the virus."

But he warned that "plenty of community schools" depended on buses.

"Every school, even if it's relying on the standard bus network, has an issue with capacity from September if the normal bus operators can only get 15 people on board, which is where they are at the moment.

"The very sad outcome of all of this is probably going to be that parents, for one reason or another, end up driving in much greater numbers than they do now, either because there's no capacity on the bus service or because they've got safety concerns."

The DfE, Treasury and Sunak's office were approached for comment.

News

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Long-Bailey sacked after retweeting 'antisemitic conspiracy' article

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Shadow education secretary Rebecca Long-Bailey has been sacked for sharing a tweet that "contained an antisemitic conspiracy theory".

A spokesperson for Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer said yesterday Long-Bailey had been "asked to stand down".

Long-Bailey had shared an interview with actor Maxine Peake in the Independent, in which Peake claimed that "the tactics used by the police in America, kneeling on George Floyd's neck, that was learnt from seminars with Israeli secret services".

Long-Bailey insisted that her original tweet "wasn't intended to be an endorsement of all aspects of the article".

"I retweeted Maxine Peake's article because of her significant achievements and because the thrust of her argument is to stay in the Labour Party," she said.

But Starmer's spokesperson said the Labour leader "has been clear that restoring trust with the Jewish community is a number one priority".

"Antisemitism takes many different forms and it is important that we all are vigilant against it."

Long-Bailey was appointed in April after Starmer

won the Labour leadership election. She replaced Angela Rayner, who became the party's deputy leader.

Long-Bailey later tweeted she had tried to discuss the matter with Starmer but he had "already made his decision".

She added: "I am proud of the policies we have developed within the party from our Green Industrial Revolution to a National Education Service and I will never stop working for the change our communities need to see."

Long-Bailey had received a mixed response from the education community. She did not endear herself to academy leaders after telling Schools Week that all schools should be brought back under "local democratic control".

She also admitted in the April interview, her first since taking the role, that the lack of an "overarching message" from Labour on its flagship national education service was one of the reasons it lost the last general election.

Her tenure as shadow education secretary of just over two months is among one of the shortest.

However the title for the shortest reign belongs to Pat Glass, who resigned as education secretary after just two days in protest against then Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn.



Rebecca Long-Bailey

New reception assessment delayed

Schools will not have to set the new reception baseline assessment this autumn after the government delayed its statutory introduction.

The Department for Education announced yesterday the introduction had been put off until 2021 because of the "challenging circumstances ... in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic".

But schools can sign up to take part in the scheme next year as "early adopters".

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, said some schools "may not have had the time they need to familiarise their teachers and staff with the process".

But he said the government remained "committed to introducing the new

assessment" and schools could still sign up to the "early adopter year to familiarise themselves with the content and administration, with the reassurance that this year's data will not be used for accountability purposes".

The department had maintained for months that the new assessment for four and five-year-olds would go ahead.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, welcomed the "much needed clarity this provides for schools as they prepare for the autumn term".

But Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders,

called for government "undertake a review of key stage 2 tests due to be taken next May as a matter of urgency".

"There may be merit in allowing schools to run them for their own checks and to support children's transition to secondary education.

"But it would be wrong to use them for school performance tables after so much disruption and as schools focus on helping children catch up."

Plans for the new assessments were outlined in 2017, following a government consultation on primary testing.

The test is due to eventually replace key stage 1 SATs in providing the baseline on which pupil progress scores are based.

Where's the £1bn coming from, ask heads

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW INVESTIGATES

The Department for Education has refused to clarify whether the £1 billion "catch-up" premium is new cash.

Headteachers have questioned where the funding is coming from, following the department's announcement on Friday that the £55 million year 7 catch-up premium would be axed next year.

The department said funding would now come through the national funding formula from September, but apply to all pupils, not just those in year 7.

However, the department later clarified to *Schools Week* that only an extra £49 million is being provided next year – and that will come from the funding increase announced last year by Boris Johnson.

The government is also reluctant to confirm whether the PE and sports premium, worth £320 million a year, will continue.

The department said more information on details of the £1 billion package will be "provided shortly".

Andy Byers, head of Framwellgate School Durham, said: "Announcing a new package while taking another away means that 'new money' is not quite all 'new money'."

Department data shows that the year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up gave at least £55 million to schools this year

State-funded schools, including special schools and alternative provision settings, used the extra funding to support pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in reading or maths at the end of key stage 2.

The late-afternoon announcement on Friday that the fund would be discontinued was news to most

headteachers, despite the government claiming it had always intended to end the premium.

One head, who received £14,000 for each of his two schools, said it enabled him to employ two higher-level teaching assistants.

He also said schools had submitted their budgets for next year based on continued funding, leaving them having to find the cash from elsewhere.

The government's announcement on Friday said that schools

would get £650 million next year to spend on catch-up plans for pupils. Another £350 million would go to setting up a national tutoring programme.

Schools would have to use their £650 million to access the subsidised tutoring, with lessons said to cost about £12 a session.

But there are no details of how the cash will be handed out. It was reported this week the £650 million will be awarded on a flat per-pupil basis - schools with more disadvantaged pupils will get the same as schools in wealthier areas.

A DfE spokesperson said the £1 billion package would be "additional to the core schools budget paid out through the national funding formula, which is increasing by £2.6 billion next year".

The government is also stalling on whether the sports premium will continue.

Tracey Couch, a former sports minister, this week joined Baroness Nicky Morgan,



a former education secretary, in tabling a formal request for clarity on the cash, which ring-fences £16,000 for each primary school to invest in PE and physical activities.

Edward Timpson, a former children's minister, on Monday challenged the government to confirm that the "instrumental" funding would continue. It follows data from Sport England that one in three children have been less physically active during lockdown.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, said he wanted to ensure "all children get an active start in life and engage in daily physical activity". He would only say arrangements would be confirmed "as soon as possible".

But the news is already weeks late. The government confirmed continuation of the fund for 2019-20 in April last year.

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News

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Forget delays - heads want exams earlier

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

Some assessment in 2021 should be moved to earlier in the year rather than delay exams, a leadership union has said.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said he had asked the government to consider whether pupils could get some elements of assessment "under the belt" before the summer exams.

The idea had been received "pretty well by some of the awarding organisations".

Ministers are drawing up plans for exams in 2021 with the regulator Ofqual and exam boards as year 10 and 12 pupils face the impact of partial school closures.

Gavin Williamson, the education secretary, said earlier this week he would consult Ofqual about putting off exams until later in the summer. Other suggestions include open-book exams or reduced content.

The education secretary has ruled out a repeat of this year's centre-assessed grades.

But delaying exams would not be without its pitfalls.

Tom Richmond, the director of EDSK think-tank and a former government adviser, said it was "encouraging to see the department acknowledge the long-term consequences of this year's severe disruption for students in years 10 and



year 12", but said moving exams was "by no means an easy option".

"Selective sixth forms and colleges would face a serious problem if GCSE results are potentially not available by the beginning of September, while universities will no doubt push back on any attempts to delay the start of their academic year by several weeks," he told *Schools Week*.

Barton agreed delay was "not without risks", narrowing the "available window of time for those exams to take place".

"If you suddenly get a spike in the virus next year, you've got less room for manoeuvre than if you'd given yourself the

usual six weeks."

Exam markers are also concerned about the proposal.

Paula Goddard, a senior examiner and fellow of the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors, said a shorter period for marking would either increase the workload on markers, most of them teachers, or leave exam boards having to recruit.

"Straight away you're asking a pool of very tired, possibly still recovering people to do extra." But she said full-time or semi-retired markers "might be quite willing to take on extra work".

If exams became open-book, "that's going to be a whole different type of marking, one which very few people will have been used to. They will need extra training, extra time to get used to it, and there probably won't be that extra time."

Barton thinks the solution is to "recognise that children are over-examined at the end of a course, and that some of that assessment and some of that content could be assessed earlier in the course".

"So if everybody knew that the end of the first half term back was going to be some internal assessment set by the exam board, perhaps marked by the exam board, but getting that assessment under the belt of students so you are actually taking the pressure off at the end of the year. Would that not be a more sensible approach?"

Ofsted will check how schools spend £650m catch-up cash

Ofsted will check how schools are spending £650 million in extra funding to help pupils catch up on education missed as a result of Covid-19.

The government announced last Friday that schools will split the funding to aid pupils who have fallen behind as a result of the pandemic. It is part of a £1 billion package, which includes £350 million for a national tutoring programme.

Gavin Williamson, the education secretary, said on Monday that he would be asking Ofsted to look at "how this has been

implemented, and how children have been supported in their catch-up plans".

Asked for more detail about the move, a Department for Education spokesperson said schools were "held accountable for the outcomes they achieve with all their funding, including through Ofsted inspections, and this will be no exception".

But they added school leaders would be trusted "to decide how best to spend this money to meet the needs of their pupils".

Ofsted declined to comment, but *Schools Week* understands the assessment of

catch-up activities will form part of the watchdog's overall consideration of each school's curriculum choices and ambition.

Routine inspections of schools have been suspended since March. Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, has said they are unlikely to resume before the end of the summer term.

She told the parliamentary education committee in April that schools would not be judged "per se" on their coronavirus response, with inspections set to focus on the quality of education.

Schools to keep copyright of Oak's online lessons

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

EXCLUSIVE

Schools will own the copyright of lessons produced for Oak National Academy under its £4.3 million government-funded expansion next year.

Schools Week revealed on Monday that the online classroom and resource hub would be funded as part of the Department for Education's plan B should schools have to close again.

Creating 10,000 lessons, Oak will give schools "back-up" remote learning in case of local lockdowns or staff and pupil absences because of illness or shielding.

The government has promised all pupils will be back in school full-time from September.

Matt Hood, Oak's principal and a DfE adviser, said: "Given the risk of local lockdowns, it's sensible to have a back-up plan available to any school, to make sure children can continue to receive an education."

The curriculum

Oak will produce its own curriculum plan to cover the entire year so any school forced to close can quickly switch to remote learning by dipping in to the free online lessons.

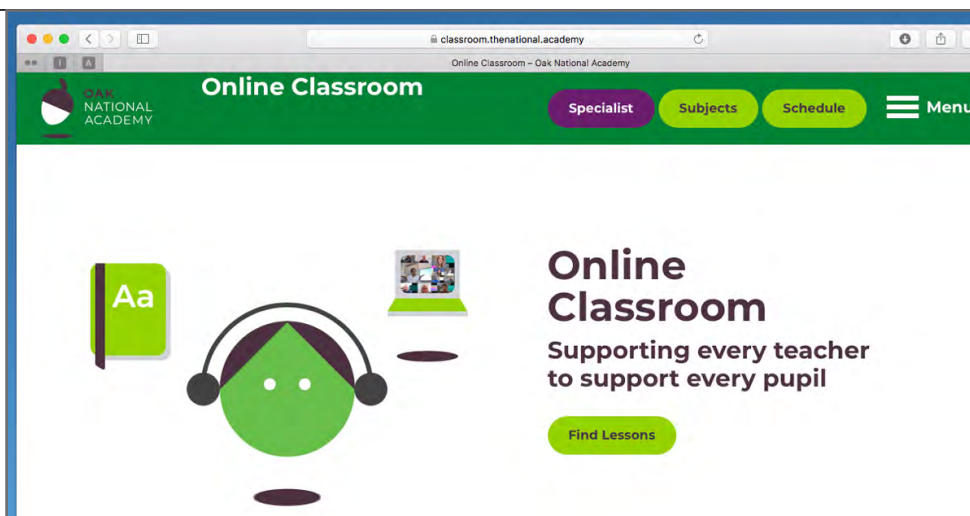
The curriculum "map" will be available by the end of next month, with most lessons – covering from reception through to year 11 and a specialist programme – to go live before September.

