

# SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Leverage leaders: game-change, or latest fad?



P15

Are we facing an outbreak of early retirements?



P22

Cash-boost grammars get less inclusive



P4

The glitch barring schools from covid tests



P10

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## ‘Incompetent and inept’

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School leaders and colleagues are at breaking point after countless broken promises over the Covid response. Now on the cusp of a second wave, which will cause enormous upheaval across the whole of society, we respectfully ask our prime minister to tuck his shirt in, straighten up and do his job.

SEE PAGES 9, 10 AND 16

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# SCHOOLS WEEK

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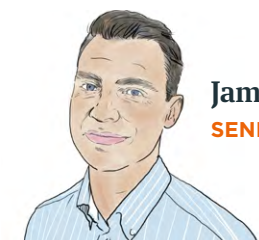
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# £50m for expansion, but grammars get less inclusive

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The government's £50 million grammar schools expansion scheme to improve access for poorer pupils has instead created "more places for the middle classes".

Analysis of admissions data from 14 of the 16 schools that split the selective schools expansion fund (SSEF) shows just 77 additional pupil premium places in three years, despite the number of overall places in those school increasing by 367. It means each additional place for a disadvantaged pupil has cost more than £630,000.

Schools receiving cash were expected to have "ambitious but deliverable" plans for increasing access. This was the first year such plans came into effect.

But the proportion of pupil premium pupils dropped in five of the schools.

Nuala Burgess, the chair of anti-selection campaign group Comprehensive Future, said the fund "appears to have achieved exactly the opposite of its original purpose: it has provided more grammar school places for the middle classes".

However, grammar heads said the coronavirus pandemic dented progress by disrupting outreach plans.

Unveiled by ministers in 2016, the SSEF funds expansion in selective schools on the proviso that they become more inclusive. Nick Gibb, the schools minister, claimed that the programme would lead to "significantly more" help for disadvantaged children.

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys (AGSB)

in Manchester was aiming to increase pupil premium admissions to 7 per cent by this year.

However, provisional figures show that the proportion of year 7 pupils eligible for the pupil premium fell from 5.8 per cent in 2017 to 3.9 per cent this year.

Graeme Wright, the school's head, said outreach work "takes time to have an impact and the coronavirus disruptions have hindered our work". He added the school remained "focused on promoting all the opportunities on offer at AGSB for pupil premium families".

Rochester Grammar School in Kent pledged to increase the proportion of pupils from deprived backgrounds to 16 per cent by next year. But the proportion of pupil premium pupils in year 7 fell from 6.7 per cent in 2017 to 5.88 per cent this year.

A school spokesperson said: "Our strategy to increase the number of pupil premium students at the school started this month. Its positive impact will therefore clearly not be seen until next year's year 7 intake."

Bournemouth School had pledged to prioritise looked-after children and pupil premium pupils, and to change its catchment area to exclude some affluent postcodes.

But the proportion of pupil premium year 7 pupils fell from 9.6 per cent in 2017 to 4.9 per cent this year.

The school has been working with the neighbouring Bournemouth School for Girls (BSG) on its outreach work. The girls' school has had more success, boosting its pupil premium representation from 2.3 per cent to 5.5 per cent between 2017 and 2020.

But Alistair Brien, BSG's head, said the

coronavirus pandemic had "got in the way" of progress.

"Covid this year has inevitably meant that our summer term programme of sixth-formers going into local primary schools to support year 5s with test preparation has had to be abandoned."

Michael Stimpson, the head of St Michael's Catholic Grammar School in Barnet, north London, said his school had been "very limited" in outreach activities this year. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupil premium pupils rose from 6.3 per cent in 2017 to 7.8 per cent this year.

Other successes include Lawrence Sheriff school in Rugby, Kendrick School in Reading, and Queen Mary's Grammar School in Walsall – the latter boosted the proportion of pupil premium pupils from 7.3 per cent to 22.8 per cent.

But Ryan Shorthouse, the chief executive of the centre-right think tank Bright Blue, said the data showed that grammar schools "never will be the kind of great engines of social mobility that advocates want them to be. We should be directing precious government resource elsewhere to really improve excellence and equity in the education system."

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We continue to work with the sector to encourage all grammar schools to do more to increase access for disadvantaged children."