Oak has set up advisory groups, including unions, sector leaders and Ofsted's curriculum team, to establish what is the most common curriculum content. This will be put into "building blocks" that set out the order of lessons.

The national curriculum will be drawn upon for lessons across key stages 1 to 3, while exam boards will provide input for key stage 4. Schools will also be able to reorder topics and lessons to fit their own plans.

Hood said: "The less 'friction' there is between the 'in-school' curriculum and the 'remote' curriculum the better."

Oak offers lessons in five primary areas, 13 secondary subjects and five specialist areas. Secondary subjects such as Latin and computer science are included, but others such as design and technology are not – which has drawn criticism.



The costs

The expansion will be funded by £4.34 million from the DfE which, like the £500,000 start-up costs, has been awarded without a tender because it is part of the coronavirus pandemic response.

Hood tweeted the alternative was a tender process "over a number of months which would have been too late for September. It was a textbook now or never."

He said value for money checks included scrutinising Oak's plans, budget, governance and grant conditions.

The DfE has used these emergency powers before, noticeably to award a contract worth up to £234 million for Edenred to run its free school meals voucher scheme. However, the company did go through a tender process for a different contract under the Crown Commercial Service.

Of the new cash, Oak said £2.7 million would be spent on staff. The remaining £1.6 million would mostly cover technology costs.

About 80 teachers have recorded lessons, with schools donating nearly £500,000 worth of staff time to fund this. However, this will be scaled up to more than 300 teachers over the next few months.

The cash will ensure schools are reimbursed or teachers paid if lessons are done during the summer holidays. Oak would not say how much the payments would be.

Overall, the Oak team will grow to about 500 in July – including teachers, resource support staff and the core team – before shrinking to a core of about 30 for the rest of the year. Oak's partner schools will recruit the teachers.

The organisation has also confirmed that schools

in the partnership will own the content of their lessons and are giving Oak permission to use them. It previously said there were no plans to charge for the content once the crisis was over.

Hood said the expansion would mean schools had "less to worry about, pupils' teaching is less disrupted, and teachers' workload is lightened, freeing them up to do what they do best – support their pupils".

Oak would remain part of the Reach Foundation, the sister charity of the Reach Academy Feltham school.

The criticism

Many in education are concerned about public funding awarded outside the usual open tender process.

But commercial curriculum providers could be another sticking point.

As revealed by Schools Week, the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) has demanded the BBC remove its free lessons by summer. It is worried the lessons will squeeze out private curriculum providers.

In an email obtained by the Education Uncovered website, Caroline Wright, the association's director general, told members it had a "number of concerns and issues" regarding Oak and the "potential for further state funding of curriculum programmes".

BESA did not want to comment when contacted by Schools Week. The Publishers Association, which represents journal and electronic publishers in the United Kingdom, did not respond to a request for comment.

All quiet on FSM voucher 'safety mechanisms'

JAMES CARR

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INVESTIGATES

There is no evidence that the national free school meals voucher scheme has built-in safety mechanisms that stop the cash going on booze and cigarettes, *Schools Week* has found.

Last week, Ben Bradley, a Conservative MP, demanded safeguards be installed to stop parents spending vouchers on items other than food for children.

"Parents aren't necessarily going to use those vouchers in the right way and the current system has no safeguards on that..."

However, Gavin Williamson, the education secretary, reassured MPs there were "mechanisms in place to ensure that the vouchers are not used for things such as alcohol, cigarettes and gambling and that's an important protection".

Schools Week contacted all eight supermarkets taking part in the scheme to ask what these measures were.

Tesco and McColl's said Edenred, the voucher supplier, was best placed to answer, while Waitrose passed us on to the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

Aldi, Asda, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons and Sainsbury's did not respond.

When asked about safeguarding measures, Andrew Opie, the BRC's director of food and sustainability, said that "parents have a



responsibility to make sure these vouchers are used appropriately to support a healthy diet".

When pressed about the mechanisms, the BRC directed us to the DfE. Edenred also told us to get in touch with the department.

However, the DfE refused to say whether any mechanisms were in place. Guidance on the scheme only says that vouchers "should be" used for food and "must not be redeemed for any age-restricted items, such as alcohol, cigarettes or lottery tickets".

Andy Jolley, a free school meals campaigner, said: "It is outrageous for the minister to claim that [there are mechanisms] because it's clearly not true.

"They have no idea how the money is being spent at the till – it's scandalous."

Bradley's request for greater safeguarding measures came in the wake of the government's

u-turn on providing the vouchers over the summer holidays.

Following significant pressure, spearheaded by Marcus Rashford, the Manchester United striker, the government set up a £120 million "Covid summer food fund" to provide vouchers over the break.

They will be provided through the existing system. However, schools are still waiting for details. One unanswered question is whether school leavers in years 11 and 13 will still qualify.

The system was swamped in its early days, leaving some parents waiting weeks for the financial support.

Under the system, schools order weekly £15 vouchers online. They then receive a code via email that is distributed to families under financial strain because of the loss of free school dinners during the coronavirus pandemic.

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Extra costs for reopening must come from school budgets

Schools that incur extra costs during reopening will have to pay the bills from their existing budgets, the Department for Education has confirmed.

In updated guidance on its exceptional costs fund for schools, the government says that schools are "not eligible to make claims for any additional costs associated with more pupils returning to school".

The decision not to allow schools to claim for screens, signage and preventive cleaning was first revealed by *Schools Week* earlier this month, with calls from school leadership unions for the scope of the reimbursement

scheme to be widened.

But it seems their pleas fell on deaf ears, as the government's latest guidance says: "We anticipate that schools will typically be able to implement the measures set out in our guidance (including increases to routine cleaning) within their existing resources."

The department has told schools to clean surfaces and equipment more, and to provide hand sanitiser for pupils. They are also encouraged to implement one-way systems and alter classroom layouts.

School business leaders had hoped they would be able to claim from the exceptional

costs scheme. It met the costs associated with keeping schools open for vulnerable children and the children of key workers, providing free school meals for eligible children not in school, and for cleaning following a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19.

But the new guidance says: "Schools are not eligible to make claims for any additional costs associated with more pupils returning to school that are not covered by these categories."

Schools Week revealed earlier this month how some schools have spent thousands on preventive measures to make their premises safe for pupils and staff.

News

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Let schools hire NQTs on short-term deals to solve recruitment blockage

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Schools should be given extra cash to appoint newly qualified teachers for short-term stints to cover any staff illnesses next year amid fears a downturn in job vacancies could push new entrants away from the profession.

A report published by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation found there have been more than 5,000 fewer job adverts in secondary schools alone this year as more teachers stay put during the coronavirus pandemic uncertainty.

While this could help disadvantaged schools – who tend to have higher staff turnover – the foundation said it will reduce opportunities for newly qualified teachers, which “risks losing them from the sector permanently”.

Furthermore, the report states “once initial apprehension” over the pandemic has passed – schools could see higher turnover in the Christmas and Easter resignation deadlines.

Jenni French, programme manager at the Gatsby foundation, said those “struggling to find teaching appointments for the coming school term will inevitably include shortage-subject teachers we can ill afford to lose”.

The foundation has called for cash to allow schools to recruit at a “short-term supernumerary basis” for the upcoming academic year.

French added: “This will increase capacity in the system to mitigate likely higher than normal teacher absences in September caused by sickness and social distancing measures.”

The warning comes amid better news for teacher recruitment. UCAS data this week showed the surge in applications to teacher training had continued into June.

Overall recruitment is now eight per cent higher than last year. Jack Worth, school workforce lead at the National Foundation for Educational Research, said: “Economic uncertainty is leading people to pile in to ‘recession-proof’ teaching.”

But there are still concerns over schools pulling out of placements for training providers – causing a bottleneck for new applicants.

Professor Sam Twiselton, director of Sheffield Institute of Education and chair of the DfE’s

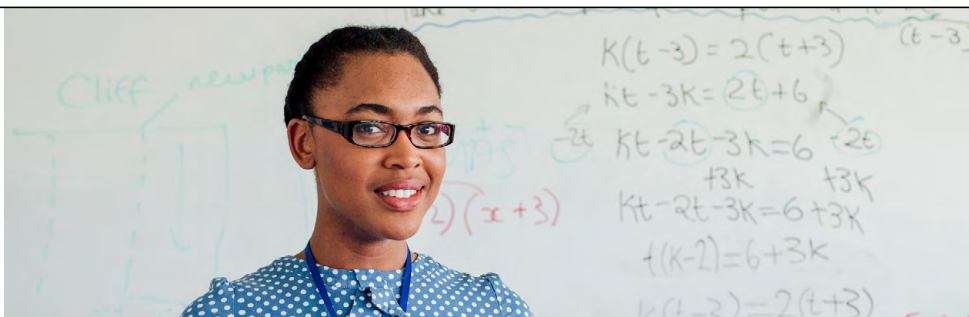
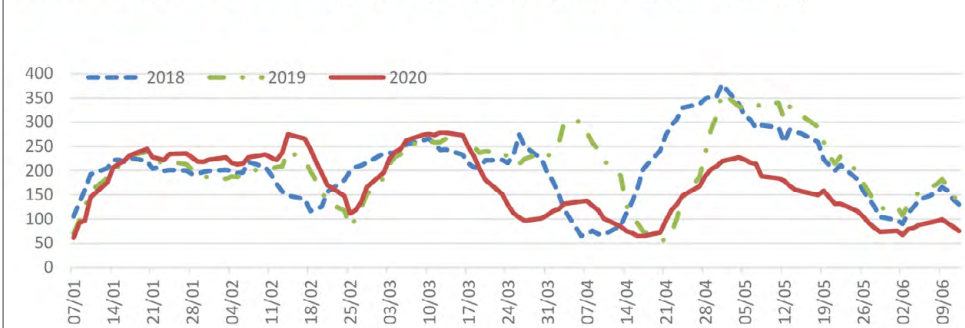


FIGURE 1 – NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ADVERTS (7-DAY ROLLING AVERAGE)



ITT Core Content Framework advisory group, cautioned schools against “putting off getting trainees” in amid coronavirus difficulties.

She said: “Trainees can be part of the solution in terms of extra staff, small group work, remote follow-up, focused intervention and more.”

The DfE has also acted. The initial roll-out of the early career framework will be extended to another 3,000 new teachers from September.

Up to 2,000 teachers were already due to get extra training and one-to-one mentor sessions in their first two years after qualifying under the early roll-out. This applied only to schools in the north-east, Bradford, Doncaster and Greater Manchester.

But under the expansion announced this week, up to 3,000 teachers working in disadvantaged schools outside of those areas will now be eligible.

Schools get paid £2,200 under the ECF to cover the five per cent of time off-timetable for new teachers in their second year – meaning the expansion will cost up to £6.6 million.

When asked where the money was coming from, the department would only say it will be a mixture of new cash from the Treasury and funds from elsewhere in its budget. It would not provide further details on the latter.

The Gatsby report, based on analysis by Teacher Tapp and SchoolDash, found recruitment activity

in English secondary school was down by around 50 to 60 per cent by early April, compared to the same period last year.

The estimated loss of more than 5,000 advertised posts works out at more than one per school on average.