**Nerd note:** All 2020 figures are correct as of this week, except for Queen Mary's Grammar School, Chelmsford County High School in Essex, John Hampden and Sir William Borlase's, both in Buckinghamshire, which are based on a Comprehensive Future freedom of information request in June and were not updated when the schools were contacted for comment.

School name	2017			2020			Change (percentage points)
	Pupil premium intake	Overall year 7 intake	Percentage PP	Pupil premium intake	Overall year 7 intake	Percentage PP	
Queen Mary's Grammar School*	11	150	7.3%	41	180	22.8%	+15.5
Colchester County High School for Girls	5	160	3.1%	17	192	8.9%	+5.8
Lawrence Sheriff School	5	120	4.2%	14	150	9.3%	+5.1
Kendrick School	2	96	2.1%	8	128	6.3%	+4.2
Wolverhampton Girls' High School*	14	145	9.7%	24	180	13.3%	+3.6
Colyton Grammar School	11	155	7.1%	16	155	10.3%	+3.2
Bournemouth School for Girls	4	174	2.3%	10	183	5.5%	+3.2
Chelmsford County High School for Girls*	3	150	2.0%	8	180	4.4%	+2.4
St Michael's Catholic Grammar School	6	96	6.3%	10	128	7.8%	+1.5
The Rochester Grammar School	12	179	6.7%	14	238	5.9%	-0.8
John Hampden Grammar School*	5	158	3.2%	4	181	2.2%	-1
Sir William Borlase's Grammar School*	3	123	2.4%	2	150	1.3%	-1.1
Altrincham Grammar School for Boys*	12	206	5.8%	8	207	3.9%	-1.9
Bournemouth School	15	157	9.6%	9	184	4.9%	-4.7

\* 2020 pupil premium figure is provisional

Schools Week was unable to obtain verifiable figures for Queen Mary's High School and Sir Thomas Rich's School

## News

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# Ofsted to check RSE 'readiness' from January

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Schools will have their "readiness" to teach the new relationships and sex education curriculum assessed by Ofsted from January, the watchdog has said.

And schools failing to teach about LGBT relationships from the summer term in 2021 risk a 'requires improvement' judgement for their leadership and management.

New guidance issued by Ofsted yesterday confirms inspectors will begin looking at how prepared schools are to meet the Department for Education's statutory guidance on RSE when full inspections resume, currently slated for January.

However, although inspectors will comment on schools' readiness to comply with the guidance in their reports from the new year, school compliance "will not impact inspection judgements until the start of the summer term 2021".

Teaching relationships education is compulsory in all schools from this year, with sex education also compulsory in secondary schools. However, due to the coronavirus outbreak, the DfE has given schools "flexibility over how they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching".

Schools have been told they "should aim



to start preparations to deliver the new curriculum as soon as possible and start teaching the new content by at least the start of the summer term 2021", but "should still be able to show how they will cover the whole curriculum in the future".

Ofsted has published new guidance yesterday on inspecting the teaching of protected characteristics, prompted by questions from schools about what to teach – particularly in relation to sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

The guidance states that separate to the requirement to teach RSE, inspectors will gather evidence on how schools promote equality "and pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics", which will be used to inform their judgement on the personal development of pupils.

From January, inspectors will comment in reports if they find that primary and secondary schools do not teach about LGBT relationships and don't yet have "adequate plans" to meet the DfE's statutory guidance by the start of the summer.

From the start of summer term, if a secondary school is not teaching about LGBT relationships, inspectors "will consider this when making the leadership and management judgement", and schools "will not ordinarily receive a judgement for this better than requires improvement".

For primary schools not teaching about LGBT relationships from summer 2021, this will not have an impact on the leadership and management judgement "as long as the school can satisfy inspectors that it has still fulfilled the requirements of the DfE's statutory guidance".

"If it cannot do this, for example if it has failed to consult with parents, inspectors will consider this when making the leadership and management judgement."

Again, schools found to have failed to do this "will not ordinarily receive a judgement for this better than requires improvement".

Inspectors will not "specifically explore the school's readiness to comply with the DfE's statutory guidance" during interim visits this term. However, schools can choose to discuss it with inspectors, who "may comment on this in the letter published after the visit".