The reduction appears to be caused by a drop in teacher turnover. Fifty-seven per cent of secondary teachers report there is no teacher movement expected in their departments this year, compared to 44 per cent last year.

Analysis found that in the first two weeks of June, not only are there fewer job adverts, these are also less likely to mention that they are suitable for new teachers.

Almost half of the reduction in job advertisements are in the core subjects of science, English and maths.

But the report added that it’s “extremely unlikely that the longstanding shortage of teachers of subjects such as maths and physics will permanently disappear”.

It comes as school workforce census figures for 2019 show fewer teachers are leaving the profession. However, the proportion of those remaining in the profession after five years dropped to 67.4 per cent for those who qualified in 2014, compared with 68 per cent in the previous year.

News

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Head was suspended for 'being truthful' about work-shy teachers

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

EXCLUSIVE

A headteacher has hit out about her suspension for suggesting during an interview on local radio that some of her teachers were “sat at home doing nothing”.

Pauline Wood is being investigated for potentially bringing her Sunderland school into disrepute during an interview with BBC radio about the wider reopening of primary schools.

When asked if parents were right that not all schools were working hard amid the coronavirus closures, Wood said she agreed “to some extent. You can’t lump everyone together as if they are all one type ... some teachers are coming up with the most imaginative, amazing things ... and other people do sit at home doing nothing. I won’t defend those people.”

When pressed whether that included teachers at her own school, Grange Park primary, Wood said: “Yes, I think it’s time we talked about the elephant in the room in some of this.”

It’s understood the comments came as a minority of staff refused to work in school for three days a week, rather than two.

The school governors suspended Wood after a complaint that she made “potentially disparaging comments” about her staff.

She was told this “raised serious concerns about your professional conduct and judgment ... which potentially brings the school into disrepute”. An investigation is underway.

But Wood told Schools Week: “It is very concerning that a headteacher can be suspended for giving a truthful answer to questions posed by members of the public.”

In her 15 years at the school, Wood has overseen its transformation from ‘inadequate’ to ‘outstanding’. She was working her notice and due to leave in September, but fears her success will now be tainted.

During the interview on BBC Radio Newcastle, the interviewer read out texts from parents



Pauline Wood



Grange Park primary

Google maps

concerned about the level of support schools in general were offering their children. One said that the statement all schools were working hard to help pupils was “simply wrong”.

When asked to comment, Wood said: “Yes, some teachers have been in [schools], but many have not been in at any time. Safety is paramount, but don’t make out teachers have all been working flat out.”

Asked about her own school, and whether it was her job to motivate such teachers, Wood said: “I think a lot can be done, but it’s down to individuals. It looks very simplistic, but you’ve got lots of HR rules, regulations, unions and people can say all reasons why they can and can’t work.”

Wood was thanked by the interviewer for “her honesty” which he said was “very refreshing”.

The interview came as tensions increase between parents and schools over the support offered to pupils. One study has suggested one in five pupils are not doing schoolwork at home.

While few pupils have returned to Grange Primary, it is understood some teachers cite childcare issues as the reason for their resistance to work on the school site for three days a week, rather than two.

Wood said she thought it would be helpful to get more staff in to work on appraisals, for instance, so pay adjustments were ready for September.

When asked for comment about staff working arrangements and the suspension, Mary Hodgson, the chair of governors, said she could not speak to anyone about “personal circumstances as it would be a breach of confidentiality”.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said school leaders should be able “to give their perspective and insight to the public via the media”.

But he said to “avoid the pitfalls”, the general advice was to have three key messages in mind and to ask a friend or relative to help prepare for such interviews.

Wood, a regular contributor to the Radio Newcastle show, said the situation was “disheartening”, especially considering the “great and sustained outcomes under my leadership”.

During the 2011 ‘outstanding’ inspection, Ofsted said the “relentless” way Wood and her leadership team “pursue excellence and improvement has an extremely positive impact on pupils’ outcomes”.

Wood added the school, in one of the most deprived areas of the country, was now in the top 2 per cent nationally for phonics and maths key stage 2 results. It also had been shortlisted numerous times for The TES schools awards.

'Don't go back' advice for shielders will be updated next week

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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School staff who are shielding because they are clinically extremely vulnerable are still being advised not to go to work – but new guidance on whether they should return to the classroom is due next week.

The government recently announced a relaxation of its shielding guidance, stating that from August 1, those who cannot work from home “can go to work, as long as the business is Covid-safe”.

But ministers’ insistence that all pupils will return to schools in September has prompted fears that shielding staff may be asked to return even if it is not safe for them to do so.

Approached for clarification this week, the DfE said the government was “strongly advising people, including education staff, who are clinically extremely vulnerable to rigorously follow shielding measures in order to keep themselves safe”.

“Staff in this position are advised not to attend work at this time,” the department added.

However, further guidance on the matter has been promised next week.

In order to facilitate the return of pupils, the government is expected to announce the relaxation of social distancing rules for children in schools. However, it is not yet clear whether those rules will also be relaxed for school staff.

There are also questions about whether schools can meet Health and Safety Executive guidance on so-called “Covid-secure” workplaces.

The guidance states that workplaces should



Dr Jenny Harries

stagger staff arrival and departure times, maintain social distancing between employees and keep canteens closed to protect workers.

But school leaders say meeting these requirements in schools will be difficult, and have demanded clearer guidance on what exactly is expected of them in the autumn term.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said making a “complex environment” like a school or college ‘Covid secure’ was “obviously going to be challenging”.

“The first job is to define what ‘Covid secure’ means in an education setting,” he said.

“Schools and colleges are very good at putting systems in place, but it is important that they are provided with guidance which is clear, based on robust public health guidance, and that they have sufficient time in which to implement these systems.”

The DfE would not say whether it would expect schools to be “Covid-secure”, but said it would “shortly be publishing further details to help schools and parents prepare for September”.

Recent polling by the NASUWT teaching union suggests guidance on shielding is long overdue.

The survey of members found that one in five teachers who were shielding because they were clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus had been asked to go into school.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said those who had been told until now to shield for their own safety “will feel very uncertain about returning to the workplace”.

“We cannot know what the situation with coronavirus will be in September, so we will expect education employers to be willing to plan on the basis that at least some staff and students may need to remain at home in September.”

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Fewer children will need to shield

A “very large number” of children currently shielding at home will be able to return to school in September, the government’s deputy chief medical officer has said.

Dr Jenny Harries told the Downing Street briefing on Monday that by September, “there should be a much fewer number of children who are on the shielding list, who would need to be away from school”.

It comes after the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health revised its

shielding guidance for children and young people, to state that “not all those children and young people who are currently advised to shield need to continue to do so”.

“The majority of children with conditions including asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and kidney disease do not need to continue to shield and can, for example, return to school as it reopens,” the guidance states.

“This includes many children with conditions such as cerebral palsy and scoliosis, for whom

the benefits of school – in terms of access to therapies and developmental support – far outweigh the risk of infection.”

However, the guidance still states that some children, such as those with immune-deficiency or immune-suppression, including through cancer therapy, will need to continue to shield, while those with certain other conditions will need to discuss with doctors and make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

A full list is available online at rcpch.ac.uk

CLPE Experts in Primary Literacy - Bring the Power of Reading to your school

The Centre for Literacy in Primary Education (CLPE) is an independent UK charity dedicated to raising the literacy achievement of children by putting quality literature at the heart of all learning. We offer an extensive range of training opportunities, free resources, research and school support. CLPE's research around the importance of using quality texts as the basis for English planning and quality teaching and to provide reflective professional development is embodied in our flagship training programme, The Power of Reading.

- Supporting schools to build a curriculum based on high quality children's literature
- Developing creative approaches to the teaching of reading and writing
- Engaging children in a love of reading, inspiring children as writers

"The Power of Reading has increased the children's engagement in reading and reignited my own passion for teaching English. Children have said 'This is the best English ever!'" - Emma Potts, Spalding Parish C of E Day School

What is the Power of Reading?

The Power of Reading is a programme that supports quality English teaching throughout a primary school, with support for transition to secondary. It is built on extensive classroom based research into what works in the teaching of English.

Teachers on the Power of Reading training programme attend focussed training days and receive a pack of high quality books. Their whole school has access to a website of resources where they can find teaching plans, information about pedagogical approaches and examples of practice. Our Power of Reading website resources are also open to schools outside of the training programme, on a membership basis. This enables a greater range of schools to access recommendations

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for quality texts and planning which supports schools to teach the National Curriculum.

The training programme and teaching plans support schools to build a curriculum based on high quality children's literature and improve the quality of English teaching by developing teacher's knowledge of quality texts and creative approaches to the teaching of reading and writing.

What impact does the Power of Reading make?

The programme has now run for 16 years, with extensive evidence of impact on engagement and attainment, particularly for disadvantaged groups.

Inspections of member schools highlight how the programme has supported schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning, with improvements seen in the quality of pupils reading and writing, the stretch of challenging texts and the impact the approaches make on children's inference and deduction skills and breadth of vocabulary. Impact is also seen in children's writing - their imagination, writing stamina and confidence in writing at length. This is evident for pupils of all abilities, not just for those working at expected levels and greater depth.

Our programme is regularly evaluated to ensure its impact on schools, teachers and

children. Our latest independent evaluation was conducted by Leeds Trinity University. The full report, which is available on the Power of Reading website, found that, in Power of Reading schools:

- Children make an additional 6 months progress in reading and writing
- The programme has particular impact on pupils who had previously been reluctant to engage with literacy
- The achievement gap between boys and girls is significantly narrowed
- The achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged pupils is significantly narrowed
- Teachers find that their children choose to read more often, at greater length and are more confident in talking about books

The Power of Reading is a high impact training programme delivered by the expert teaching team at CLPE. The Power of Reading also has a membership website which includes access to 220 teaching plans for quality texts, home learning notes and recommended reading lists to further develop staff subject knowledge.

To find out more visit
clpe.org.uk/powerofreading or
email info@clpe.org.uk

Ofsted

New ITE inspections: what you need to know

Ofsted has confirmed its new initial teacher education (ITE) framework will be launched in September before a new cycle of inspections starts in January. *Schools Week* has everything you need to know

1 What's changing?

- There will be two new judgments: 'quality of education and training' and 'leadership and management'. Ofsted says these will focus on the ITE curriculum and "help inspectors get to the heart of the quality of trainee teachers' education". They replace the previous 'outcomes for trainees' and 'quality of training across the partnership' judgments;
- Inspections will be based on a single, four-day inspection, announced three days in advance. This replaces the previous two-stage process;
- Similar to the new schools framework, ITE providers will now also get an "educationally focused" telephone call before the inspection;
- Inspections will run in spring and summer term-times only;
- Curriculum will be explored through a "focused review" method – which is similar to the "deep dives" used in schools.



2 Less focus on results

As with schools, the focus is shifting from results to what you teach. Ofsted has confirmed that outcomes data will have less prominence.

When looking at the impact of the ITE curriculum, Ofsted will consider 'outcomes trainees achieve', but this will relate to whether or not trainees "know more and remember more of the intended ITE curriculum and apply that knowledge to their practice".



3 Some slack for those hit by Covid-19

Ofsted says it is aware that coronavirus disruption means providers may not have been able to deliver their new curriculum plans fully. A "transition statement" will be introduced, but this will apply only to the "'good' grade criteria for the quality of education and training judgment".

Essentially, inspectors can consider the ambition of curriculum plans and how well they have been delivered. If it's clear the plans will be "fully executed for the September 2021 academic year", then inspectors can award a 'good' judgment. However, to be graded 'outstanding' a partnership must meet "all of the criteria for good and should also be exceptional".



4 Phonics focus stays despite 'restrictive' reservations

Ofsted proposes to inspect how well partnerships with early years and primary phases help trainees teach early reading, including systematic synthetic phonics (SSP). But respondents in the consultation raised concerns this was "restrictive and may undermine the academic freedoms".

But Ofsted says teaching SSP is a requirement of the national curriculum and the teachers' standards, and is in the government's compulsory initial teacher training core content framework – so it's staying.



5 Autumn term inspections ditched

Following the consultation, Ofsted says it recognises the "difficulties of forming valid judgments during the autumn term".

However, during the consultation providers said most of the centre-based training took place during this term – so inspectors might miss this. In response, Ofsted says that inspectors can gather sufficient evidence of what is systematic by talking to leaders about the programme, and then "connect this to how well trainees on placement apply and build on the knowledge they have gained".

Meanwhile, the new phone call with partnership leaders will involve a short, practical planning call before a "longer conversation that is educationally focused".

The notification of inspection has also been extended to three working days before the inspection week.



6 Deep dives shouldn't increase workload

While there was strong support for "focused review" evidence gathering (75 per cent agreed or strongly agreed), there were workload concerns over arranging subject-specific visits.

But Ofsted says the new methodology "should not increase workload for ITE partnerships".

"Inspectors will discuss with partnership leaders the most pragmatic ways in which to plan the focused reviews to ensure that inspection activities do not place an undue burden on partnerships."

Providers were also concerned whether inspectors had the subject specialism to do such deep dives. Ofsted says its workforce is "experienced and highly trained", adding focused reviews in individual subjects "are not subject inspections".



News

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New NLEs have to show high standards with 'knowledge-rich curriculum'

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

EXCLUSIVE

Only leaders who achieve high standards “in the context of a knowledge-rich curriculum” can become national leaders of education (NLEs).

In February, the NLE advisory group published its review to shake-up the system, including recommendations to allow “transformative” academy trust chief executives and improvement directors into the programme.

NLEs are successful school leaders who work alongside others to support struggling schools.

Tender documents reveal the government believes up to 2,000 school leaders are eligible for recruitment, but just 400 will be in place by September next year.

NLEs will also have to complete 30 hours of training and pass a test before they are sent into schools.

One of the more potentially controversial criteria in the new standards says a successful candidate must show evidence of the “the achievement of high standards for all pupils in the context of an ambitious, knowledge-rich curriculum that is well-designed and sequenced and closes gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers”.

A knowledge-rich curriculum, the government's preferred model of learning, entails teacher-led rather than enquiry-based instruction, with a focus on “core” academic knowledge rather than creative activities.

The ‘knowledge-rich’ criteria falls under the “professional credibility” standard.

But Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said: “It is important that interpretation of this is flexible and not prescriptive.

“This is what schools and colleges all over the country are doing in many different contexts and it will be important to utilise this breadth of expertise in the NLE programme.”



The standards also outline a need for applicants to “identify the signs of insufficiently high expectations of pupil behaviour” and know “how to design workable and effective behaviour reinforcement systems”, including sanctions and rewards.

The three-year contract to recruit and deliver training and assessment for the programme is worth up to £1.7 million. The government said it expected there were about “1,500 to 2,000 school leaders eligible for NLE status”.

Schools Week reported last December that the number of NLEs had plummeted by about a fifth in 18 months – falling from 1,319 in June 2018 to 1,065 at the end of last year.

The reform group said it wanted the “full cadre” of newly designated NLEs by the start of 2021-22.

However, the draft key performance indicators for the contract call for 700 eligible school leaders applying by July 2021, with 400 “ready for deployment” by September.

Training is anticipated to cover school/trust culture, the curriculum and assessment and behaviour and implementation.

The provider must complete a “light-touch summative assessment” to confirm NLEs have “met the aims of the development programme”.

NLEs will also get about 18 hours of ongoing



development training.

Steve Munby, the former head of the National College of School Leadership, said there were “a lot of things to like”, such as the widening of criteria of who could become a NLE.

But he was concerned that it came across as “another top-down, highly controlled and centralised initiative, with the criteria for success focused on the current government's favourite aspects”.

The advisory group proposed NLEs must meet one of three eligibility routes: a “turnaround head”, “beacon of excellence” or “transformative multi-academy trust chief executive”.

This would expand eligibility to “strong leaders with a demonstrable record in school improvement, whether as a headteacher, MAT chief executive or other leader accountable for school improvement across a MAT”, it said.

In conversation with... Alison Peacock

Don't 'guilt trip' teachers into working over summer

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Teachers must not be “guilt-tripped” into working on summer catch-up programmes run by schools, the head of the Chartered College of Teaching has said.

Dame Alison Peacock (pictured) said it would be “foolhardy” to expect teachers to “just take a few days off and then come back in again over the summer”, warning that “exhausted” teachers and leaders needed a proper break.

The government outlined its catch-up plan last week with £650 million set to be split between schools for spending on initiatives such as small-group tutoring and summer activities.

Although it will be up to schools how to spend the money, there have been calls for staff to be roped in to help with summer schools.

Lord Blunkett, a former education secretary, has said teachers should be prepared to give up some of their holidays, while Sir Michael Wilshaw, the former chief inspector, has suggested that ‘good’ schools will ask their teachers to work over the summer.

But in an interview with Schools Week, Peacock said she was worried about leaders and teachers, many of whom have worked non-stop since the lockdown started.

“There may well be colleagues who want to do some work over the summer,” she said, “but we certainly wouldn’t want to have a guilt trip on the whole profession saying ‘this is what you should be doing.’”

Peacock said she joined the concern about staff burnout as calls grew for catch-up programmes and uncertainty remained about how schools would reopen in September. Some leaders might leave the profession once the crisis was over.

“The time that we’ll really have to worry will be when things settle down into a routine of some form. Then we might well see quite a few people saying ‘oh I just need to step away’.

“When you’ve dealt with the immediate thing in front of you, when things settle down, that’s when you realise how exhausted you are.”

But teachers were “in good heart”.

“It’s lovely to see how they’re enjoying seeing the children back and people are talking about how wonderful it is to have noise in the corridors again.

“And we will come through all this. I just feel

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



so proud of the teachers I know, the teachers we’re hearing from and the teachers who are posting on social media. It sounds cheesy but it’s absolutely true.”

However, she said interventions from former ministers and figures such as Wilshaw were “unhelpful”. The press too was often “critical of teachers en-masse”.

She also defended the education unions, which have been accused of being “obstructive”.

“I can say from the groups I’m on... I haven’t heard any of them being anything other than constructive.”

Peacock said she shared the unions’ frustration that the sector had been ignored.

It was revealed last month that leadership unions were not consulted before the government announced its June 1 wider reopening for primary schools. And leaders said last week they were also not given the opportunity to discuss the government’s catch-up plans.

“We were being asked for our input, and that’s something, to have a seat at the table. But we weren’t involved, quite often, in the ultimate

decisions,” she told Schools Week.

“We were just asked: ‘what would be the consequence of doing this?’ or told ‘this is what we’re going to do, how can we make it work?’, rather than ‘what do you think we should be doing?’”

In an attempt to give teachers a greater voice, the college this week launched The Education Exchange, a “free one-stop digital hub to help foster a global conversation about what matters in education”, which will be open to non-members.

Peacock said the idea was to “curate a space to have a conversation about the future of education”.

“We’ll look at recovery planning, curriculum design, which most recently will probably be impacted by the Black Lives Matter issues and the death of George Floyd, and how schools may well want to respond to that in terms of curriculum planning.

“But we’ll also think about what we’ve learned over this period and what we believe is the best of what we do and what perhaps we want to leave behind.”

Speed read

The new academy spending rules for next year

The government has published its latest academies financial handbook for the 2020-21 academic year. The document, which comes into force from September, sets out the rules on financial management that trusts must adhere to. John Dickens rounds up the most important changes

Publish £100,000-plus salaries on websites

Academy trusts must publish on their websites the number of staff paid more than £100,000.

While trusts already show such information in annual accounts, the handbook says they must also publish it on their website in a "separate readily accessible form".

The information can be laid out in a similar format to the annual accounts: the number of employees whose benefits exceed more than £100,000, in £10,000 bandings, based on the most recent financial statements.

However, there's no requirement to name the recipients, just to list their salary. Benefits to be included in the remuneration include salary, other taxable benefits and termination payments, but not the trust's own pension costs.



Push to professionalise finance roles

Larger trusts are encouraged to employ finance officers with relevant accountancy qualifications. The handbook says this is something chains with more than 3,000 pupils should consider when filling chief finance officer vacancies, alongside ongoing training for the role.

All trusts also must "assess whether the CFO, and others holding key financial posts, should have a business or accountancy qualification". Baroness Berridge, the academies minister, said the "value of a relevant financial qualification can be a great boost to your role as CFO".



Reminding members of their responsibilities

Berridge said she wanted "greater focus on members remaining informed and their role in ensuring that the board is exercising effective governance".

Members sit above trustees in an academy trust, and have a similar role to shareholders of a company.

The new handbook says members must be provided with the trust's audited annual report and accounts so they can be "assured that the board is exercising effective governance".

Another new requirement is that trusts "must appoint a clerk to support the board of trustees who is someone other than a trustee".

The board is also reminded it must ensure financial plans are "prepared and monitored, satisfying itself that the trust remains a going concern and financially sustainable".

It must also take a "longer term view of the trust's financial plans".



Spend on booze outlawed

The government has long been unhappy about trusts spending cash on booze. The annual academies direction for 2017-18 stated that purchases of alcohol or excessive gifts were examples of irregular expenditure.

It followed several government investigation reports highlighting misuse of public funding on alcohol.

But it is now made clear that trust funds "must not be used to purchase alcohol for consumption, except where it is to be used in religious services".



Whistleblowing policies must be published

Other changes include trusts publishing whistleblowing procedures on their websites.

This is something the government had promised to look into following investigations by *Schools Week* around concerns with a lack of protection for those speaking out in some trusts.

All trusts will also have to complete the government's school resource management self-assessment tool. Berridge said this would help trusts "appraise their approach in key areas of resource management and governance".

The option for internal audits to be performed by a trust's external auditor has been removed, and trusts have also been reminded to keep their register of interests up to date.



New minister 'impressed' with academy finances

Berridge, who took over from Lord Agnew earlier this year, said she had been "enormously impressed with the standards of financial management achieved by academy trusts".

She said the "great majority" of trusts have reported a cumulative surplus and received an unqualified opinion on their accounts from auditors.

"Academy trusts have also led the way with accountability and transparency, making available an increasing amount of information to the public about how trusts are governed and performing financially."



EDITORIAL

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

Times are tough – but there are shoots of optimism

We have in recent months often used this space to criticise the government for its handling of the coronavirus pandemic and its impact on schools.

And for good reason; its shambolic approach has needlessly created hardship and misery among school staff and the children they serve.

In a week stuffed with new announcements, we'll refrain from picking them apart, again (plus, they are aptly covered in our news pages).

Instead, we'll focus on the emerging reasons to be optimistic.

First, the surge in people applying to become teachers has continued into June. While bringing many of its own problems, the coronavirus pandemic may actually solve something the government has failed to do for years – recruit enough teachers.

Sure, there are concerns over schools shutting up to offering placements, but that's resolvable. There are also worries over new trainees being shut out from the profession as teachers stay put – but, again, there are workable suggestions to sort this out.