Ofsted guidance also states that schools "are at liberty to teach the tenets of any faith on the protected characteristics", but "must also explain the legal rights LGBT people have under UK law, and that this and LGBT people must be respected".

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

## Pay rise costs takes sheen off extra funding

School funding will still be six per cent lower than it was in 2010 after cash swallowed up by rising salaries is taken into account, a new study has found.

The government has promised to pump an extra £7.1 billion into the schools budget by 2023, which the Institute for Fiscal Studies has said "near enough" reverses the 9 per cent spending cuts since 2010.

However, the organisation's annual report on spending, published today, says the real-terms increase is actually only 6 per cent once cash to cover teacher pay rises is taken into account.

The report also flags how the funding advantage per pupil at the most deprived

schools has shrunk from 35 per cent in 2011 to 25 per cent in 2019 – despite the introduction of the pupil premium payments.

Dr Luke Sibbets, research fellow at the IFS, said this will present a particular problem for these schools with a "likely widening of educational inequalities during lockdown".

He added: "Most of the Covid catch-up funding will be spread across all schools, regardless of disadvantage. This provides a strong case for greater targeting of additional funding to more deprived schools."

Julie McCulloch, director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders, said it is "shameful that those serving

deprived communities have been particularly badly affected. On the ground, this translates into cuts to the curriculum, and larger class sizes".

The Department for Education said its funding boost is "giving every school more money for every child".

They said the national funding formula will "continue to target additional funding ... for schools with high numbers of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds".

But the IFS said the NFF will deliver funding increase of up to four percentage points less in schools in poorer areas compared to their more affluent counterparts up to 2021.



# Closing trust gave departing CEO six-figure pay-off

JAMES CARR

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EXCLUSIVE

An academy trust set to close over financial worries awarded its outgoing chief executive a £115,000 severance package – before handing its schools to another trust with a six-figure pension deficit.

Floreat Education Academies Trust awarded chief executive Janet Hilary £115,062 in severance and redundancy pay last year, its final accounts have revealed.

The trust, founded by former David Cameron aide Lord O'Shaughnessy, decided to close last year after deeming it unviable to carry on running just two primary schools.

However, the accounts show the trust had a £400,000 pension deficit, of which the vast majority was transferred along with the two remaining schools to GLF Schools in September.

Dr Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the National Education Union, raised concerns about "paying over and above the odds for redundancy" if you are "handing over a trust with nearly half-a-million-pound deficit".

She added: "The problem is there are completely insufficient checks and balances about how academies spend their money and whilst this remains the case you are going to get example after example of this".

Hilary's pay-off was made up of an £85,062 contractual redundancy payment, and another £30,000 severance fee.

This was awarded on top of her £132,124 salary last year.

Floreat said the payment was calculated based on her "tenure in the teaching profession, her salary, and the exceptional service she provided to the Floreat pupils, teachers and parents".

The £30,000 was "determined by trustees on the basis of external legal advice, which took into account Education and



Skills Funding Agency guidance as well as contractual and moral obligations".

Hilary is one of Floreat's trustees, alongside O'Shaughnessy. However, the trust said "at no point" was she involved in "deliberations on this matter".

Trusts must seek approval from the ESFA for severance payments of more than £50,000. However, this strictly relates to the non-contractual element of a payment.

Education lawyer Antony Power, of PHP Law, said he would usually advise clients to obtain consent from the ESFA when dealing with such large payouts – or risk criticism by the funding watchdog "on a value for money basis".

But Leora Cruddas, chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said it is "absolutely right that the CEO, as would the staff in any other organisation which is essentially closing, receive a redundancy package".

"Generally speaking, I would expect a good employer to be honouring their legal and contractual commitments and be making a redundancy package."

A spokesperson for GLF said it had "no involvement or sight" of the severance details which were undertaken "prior to the schools transferring". They confirmed they had inherited the pension deficits related to both schools.

Floreat said that "responsibility for addressing" the deficit was

"shared between the two trusts". It's understood Floreat paid off the deficit associated with the Floreat Brentford Primary School, in west London, which closed in August 2018.

Pension deficits are normally passed on when schools are transferred between trusts.

However the government has stepped in before to bail out the TBAP multi-academy trust so it could continue to pay its pension contributions.

The FEAT accounts also show Hilary's remuneration included an extra £17,000 worth of "accommodation".

Schools Week revealed last year the trust had been renting a two-bedroom flat near to Floreat Montague Park primary school in Wokingham for Hilary – around 35 miles away from her London home.

At the time Floreat said it was the "best outcome and value for money" as Hilary had to operate as acting head at Floreat Montague after both the head and assistant head went on maternity leave.

Last year it was also discovered Floreat was advertising for unpaid volunteers to fill key roles such as finance assistant, office administrator and personal assistant to the chief executive.

Each prospective applicant was expected to work between three and five days a week, with hours ranging from full-time to a minimum of two to three hours a day.

Floreat was set up in 2014 with a pledge to focus on the "classical ideal" of education.



Lord O'Shaughnessy

# Termination notice 'could not have come at worse moment'

**SAMANTHA BOOTH**

**@SAMANTHAJBOTH**

An academy trust co-founded by a multi-millionaire Conservative party donor has accused the government of causing "dreadful unnecessary turbulence" by stripping it of a school during the coronavirus pandemic.

The case exposes brewing tensions over the reintroduction of intervention and accountability measures during a time when schools say they are working tirelessly to deal with Covid-19.

The Landau Forte Charitable Trust was issued with a termination notice for one of its primary schools on Monday. The government said there was no formal evidence that the trust's support "has had, or is having, any impact on outcomes for pupils".

"There is a very real risk that performance will not improve and children will not receive the education they deserve," said Carol Gray, the interim regional schools commissioner for the East Midlands and Humber.

Landau Forte Academy Moorhead, in Derby, has been judged inadequate twice, most recently in March last year.

But a spokesperson for the trust, whose founding sponsors are Martin Landau, a property developer, and Sir Rocco Forte, a hotelier, said the "timing could not have come at a worse moment, creating dreadful unnecessary turbulence when schools across the country are working tirelessly to ensure learning is not further disrupted by the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic".

Tom Richmond, the director of the EDSK think-tank and a former government adviser, said the government was right to "demand high standards" of schools, but added that it was "hard to ignore" they were facing "an extraordinary set of challenges right now that will make it extremely difficult for them to demonstrate that standards are improving".



Boris Johnson

"With the demise of the testing regime for primary schools this summer, plus the scale of disruption to pupils' learning since the start of the year, it is entirely possible that we will see more incidents in the coming months of officials claiming that a school is underperforming, but with little opportunity for the school to show they are progressing.

"It also remains to be seen whether there are enough high-performing trusts available in the current circumstances with the capacity and expertise to take on more schools."

Gavin Williamson told the education select committee on Wednesday that he was "incredibly conscious" of the broader pressures schools faced. "This is why we are continuing work with the sector to make sure we are not putting added and undue pressures on them, but they can be focusing on the job in hand."

But the education secretary said that it was "important" to look towards returning to measures of accountability, making sure it was "sympathetic and empathetic".

Forte, the chairman of Rocco Forte Hotels, donated £100,000 to the Conservative party to back Boris Johnson in last year's election, according to the *Daily Mail*.

He was said in 2019 to be worth £250 million.

Gray, who met the trust in February, said she believed the school "would improve more quickly with a stronger trust with a history of school improvement".

Only 28 per cent of pupils met the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2019, compared with a national average of 65 per cent.

But the trust said recent results showed a better picture, including a rise in pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics from 33 per cent in 2018-19, to 72 per cent in 2019-20.

The trust spokesperson said it was "appealing" the notice as the Department for Education had "failed to acknowledge the significant improvements that have been made over the last two years, not to mention the tremendous efforts of all our dedicated staff in these extraordinary times".

There is no route of appeal for such notices, but the trust would not comment on what it meant by appealing.

The government is also facing a legal challenge from the Khalsa Academies Trust over a termination notice issued during school lockdowns for Khalsa Secondary Academy in south Bucks.

The trust said the school had made the required improvements, but could not demonstrate this while Ofsted inspections were suspended.