The announcement this week that the early roll-out of the excellent early career framework will be expanded to encompass more new teachers was

welcome, before it's full roll out in 2021.

The news that the reception baseline assessment will be delayed for a year also shows the department is listening (at least to some of the sector's concerns).

Ministers have staunchly defended the new assessment for four and five-year-olds, promising for months it would go ahead from September. But, they've bitten the bullet and delayed so schools can focus on the more immediate coronavirus challenges in September.

And, finally, the end of term is in sight.

We agree with Dame Alison Peacock, who in her interview in this week's edition warns that school staff must not be guilt-tripped into helping with summer catch-up activities.

There's no doubt there will be extra planning for the restart in September, but we hope staff can get a break over the holidays – we know many haven't had a proper one since February half term.

We know many of you are exhausted, and yet you carry on, steadfast in the belief that your charges come first. But, as you plough on, be reassured there are things to be optimistic about.

SCHOOLS WEEK



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Trust launches 'honest and frank' leadership review as CEO absent

Michael Powis, chair, Kent Catholic Schools Partnership

May I clarify why we are undertaking some research into what our schools think of how the board is leading our partnership of 24 schools. Our MAT grew very rapidly from 2014 through to 2017. In steady state, we have moved to developing the partnership in depth.

Recently we have identified a range of ways in which we might harness more of the potential of a partnership of schools to deliver better education and care to the 10,000 children and young people in our charge. Improving the quality of communication and understanding between schools, the board and the central team is key to achieving that.

Our schools are spread across a large and diverse county. Constructive inclusive dialogue is not always easy. An independent survey analysed by a reputable academic research team should help greatly. The project has been in development for six months, Clive Webster [the CEO] leading the planning. There is no connection with the other stories you refer to in the article, merely a coincidence in time.

Teach First drops 120 trainees as schools halt recruitment

Mike

Teach First must have known this was likely to be a problem and yet it has waited until now to tell trainees, although many will have given notice at their jobs. People who have made a commitment to Teach First will end up with no job and no place on a training programme. Two years ago it told me it was withdrawing my place as it hadn't found enough placements in primary: this was TWO DAYS before I was due to start training. When I complained, it simply referred me to the fine print of the terms and conditions that say it reserves the right to withdraw places at any time at its sole discretion.

Schools will return in September with 'full attendance'

Steve Edwards

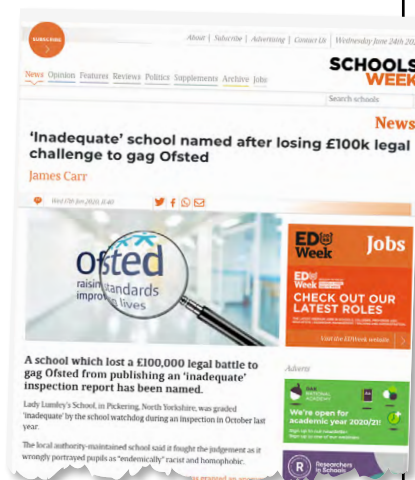
I was in school yesterday and measured the size of two rooms. One was 48sqm and one was 50sqm. The double desks in the room are

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Mike Julian

'Inadequate' school named after losing £100k legal challenge to gag Ofsted

The local authority has clearly dropped the ball here. Even as a large authority it can't have schools spending £100,000 on disputing Ofsted. It already knows that changes in judgments or even significant alterations in text are virtually unheard of. The actions of the LA between inspection and conversion are crucial to the later success of the school. It needed to accept and quickly move to decisive action.



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

1.3m long.

So there is no way that two children can sit at the same desk and maintain 1m distance. There is also no way that 30 students can sit in one room with 1m around them.

Government to consult on delaying 2021 exams

Julia Williams

A lot of people have missed out on things this year and have already made plans for next year, taking into account exams in May/June. Expensive holidays, rearranged to July 2021, may now coincide with these exams – holidays that we will not be reimbursed for. Why not just reduce the content, increase the amount of study time, do open-book exams. Why mess up everyone's year again by changing dates?

Schools need to know 2021 exam plans before summer, says Ofqual

Rachel Wilkes

My daughter will receive two hours direct teaching for each A-level subject over the next few weeks. That's six hours total contact time in school. Schools need to be honest about how much of the various syllabuses of each subject has been relying on remote learning. Students have missed the direct interactions to exchange opinions in open class and have lost the opportunity to hone their exam techniques. Whatever is decided [for 2021 exams], clarity is needed to give our kids the support and to set the expectations for their studies in the next academic year.

Profile

JL DUTAUT | @DUTAUT

A close-up portrait of JL Dutaut, a man with dark hair and a slight smile, wearing a blue suit jacket over a striped shirt. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“Sometimes in education you just need to know your community”

Dan Morrow has helped to kickstart a leadership network with a twist. JL Dutaut finds out why

The odds were stacked against Dan Morrow becoming the chief executive of a multi-academy trust. In fact, were he a pupil in one of his schools he would be one of the

disadvantaged children that he would be worried about.

His success has not led to a classic “pull yourself up by your bootstraps” attitude to personal growth - he is as diametrically opposed to that as can be. In fact, he is opposed to much of the education system’s zeitgeist. So much so that his becoming a chief executive seems all the more

unlikely the more you speak to him.

Morrow is not alone in his scepticism. “Let’s face it, there are a number of civil servant-type chief executives who see their role as taking what’s handed from the department and enacting it entirely.

“But there’s also a different strand who think our role, especially as charity leaders, is to be

Profile: Dan Morrow



public servants with and for our communities - and that isn't necessarily going to marry up to a civil servant's view of the world."

A network of these public service-minded men and women has recently coalesced under the banner of the Educational Leadership Collective (ELC). Only a matter of weeks old, it is already getting daily blog contributions, organising Twitter chats and running a "collective listening month". "We've got over 300 contributions from across education. Nursery heads, FE college leaders, MAT chairs, CEOs, commentators on diversity and inclusion. It's a genuine platform and what I love is that there are lots of people who don't always agree. That's great, because that means there's maximum chance to find a genuine consensus."

This fledgling network is designed to become self-sustaining. Come September, Morrow says, he and its kick-starters will step back to let it become whatever it needs to be. It's part of an attitude to hierarchies that runs deep. "If you're trying to change everything and you just go to your bubble, what's the point? All you're doing is a turgid exercise in self-indulgence."

So how does a person so averse to monocentric leadership come to be a chief executive? It would be easy to fall back on results to justify Morrow's

position and effectiveness, but it wouldn't be fair. For sure, his track record is good. Of the four

"How can I be a public servant if those I serve are forgotten?"

primary schools dotted around Kent and the London borough of Bexleyheath that make up Woodland Academy Trust - a fifth is due to open in 2022 - three are rated 'good' by Ofsted, and one 'requires improvement'. The latter was inspected last September and its report begins: "Knockhall Primary School is on the right tracks. Frequent changes of leaders and staff have been unsettling for everyone. The school is now more stable and a much happier place. The community is coming closer together."

Its predecessor, Knockhall Community Primary, was put in special measures in 2013. It became an academy soon after before it was rebrokered to join Woodland in 2017. A turnaround is clearly

underway, but, regardless of Ofsted outcomes, Morrow will be most cheered by the centrality of community to that turnaround and Ofsted's ability to recognise it. That is what drives him.

For the first part of his life, Morrow was raised in an unhappy household. His father, suffering with addiction, was often violent and abusive. "Up to about nine years old I basically didn't speak. I used to wet myself in class a lot and was incredibly anxious." When his parents divorced and his mother, Pauline, developed cancer, his maternal grandfather became a father figure. "He was an Irish immigrant, a northerner who had passed his 11-plus. But he wore clogs so he couldn't go to his school because he didn't have shoes."

Under his and Pauline's influence (she made a full recovery), Morrow too passed his 11-plus. He did well at grammar school, although he did not have the same things as his peers (and was made to feel it). He studied history at the University of Oxford and from there started as a trainee chartered accountant for KPMG. He never finished: Warner Bros, one of his clients, headhunted him to work on post-production on *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, and other big screen hits such as *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*. But one of his grandfather's favourite mantras stuck with him.

Profile: Dan Morrow



Daniel Year 4

"You're a bright kid and you're going to climb the ladder, so don't pull the ladder up after you and understand that you have to become a ladder." He had become used to earning (and spending) well – he also looked after his mother financially – but felt unfulfilled.

The opportunity to "become a ladder" presented itself, as it is wont to do, in the form of a *Daily Mail* article that named and shamed the ten worst schools in the country. "I wrote to them and asked if they wanted a trainee teacher." Ashburton Community School in Croydon, south London, replied and in September 2006, he began a graduate teacher programme in history.

Morrow quickly learned about the challenges of education in a deprived community. He learned too to overcome his reservations about academisation, and still praises the open and reflective leadership of the founder of the Oasis Charitable Trust, which took over the school now known as Oasis Academy Shirley Park. "Steve Chalke and Joy Madeiros had ethics and values that you can only dream of," he says. "They shaped a lot of how I now lead. I don't have the same faith, but their belief in every individual's ability to accept difference was transformational for how I



could see people running academies."

Morrow was off on a second successful career run. "By 2013, I was the head of the secondary aspect of Shirley Park, a school that had been in trouble for 20-plus years. It had merged with a

**"I got to run
a school where
I'd got my
first merit"**

junior school that was in special measures, which merged with an infant school that was in special measures. In four years we were outstanding in every category."

Oasis then asked him to take the helm at Isle of Sheppey, a school that has obstinately clung to its 'requires improvement' judgment since 2013. "Then I was looking to leave Oasis, and the primary school I attended as a kid, Skinner Street, went into special measures. So [Oasis CEO] John Murphy had a conversation with me to say 'I didn't think you'd be happy if I didn't ask you'. And so I got to run a school where my mum lived opposite. I'd been in the same playground. I'd got my first merit in the school hall. I had two TAs

who remembered me."

Within 12 months, Skinner Street was 'good' in all areas. "It was a reminder that sometimes in education, you just need to know your community and be part of it. You need to have walked in their shoes, to have gone without, to know that when that mum is absolutely screaming at you it's because something else is going on."

Having overseen Skinner Street's turnaround, Morrow decided it was finally time to move on from the trust. "I thought it'd be quite nice to sort something out and then stay there and enjoy it."

Since 2017, he's been heading Woodland Academy Trust. "It was the first and only thing I applied for. I went to the interview and I just connected. I love it." Of the role, he says: "The absolute truth is you get to make sure that all of the shit that gets in the way doesn't happen. And that's amazing. The power to say no. No, that's crap. No, I trust you. No, I don't care about monitoring. Nope, nope, nope, nope, nope."

It's a typically provocative take on the role, but Morrow is not here to ingratiate himself or lecture others about their bootstraps. He's here to be a ladder, and the pandemic has only made him more determined.

"The corner of the carpet is lifted, and everyone can see what's underneath it. If I can't speak up for my communities then I'm failing in my job. And if we don't make a change then I will continue to fail in my job. Because how can I be a public servant if those I serve are forgotten?"

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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JO
BARBER

Associate assistant
headteacher, Aspire AP

Arts are not an extra but key to recovery

Lockdown has reaffirmed that the arts are vital for every pupil's wellbeing and engagement, says Jo Barber

Lockdown highlights the powerful and crucial role the arts play in fulfilling the human need for creativity. The appetite for content created by galleries, arts organisations, broadcasters and schools during this period are a powerful demonstration of the importance of creativity in relieving stress and solitude. More than that, they are a staple for our wellbeing and engagement.