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# Coronavirus outbreak

## We've got this - no more delays on health advice, says DfE

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

INVESTIGATES

The Department for Education has seized control of handling school coronavirus cases after headteachers were left in "limbo" waiting for official health advice.

A Schools Week investigation on Wednesday revealed how schools had to wait three days for advice from local health protection teams on how to handle outbreaks.

Yesterday, a day after we published our investigation, the DfE announced it was overhauling the reporting system and establishing a new national helpline. It said the delays were forcing staff and pupils to stay away from school longer than necessary.

James Bowen, the director of policy at the NAHT school leaders' union, said the change could be a "step in the right direction - as long as it works".

"It's vital school leaders get advice in a timely fashion, they can't be sat around for hours waiting for it. We've been told this [the new system] will deliver more capacity."

But there could be teething problems.

Ian McNeilly, the chief executive of the de Ferrers Academy Trust, called the helpline on Thursday morning, but was told to ring Public Health England (PHE). He did, and was told to call the new helpline (see box out).

He told Schools Week: "I'm not the type to criticise, but for the DfE to tell all schools to call this new helpline - and then it not be ready and cause additional work for everyone - is not really fair. I hope it's teething problems and sorted soon."

In an email to schools, the department said callers to the new helpline would be put through

to a "team of advisers who will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice, and work through a risk assessment to identify close contacts".

This would "free up capacity of the Public Health England's local health protection teams to deal with more complex cases, for example special schools and universities, or outbreaks where there is more than one confirmed case".

Advisers would escalate the cases as necessary "following a triaging of your circumstances during the call".

The DfE said this would allow schools better access to support "in a timely manner where it is needed to ensure the right proportionate action is taken in asking close contacts of confirmed cases to self-isolate, while the remainder of the school can continue with minimum disruption".

In a letter to the prime minister this week, headteacher unions said the delays in advice following positive cases left them in an "impossible situation".

They either had to leave close contacts of the infected person in school while they waited for guidance, or make a public health call themselves and decide who to send home.

Schools Week revealed how two schools waited nearly four days for advice. Another was told to make its own decision - but its local health protection team then said it had been "too heavy-handed".

The government promised schools would get "rapid" assistance from health officials who would "guide them through the actions they need to take" following positive cases.

Meanwhile, heads have told of conflicting advice - with concerns that health teams have been



pressured into sending fewer pupils home.

At the start of term, PHE advised Buile Hill Academy in Salford that all pupils within a bubble with a positive case self-isolate.

However, the advice following a more recent case was to only send home children who had been in direct contact with the child who tested positive.

David Clayton, the chief executive of Consilium Academies, which runs the school, told Schools Week: "We understand advice and guidance evolves, but within a short space of time the 'tightening' of the rules creates some significant challenges when providing reassurance and clarity to a community."

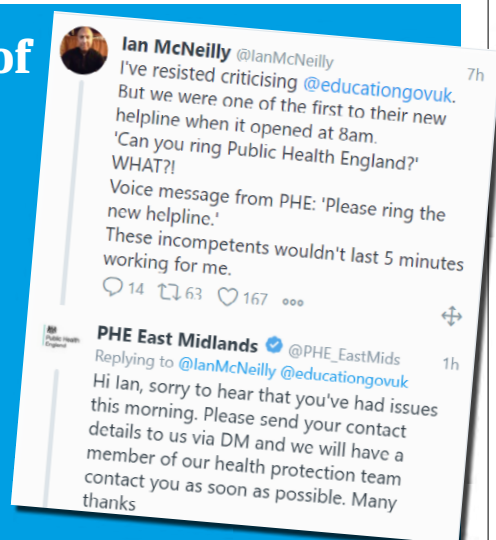
## Bad start: school tells of new helpline woes

**Thursday, 8am:** Called new DfE helpline to alert over positive test. Told to call PHE

**8.15am:** An answerphone message from PHE said to call the DfE

**8.30am:** DfE called back to say they needed more details, and PHE would call

**2.30pm:** No call from PHE, but trust CEO gets a tweet from PHE asking for his contact details



## HOW TO REACH THE NEW HELPLINE

The new helpline can be reached by calling the DfE's existing helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting the option for reporting a positive case.

It covers early years settings, including nurseries; schools, including primary, infant or junior, middle and secondary, boarding and special schools; and colleges.