The arts enable us to analyse, understand, evaluate and express ourselves, our place and experiences.

Yet it was two years ago that Geoff Barton highlighted the decline in arts provision for the Cultural Learning Alliance, and it remains of national concern that they continue to be undervalued and sidelined in education. They have been gradually reduced from the mainstream curriculum and are now sadly becoming the preserve of extra-curricular or co-curricular activities.

While this may be a consequence of the performance measures

schools are beholden to, it doesn't have to be this way. We should not constrict opportunities for pupils to participate in the arts; lockdown has reaffirmed this.

Creativity is central to Aspire's ethos, yet the arts have not been part of many of our pupils' lives – at home or at school. All our pupils

“Pupils revelled in the joy of sending us pictures of their work

are timetabled for creative subjects because, as educators, we have an opportunity and responsibility to provide them with the benefits and positive experiences of being culturally and imaginatively engaged. And they thrive on it.

As it has for every teacher, lockdown has required us to adapt quickly and to be creative ourselves in sustaining our broad provision. Connecting with pupils' creativity remotely and ensuring that they have equitable access to materials and resources have been key.

Funding from the youth organisation artwork enabled us to purchase additional art materials. These were welcomed by thrilled pupils and families when we



delivered them with the food we've been delivering three times a week since March. Even those who had been reluctant to participate in arts activities got stuck into drawing,

painting and crafting, revelling in the joy of sending us pictures of their completed work.

Staff say that pupils have not only engaged regularly with the arts and creativity during lockdown, but their motivation to learn in other subjects has been boosted. They have shared their creative work with us with pride and a sense of achievement. Parents have told us how their children have been settled, concentrated and self-regulated when completing arts and creative tasks. In turn this is building their self-esteem and confidence as independent learners. In sum, art is a valuable teaching tool.

And if more evidence was needed,

we also teamed up with Springwell Alternative Provision in Grantham over the summer term to deliver a selection of online “Art Club” activities for Oak National Academy. Oak's data shows that more than 26,000 pupils have accessed our lessons since the beginning of half-term week, a testament to the needs and demand of pupils of all ages to engage creatively in arts activities and of parents' support for a broad and balanced curriculum.

Many unknowns remain about what September will bring, with increasing concerns over disadvantaged students' attainment compared with their more affluent peers. With this in mind, it is vital to remember that the arts are important, not only for art's sake, but as an educational tool for engaging and empowering pupils to learn across the curriculum. With the pressure to “catch up” over the summer and beyond, it would be a travesty – and simply misguided – to squeeze these subjects once more out of timetables in favour of a restricted diet of English, maths and science.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Statutory relationships and sex education has not been delayed for a year. So you best be prepared, says Lucy Emerson

The second national Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Day, takes place this year at a pivotal moment. There are just ten weeks before RSE becomes a statutory subject for all pupils in every school in England. Yet we are repeatedly asked at our teacher training webinars, why has RSE been delayed to 2021? I'd like to set the record straight: it hasn't.

The Department for Education reiterated that the new subjects – relationships education, RSE and health education – will still be statutory from September 1 this year, but it has allowed some flexibility. Recognising the impact of Covid-19 and school closures on teachers' ability to prepare, those schools who might need extra time can introduce different relationships, sex and health topics in phases. Nothing more. Nothing less. All schools must be delivering the subject fully by summer term, 2021.

Providing this leeway makes sense. It is 20 years since RSE guidance was last updated, and the disruption caused by the pandemic has eaten into the time that is necessary to properly assimilate this broader curriculum range and the rigorous approach expected in delivering it.

The guidance is rightly ambitious in relation to the assessment of pupil progress in RSE and the necessity of making the subject accessible for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Developing curriculum plans, integrating LGBT+ inclusion, training staff and updating policies all take time, and while some schools are already using the DfE's



LUCY
EMMERSON

Director, sex education forum,
National Children's Bureau

Extra flexibility, but RSE is more vital than ever

guidance to deliver the subject or are close to ready, others have yet to lay the foundations for high-quality provision.

One area which schools will be particularly anxious to get right is engaging with parents. Events that would have allowed those discussions about RSE have simply not been

and they are likely to appreciate open conversations about any subject, not least one as important to wellbeing – and which many have strongly held views on – as RSE. The new government guidance requires that schools involve parents and carers in planning and recommends ongoing communication with them about

“Lockdown has stopped important discussions with parents

able to take place during lockdown. But conversely, many parents' involvement in their children's education has increased as a result,

what will be taught and when. Ultimately, involving them will improve pupils' learning. We know from research that young people



have long wanted their parents to take a greater role in educating them about sex, relationships and growing up, but that for varied and complex reasons, many parents have not taken this on.

Evidence also suggests that RSE is more effective when home and school have a shared role in meeting children and young people's needs, yet it is important to note that what the pupil population requires from RSE cannot be established on assumptions. The government recommends giving pupils a voice in how the subject is delivered: something that could be illuminating for any parents with their heads in the sand.

The Ofsted handbook sets out that inspectors will consider the provision of relationships, sex and health education as part of a wider judgment of pupils' personal development. When routine inspections restart, RSE will be part of the inspectorate's scrutiny, albeit with sensitivity to the context and circumstances of schools.

Updating RSE to ensure it is relevant to young people's lives, supported by their families and provided in a timely and inclusive way, is long overdue. This was true before the reality of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is even truer now that in light of the sometimes harsh emotional experiences it will have caused for some, and the new dynamics in friendships, family and intimate relationships we have all developed.

That children need RSE to catch up with their world is no longer in question. Neither is its importance to the curriculum. Government flexibility aside, schools have an imperative to get it right.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Lockdown diaries – a week in the life of...



VIC
GODDARD

Co-principal, Passmores Academy

Monday June 15

Public and political opinion over the past few days has been like someone constantly screaming into my ear. What cost me my night's sleep last night, however, is that today the responsibility becomes real. Eighty-five of our year 10s come in after two weeks of phoning, planning, making videos and assuring families that we are putting safety and equity first. Today is full of individual meetings with form tutors or heads of year; it feels like a big step and is an emotional day for us all.

The government has announced it won't be offering free school meals over the summer holidays. This latest piece of short-sightedness is hard to understand from a populist government. Watch this space.

Tuesday June 16

That didn't take long. The government has changed its mind over summer FSM. The bigger question is how we ever thought they should be provided only in term time. The Headteachers'

Roundtable published a blog today in which it says FSM can be offered year-round for £200 more per child. Surely that time has come.

Face-to-face meetings continue. Like most things we've been asked to do, the procedures are set up, happen and then we replan the moment the guidance changes. Again.

Wednesday June 17

Year 10 meetings carry on, and the unwavering support of all our colleagues lets us think about the next challenges. We discuss transition plans at length. If year 6-into-7 causes anxiety in normal times, imagine September! We really want to know what parents/carers want from us to help them and their children. Decision made: we'll call them individually before finalising anything else.

The prime minister last week spoke about "a massive catch-up operation". Halfway through the week and I'm already tiring of "knowledgeable" takes about what we should be doing over the summer. Like many schools, we



already have plans for what we want to achieve. Our transition summer school is one of the best-received things we do: it's kept going despite the government cutting its funding. We think it's needed this year more than ever.

Thursday June 18

Home learning pack 3 goes out today. We have some amazing online platforms, but when we audited how many of our pupils have good online access on suitable hardware every day, we found that 20 per cent, more than 200, don't. I can't imagine giving a textbook to 80 per cent of our pupils and just saying "do your best" to the rest, so we issue workpacks every three weeks and supply everything, including stationery. This way, everyone can meet the "expectation" and most can access extension online. A thousand weighty envelopes go out. Sorry, posties.

There's a trust board meeting tonight to go over the next set of plans. Their commitment has been

a blessing too.

Friday June 19

Various news outlets let us know more details about "catch-up". This drip-feeding of information creates such anxiety. Families and colleagues instantly want answers - and I am desperate to give them, but it's impossible.

It's the missing details that get to me. We will lose our year 7 catch-up funding, and the "tutor fund" will not provide free sessions, but a discount from approved providers. But why let that get in the way of a good headline?

The official announcement hits my inbox at 15.29. Within an hour I have 11 emails from tutoring companies assuring me they are on the approved list and offering me early booking discounts.

This job is hard, and even harder because the best of it is missing. Schools without colleagues and young people are not a huge amount of fun. I'll hang on to having seen our year 10s this week in the hope of some sleep tonight.

BOOST LEARNER OUTCOMES WITH BITE-SIZED INTERVENTIONS IN ENGLISH AND MATHS

ncfe.

There has been a great deal of disruption to learning over recent months and the impact will be felt long into the next academic year and possibly beyond.

One of the biggest changes we've seen is the shift in the pace of learning. It's been well reported during lockdown that the amount of school work being undertaken and the pace of learning amongst individuals has varied, with concerns across the sector that some learners may have fell behind their peers.

No one can be certain at the moment what the future of education will look like long term, or what skills will be needed for the future. But one thing we can be sure of, is English and maths remain vital to allow young people to progress in their lives, education and work.

Our bite-sized English and maths qualifications are suitable for schools and colleges, and are ideal to support learners who may need additional support in these important subjects, following the recent disruptions to learning.

Darlington College has shared with us how these qualifications have aided learner progression

Learners at Darlington College are progressing to new career paths and learning opportunities thanks to our bite-sized English and maths solutions.

The Next Steps programme at the college provides a supported learning environment for young people with learners on the programme working on their skills for independent living, going on to higher level courses, the workplace or volunteering roles.



Sean Maguire, Programme Leader at Darlington College said: "I had worked with NCFE in previous roles for over 15 years and I had always had a positive experience. Within our department, we had discussed how we could supplement our learners studies to help them gain valuable English and maths skills that would not only help them whilst they were with us, but also give them skills to use in their everyday lives.

We chose NCFE's bite-sized units as they were relevant to our learners and they use real life examples, which allow learners to develop transferable skills."

NCFE's bite-sized units offer personal intervention for learners aged 14 and above, and allow for educators to target specific areas for development with short and manageable units that fit individual learners' needs. Available from entry level to level 2, the qualifications can be conducted remotely or face-to-face, with no need for external assessment; a great way to boost confidence and engage a range of learners, including low attainers, in education in a manageable way.

Sean said: "Offering NCFE's bite-sized units has been particularly beneficial to many of our

learners who have specific learning needs such as autism. Without essential skills in maths and English, our learners wouldn't be able to easily progress.

I would recommend NCFE to other centres who wish to build up the skills of their learners in a way that is manageable for the learner but also for the tutor, as the administration responsibilities are very low."

Supporting schools through the pandemic and beyond

During the current pandemic, these bite-sized qualifications are ideal to support "bubble" classes in schools where the subject specialist may not currently be available, as educators can identify individual needs across a range of levels.

To find out more about personal intervention for your 14-16 learners, visit www.ncfe.org.uk/english-and-maths or email englishandmaths@ncfe.org.uk.

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Courage in the classroom. LGBT Teachers share their stories

Edited by Catherine Lee

Published by John Catt

Reviewed by Jared Cawley, year 5 teacher, The British School in The Netherlands

Last year's protests outside Anderton Park school in Birmingham demonstrate that acceptance of the LGBT community is still far from a safe assumption. In that context, *Courage in the Classroom* is an empowering manifesto for LGBT teachers. Its array of brutally honest and personal stories from the participants in *Courageous Leaders* – the UK's only LGBT leadership programme – makes it an important book.

Each story is only an example of the pain and discrimination still felt by so many LGBT teachers. I can personally attest to how isolating an experience that can be, yet this book makes me feel encouraged to ensure my voice is heard. In each chapter, a LGBT teacher shares his or her painful struggles and how the world has changed for the better. Their collective sense of hope and progress creates confidence that our society is proudly becoming more accepting, diverse, and inclusive.

As well as cathartic, this book is pragmatic. Each chapter concludes with practical advice for school leaders, teachers, and governors keen to make their school inclusive for LGBT staff. It includes examples of schools that celebrate inclusivity and offer a safe space for staff and students to be their authentic selves.

But while each chapter is filled with joy, learning about what it was like for teachers to work and hide in a society that did not accept them makes for

uncomfortable reading, and forces us to confront how we are supporting staff and students who do not fit heteronormative confinements today.

In chapter three, for example, Jerome Cargill, a New Zealander working in London, writes about how the constant homophobia he experienced as a teenager left him unprepared for navigating his sexuality in a professional setting. During his teacher training his university mentor accused him of flaunting his "gayness" and advised to keep his personal life a secret. Not until a student came out to Cargill did he fully realise the importance of positive role models in creating safe and inclusive environments.

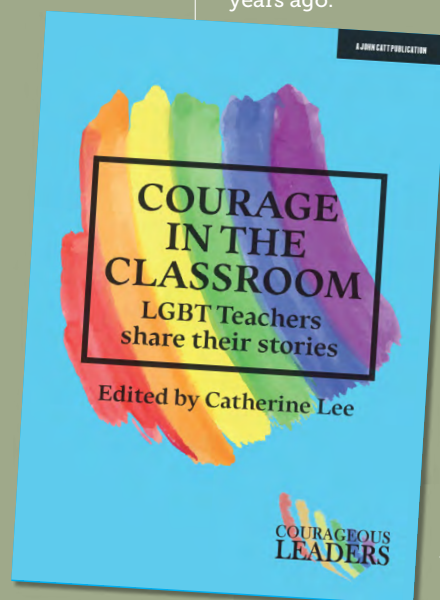
Chapter 6 by the book's editor, Catherine Lee, is a heartbreaking story of the power of parents in a rural community. She writes about how she and her partner were constantly harassed by her homophobic neighbour who "would not be told what to do by a pair of lesbians" and threatened to make their lives a "living misery". He also accused Catherine of staring at his daughter "lustfully" and outed her to the headteacher. Such abuse and stress ended her teaching career.

The final chapter

is by Jane Robinson, the founder of Courageous Leaders, who shares the challenges she faced as a teacher during section 28, a piece of legislation in effect from 1988 to 2003 that prohibited the promotion or "teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship".

She talks about her schooling in the seventies and the intimidation from teachers and peers. When her parents were "horrified" at her coming out, she ran away to London to become a teacher, but the homophobia continued, this time from colleagues. With the country "in the grip of HIV and Aids paranoia", one expressed this sentiment: "'Let's face it, it's only queers that get Aids and they deserve it.'"

The courageous Robinson concluded that it was her "duty to be out and proud". The book, and the programme it is based on, are the result of coming to that conclusion 20 years ago.



If all *Courage in the Classroom* did was loudly state that we are here and deserve to be heard, that would be enough to make this book a triumph for LGBT teachers. Its added focus on the practical realities of improving inclusivity in our schools makes it even better than that.

Reviews

TV REVIEW

The School that Tried to End Racism

Channel 4

Thursday, 9pm

Natasha Devon, author, activist and researcher



We cannot solve a problem if we deny its existence. That's why the most troubling aspect of public discourse on race is the insistence by white voices, despite evidence to the contrary, that the UK is not a racist country.

Hailing as I do from a mixed-race family, no one needs to persuade me that I, with my relatively light skin, enjoy more privilege and less discrimination than my darker-skinned siblings. Yet I can also see how the racism I've witnessed has been both subtle and insidious, and would be hard to spot if you weren't either attuned to or on the receiving end of it.

It is at this starting point that we find ourselves in Channel 4's timely *The School that Tried to End Racism*, in which year 7 pupils insist that they "do not see race". We hear (predominantly white) 11-year-olds proclaim confidently that skin colour doesn't matter and that no one should be, or indeed is, treated differently in Britain because of it.

The experiment takes place at Glenthorne High School in south London, a high-performing state school with a 50 per cent BAME pupil population. The opening scenes invite the viewer to question the worthy words as they are interspersed with footage of a white girl touching her black friend's hair without consent and a teacher choosing two white pupils to answer his question first, despite BAME children having their hands up. An initial unconscious bias test confirms that of the 24 pupils in the class, 18 favoured white people, while only two favoured black people. Four were neutral.

The experiment initially involves separating the children into two

"racial affinity groups" – one "white" and one "black and other minorities". But how can segregating children according to ethnicity serve to enhance multiculturalism? The show's experts – Dr Nicola Rollock and Professor Rhiannon Turner – argue that it is only by enforcing initial segregation that an honest conversation about race can be instigated.

Rollock explains that children under the age of 11 tend to mix with diverse skin colours and cultures, yet, as they progress through adolescence, there is a tendency to split into race or faith-based friendship groups. My experience working in schools certainly attests this. They hope to intercept this process and prevent unconscious bias "crystallising into adulthood".

Episode one (of two) focuses on three pupils: most viewers will probably see themselves in at least one of them. Henry is white and very indignant about the whole process. He has been told from a young age that racism is wrong, doesn't consider himself in any way prejudiced and is uncomfortable discussing the topic. Mahkai is black and has experienced enough racism to know it is a reality of life. He's reconciled to prejudice in a way that's heart-breaking to watch. Farrah is of mixed heritage and looks white in certain lights, brown in others. Initially, she isn't sure which group to place herself in. Her palpable sense of relief and joy when she's defiantly told by her BAME friends that she "belongs with them" is one of many emotional moments.

The school is a kind of symbolic microcosm. From the mouths of these relative babes come sentiments we've all



heard in our homes, workplaces, pubs or on tv. The white pupils don't regard themselves as having an identity (and even if they did, they perceive celebrating Englishness as inherently racist). The BAME children have knowledge of and pride in theirs by the bucketload, but most have learned to stop challenging the micro-aggressions they experience daily.

Through the eyes of these children, many of the complex socio-political questions that adults wrangle with start to become clear. *The School that Tried to End Racism* holds up a mirror and asks us if we can tolerate what we see. It should be compulsory viewing.

Reviews



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

@THEHEADSOFFICE

What next? Early thoughts triggered by school responses to the coronavirus crisis

@brianlightman

If the current reality for schools is defined by anything, it is the three Cs of coronavirus, Covid-19 and crisis. This too shall pass, and we'll move forward, but what will this look like for education? Brian Lightman is not advocating a particular approach, but rather poses questions. His hope is to engage us in thinking about what might be possible, rather than replicating the pre-Covid status quo by default. Looking at the use of time, curriculum, virtual learning, attendance and safeguarding, among others, he asks his readers to really think outside the box and envisage a very different structure for education.

Crisis leadership through Covid-19

@phildenton81

Phil Denton outlines his own three Cs – calmness, consistency and clarity – which, combined, create a sense of confident commitment. Although this piece is about school leadership from the viewpoint of a headteacher, much of it is appropriate to governing boards. Our commitment usually

TOP BLOGS of the week

is not lacking, but our confidence can easily be – especially if we have not been included in the team ethic that the author refers to.

The other 'C' word

@d_a_ellison

Only one C-word matters for David Ellison: consistency. As a leader, he believes that making sure certain aspects of school life are consistent is a matter of providing the equity all children are entitled to. While recognising that this view may be contentious, the scenarios he presents make a forceful argument that without consistency, the quality of pupils' experiences can be vastly different. As lockdown and its consequences continue to create huge variations, this is an important read for all school leaders in considering how best to close the gaps.

A new governance landscape

@dogpaws23

And as if the education sector is desperate to think of C-words other than the dreaded virus, Fee Stagg posts a blog framed by that letter. Here, she suggests that the seven key attributes of the governance competency framework – commitment, confidence, curiosity, challenge, collaboration, critique and creativity – may no longer be as

appropriate as they were.

Instead she offers compassion as an educational value we have seen more of and hopefully come to realise the need for. Flowing from that is the need to ensure curriculum is a good reflection of our communities and their cultures. She recognises that decisions about these matters are complex and require boards to be consistent, which we will only achieve through connections and – as is too often forgotten – celebration. Perhaps the framework is unlikely to change, but this is a positive and useful lens to see our work through.

Visible governance – the importance of public information

@HoyleRosemary

No C-words here, but a challenge nonetheless. Following the National Governance Association's launch of #VisibleGovernance, Rosemary Hoyle takes boards to task over hiding their lights under bushels. She suggests boards use their school's website as the starting point for explaining their work. Too often limited to statutory details, it has real potential as a window into governors' responsibilities and actions. Hoyle also calls on governors to use social media in a proactive, positive way to meet their communities.

Planning for September: We'll meet again

@NGAEmmaK

Picking up on the words of a song that saw the nation through a war, Emma Knights' rallying cry outlines the chaos that has been the guidance from government; not necessarily in respect of content but its continual issuance. She emphasizes that the time between now and September when it is expected that schools will reopen fully needs to be used for planning and preparation not only in terms of continuing to be Covid-safe but also to consider how we will close those learning gaps.

Research

Rob Coe reviews the evidence on a school-related theme. Contact him on Twitter @ProfCoe if you have a topic you would like him to cover

How can we ensure teachers receive effective feedback?

Rob Coe is director of research and evaluation, Evidence Based Education

We know effective feedback is incredibly powerful for students' learning (Hattie and Timperley, 2007) and supporting task performance much more generally (Kluger and DeNisi, 1996; London, 2003). This is as true for teachers as for students. But are teachers actually receiving effective feedback?

My own PhD research, more than 20 years ago (Coe, 1998), was on the impact of giving teachers feedback. The evidence, then and now, suggests that this can be a powerful way to improve outcomes.

If we want our students to be able to do hard things (eg use capital letters properly, present complex arguments or do column subtraction), we don't just describe the final product. We have a complex sequence and iteration of different strategies to enable learning to happen: checking what they already know; breaking a complex task into digestible chunks; scaffolding to match the readiness of learners; checks and opportunities for practice; feeding back to correct and guide; integrating the parts; taking away the scaffolds; etc.

Teacher learning is just like every other kind of learning. If we want teachers to get better at something as complex as teaching, we need to provide the same conditions we provide for our students to support their learning.

Feedback for teachers often comes from colleagues, managers or outside experts. However, those colleagues often over-estimate their own ability to make sound judgments about overall effectiveness (Coe, 2014) and may also not understand the underlying mechanisms and theories that would enable them



to give really helpful formative feedback. Not all feedback is good feedback.

For some aspects of classroom teaching, there may be task-inherent feedback: if children are climbing up the walls it will be obvious to any teacher that their classroom management could be improved. However, even this feedback may lack formative value. Worse still, for many aspects of its performance teaching may be characterised as a "wicked domain", where feedback is either not available, biased or arrives too late (Hogarth 2003). People still form intuitions and make judgments, but they are often wrong, so learning is unlikely to occur and improvement is slow at best (Hogarth et al, 2015).

If we could create "kind environments" with feedback loops that allow teachers to gain timely and trustworthy information about the quality and impact of their teaching, my hypothesis is that this could help create the conditions for better teacher learning. In an environment with good feedback, teachers can, we hope, learn to be more effective, optimising their behaviour to suit their context.

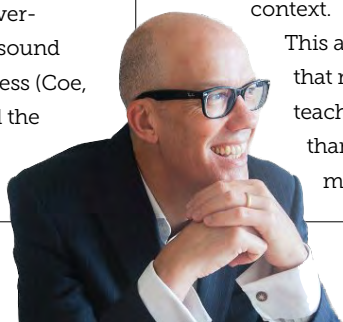
This approach acknowledges that many aspects of "effective teaching" may be more complex than we can easily describe, measure or advise. What

is effective in one context may not be in another. There simply is no recipe, and, in the words of Dylan Wiliam, "Research can't tell teachers what to do".

But if we create feedback that allows teachers to see clearly whether what they try is working and combine these kinds of feedback with targeted support and professional learning (eg through expert coaching; Kraft et al, 2018), then the combination will be more powerful than either alone. And we know that teachers improve most "when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment" (Kini and Podolsky, 2016), so the role of school leaders in creating this environment is crucial.

Last week, Evidence Based Education, in partnership with Cambridge International, published the Great Teaching Toolkit: Evidence Review. This research presents an accessible summary of the evidence about what teacher practices make a difference to their students' learning, and offers a framework for teachers to develop the underlying skills and knowledge to be more effective. It is the first step to creating a range of tools and resources that can support teachers in learning to be (even) better.

Contact Schools Week for a full list of references without hyperlinks



WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

FRIDAY

Avid readers of Week in Westminster will remember how last week's column set out the barely organised chaos that surrounded the government's announcement of a £1 billion education catch-up package.

As dawn broke following the fiasco, which saw at least one national newspaper go to print with the early version of the government's press release before all the facts in it had been changed, details of the inter-departmental child's play emerged from those in the know.

Sources familiar with the inner workings say the Treasury and Number 10, like school bullies holding lunch money to ransom, used the announcement to lord it over the DfE, forcing last-minute concessions that excluded some institutions and reducing the length of the national tutoring programme from two years to one.

The DfE's partners, meanwhile, looked on in horror as the proposals they'd worked up with a moment's notice were kicked about like a political football.

As one sector leader remarked during the night of many press releases: "Shambles."

Seemingly not in the mood for technical questions about its catch-up plan, Downing Street yet again declined to let Schools Week ask a question at its briefing, despite repeated requests.

We wear their fear as a badge of honour.

MONDAY

So preposterous was the government's mishandling of its "catch-up plan" announcement last week, that the whole sorry business was raised in the Commons this week.

In what would turn out to be her last outing as shadow education secretary, Rebecca Long-Bailey quizzed Gavin Williamson on why the announcement had been changed at the last minute to exclude early years and 16-to-19 providers.

With great vigour, Gav ducked the question, choosing instead to attack Labour for its position on schools reopening (whatever it is), to the extent that he was upbraided by the Speaker because, "it is the opposition who ask the questions, not the other way round".

Despite the tough questions, the education secretary seemed more feisty than usual at the Despatch Box.

Was it because he was pleased about his £1 billion catch-up package, or has he just been told by somebody higher up to do something about the fact he often sounds like a police officer delivering bad news?

THURSDAY

If anonymous briefings from government are to be believed, Gavin Williamson is on borrowed time at the DfE, with Downing Street supposedly unhappy with what they see as his mishandling of their woeful response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Whatever is going on, Williamson

is a man who needs his trusted advisers right now. Which is why it must be more than a little inconvenient that one of them is hauling out.

Buried in an ESFA briefing this week was the news that Warwick Sharp, Gav's principal private secretary (a civil service, not political, role), is moving later in the summer to take up residence as head of the agency's academies and maintained schools directorate.

He is replacing Mike Pettifer, who has been appointed as director "responsible for overseeing the department's Covid-19 continuing response plan". They must have had to cough up for a decent pay rise for anyone to want that job!

Sharp is no doubt moving for a myriad of reasons, but we can't help but think being a key adviser to the ed sec won't have been easy these past few months...

Farewell, then, Rebecca Long-Bailey. Her two months as shadow education secretary came to an abrupt end today after she retweeted an article that "contained an antisemitic conspiracy theory".

Long-Bailey said she was "proud of the policies we have developed within the party, from our Green Industrial Revolution to a National Education Service". The bombshell of the NES being developed is news to the sector, who are still waiting for some actual details years after it was first touted.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Start Date: January 2021

Salary: L30 – 33 (£83,757 - £90,145)

Job Role: Full time, Permanent



The Shared Learning Trust

**THE CHALK
HILLS ACADEMY**

The Chalk Hills Academy is seeking an exceptional candidate to provide outstanding leadership to our academy. You will work closely with the Executive Principal to ensure that excellence and high standards are attained in all areas. As Head of School, you will provide operational leadership, making marked improvements in teaching, learning and student performance.

This is a pivotal role in our academy's leadership structure; a role where you will shape our future with drive and ambition, building on the good work that is already taking place.

We are looking for a student focused leader who will:

- lead from the front
- be visible to the school community
- be concerned about rewards

- be consistent
- build on current good progress and move the Academy to an Outstanding Ofsted rating
- encourage high standards of achievement and behaviour through rewards and structure
- build strong relationships by being approachable and getting to know students
- build strong relationships by being approachable and getting to know staff
- have experience of Sixth Forms and will continue to build this in terms of both student outcomes and financial viability

If you share our vision for education and are passionate about raising educational attainment and standards to ensure all learners reach their full potential, you will be well placed to join our academy and make a difference.

Visits and discussions with the Executive Principal are warmly welcomed.

Closing Date:
Friday 11th September at 9am

Interviews:
21st & 22nd September

(successful candidates on day one will go through to day two **22nd**)

If you are interested in this job opportunity, please do apply online today via our career site on <https://www.mynewterm.com/trust/The-Shared-Learning-Trust/135337>

PRINCIPAL, SUTTON COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Salary: Competitive

Start date: 1 January 2021

You won't just transform our academy. You'll transform our students' lives.

You could wait a lifetime for a challenge like this to appear again. Sutton Community Academy has exceptional potential, but we need an exceptional leader to take us there. Having been placed in Serious Weaknesses, we recognise that the only way is up – but we also believe that with you at the helm, the sky's the limit.

At the heart of the Academy Transformation Trust, we deliver the best possible education to young people from relatively deprived urban backgrounds. We can't boast extensive outside space or all the facilities you might find in another academy. We can boast a closely-knit, welcoming and passionate teaching team, students who want to make something of their lives, and a place at the very centre of the local community.

In short, we're an ambitious academy and we need an equally visionary Principal. We're currently investing significantly in our school theatre, which is a focal point for local activities, but we regard you as the most important investment we'll ever make.

Let us be perfectly clear: we're not just looking for another Principal and we're not just looking for rapid improvement. As our trust's name makes clear, we want you

to deliver transformation: of the way we teach and learn, of our extensive academic, vocational and leisure programmes, and above all of the way our students see themselves and their futures.

Your dedication will make them realise that education is the key to success in life, and that with the right attitudes, skills and qualifications anyone can transcend their circumstances. In return, we offer 38 leadership development pathways to give you the ongoing professional development you need to become the school leader you've always wanted to be. What's more, once you've made your mark on Sutton Community Academy – and more broadly on an entire region of Nottinghamshire – we have a wealth of other schools that could benefit from your imagination and integrity as a member of the Trust's senior management team.

If you're a seasoned school leader with an appetite to become much, much more, this is your chance to shine and take us all the way to Outstanding.

Closing Date: Monday 6th July 2020, 9am.

Sutton Community Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We particularly welcome applications from under represented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.





HEADTEACHER ST LAURENCE SCHOOL

SALARY RANGE: LEADERSHIP SCALE RANGE
L29 - L39 (£81,723 - £104,368)

The Governors wish to appoint an outstanding leader to the post of Headteacher at St Laurence School. The vacancy has arisen as the result of the planned retirement of the Headteacher. We are looking for an exceptional person to take over the headship of St Laurence after a sustained period of school improvement, during which standards have risen, facilities have been developed and the roll has increased. Our latest Ofsted inspection judged St Laurence as 'good' with outstanding features. The last SIAMS inspection was also graded as 'good'.

Our previous recruitment process was interrupted by school closures as a result of Covid-19. Previous applicants need not re-apply.

St Laurence is a popular and successful 11-18 mixed academy, set in the beautiful and historic Wiltshire town of Bradford on Avon and just a few miles from Bath. There are currently 1419 students on our roll and a thriving Sixth Form of 287 students.

The successful candidate will:

- Provide inspirational, strategic and professional leadership
- Ensure high quality teaching and learning experiences for all our young people
- Not need to be of any faith but must be committed to preserving the School's distinctive Christian vision in line with the SIAMS schedule
- Build upon the very positive relationships within the school and with the wider community, based upon the values of trust, fairness, mutual respect and inclusiveness
- Promote high standards of behaviour, mutual respect, attendance, and individual attainment
- Maintain the needs and aspirations of all students at the centre of our thinking
- For full details of this position together with the application process please visit our website www.st-laurence.com

Closing date: Midday, Friday 3rd July 2020

Interviews: 14th-16th September 2020

Start Date: 1st January 2021

Please feel free to contact **Fergus Stewart** (headteacher@st-laurence.com) for an informal conversation before applying.

If you would like to visit the school prior to submitting an application, please contact the Head's PA, **Sally Hackett**: salhac@st-laurence.com.

Visits can be arranged, subject to social distancing requirements.

Offers of employment are subject to Enhanced DBS checks and references.

PRINCIPAL

Ravens Academy
Clacton-on-Sea, Essex
Salary: Competitive



An amazing opportunity to lead a high-performing academy.

At Ravens Academy, we are a friendly, welcoming academy committed to achieving together. We work alongside children, their parents and the wider community to provide a rich and rewarding education for all of our learners. We are very proud of each of our children and we continue to work hard to inspire every pupil in our academy to succeed and develop.

The rich, engaging curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils are supported and challenged to be the very best they can be, resulting in ambitious and highly successful learners. There is an unwavering commitment to ensure that every child gains the knowledge, skills and character needed to succeed.

More than a Principal; you will be an ambassador and inspiration for colleagues and pupils alike. You will embrace the collaborative, ambitious vision of Academy Transformation Trust and be an advocate for success and evolution in the wider education community.

Experienced within primary education, you'll bring an impressive track

record of school improvement and be an ethical, forward-thinking leader who will make a difference - every day.

Equally importantly, you will have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding legislation, be absolutely committed to best practice and determined to champion our children and support their families in order to make a difference - every day.

If you're ready to shape the future of our Ravens Academy family, and are excited by the opportunities for collaboration and career development within our expanding network of 22 academies, please apply now.

Closing Date: Sunday 5th July 2020, midnight

Academy Transformation Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

All offers of employment will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check, 2 satisfactory references and any other necessary checks.

**SCHOOLS WEEK | FE WEEK | EDU
WEEK JOBS**

Recruitment advertising during the Coronavirus Pandemic

To assist organisations over the forthcoming weeks, Schools Week, FE Week and EduWeek Jobs will be offering the following:

- **Free recruitment advertising for Coronavirus cover roles** at education settings remaining open to support key-workers
- **On all online listings**
 - A **free of charge** extension by up to 8 weeks after the closing date
- **On all adverts within the digital editions**
 - A **free of charge** second insertion of your advert

CLICK HERE TO**ADVERTISE
A ROLE****CLICK HERE TO****SPEAK TO A
MEMBER OF
THE TEAM**