It will be open from Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

# Coronavirus outbreak

## Anger as government admits test and trace website coding error

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@FCDWHITTAKER

INVESTIGATES

A coding glitch caused by the government's "failure" to carry out proper software testing is preventing people from booking Covid tests.

There have been widespread reports of people – including school staff and pupils – not being able to book tests via the government's website, despite claims that local centres still have appointments available.

But programmers have reported a glitch with the booking website itself may be blocking some users from getting through to live appointments.

The problem relates to a stage in the registration process where website visitors can toggle between drive-through and walk-through centres.

Anyone who clicks to change the type of testing site they want to access is subsequently told there are no sites available.

However the website's code shows that what's actually happening is the website is failing to connect with the appointments system – so it isn't even checking whether sites are available.

But rather than showing on the website as an "error", the page instead still states "no test sites available".

A Twitter user who spotted the problem, @itsterry, said this means "you'll have lots of people toggling these to no avail".

However, users have been reported being able to get a test if they go back through the



registration process again but don't toggle between the type of testing site.

A government source said it is aware of a "minor coding error" and was working to fix it, but has claimed the glitch did not have "any significant impact on the ability of people to access testing".

However Baroness Harding, head of the government's test and trace programme, has suggested that as many as 750,000 Covid test requests go unanswered every day.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said she was "speechless".

"In every one of its responses to this pandemic, the government has been incompetent and inept," she told *Schools Week*.

"For school staff who want to be in school doing their jobs, to not be able to be able to get tests because of a coding error just adds insult to injury."

She said the government should face questions about how long it had known about the error and what it had done about it.

The problem itself has been highlighted on Twitter by a number of programmers. *Schools Week* was also able to verify it.

Adam Leon Smith, who chairs the software testing specialist group of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, said he had analysed the problem with the site and found "two failures in the testing of it".

"First it is necessary to understand that there are two parts in operation – a web page and a service that is telling the web page if tests are available," he told *Schools Week*.

"Firstly, it has not been tested in an equivalent environment. The error that is occurring is caused because the web page is trying to contact a service on a different computer to the one it 'lives' on – this is totally normal, but is not working here due to a mis-configuration.

"The fact this was not caught in a test process implies that the testing was done in an environment where it did not have to make an equivalent interaction, probably as both the web site and the service were on the same computer, to save money and time.

"The second problem is that it has not been through a process of resilience testing to determine how the system will operate outside normal parameters. Such a test would have checked what happened if any dependencies were unavailable, and handled it more gracefully than just saying no tests were available."

The Department of Health and Social Care was approached for comment.

Leon Smith added: "It would be unprofessional for any organisation to put any system live without involving testing professionals, and it is not uncommon for 30 to 50 per cent of IT project budget to be allocated to testing activities."

## More testing kits could be on their way

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

The government is looking at increasing the number of Covid-19 testing kits issued to schools.

Conservative MP Nick Fletcher yesterday urged his party to increase the number for each school from ten to 30 to "help pupils remain in the classroom".

*Schools Week* revealed last week how schools were exhausting their small supplies as the government's test and trace system fell over. They can now order more kits, which are supplied in sets of ten.

But when asked whether the government

was looking at increasing the number schools received, Matt Hancock, the health secretary, said: "Yes, we are looking at exactly that."

Figures from Teacher Tapp show some 25,000 teachers (5 per cent) have needed a test in the past seven days.

Some schools have had to abandon full-time teaching and move to a rota because of the high number of staff self-isolating.

Problems with the government's current testing capacity have been well documented with people finding it near impossible to book a test or being told their "nearest" testing

centre is hundreds of miles away –

Boris Johnson admitted yesterday the government did not have enough testing capacity to keep up with demand.

This was despite a pledge from the Department for Education earlier this year that it would make it "as easy as possible" for school staff and pupils to get tests.

The government is set to publish a prioritisation list for testing within the next few days. Both *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* reported this would include school staff.



# Fears HSE spot checks will be latest outsourcing 'disaster'

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

INVESTIGATES

The government's "disastrous" record on outsourcing has left school leaders fearing the new coronavirus health and safety spot checks might "fall short".

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is making 15-minute phone calls to check schools in England have risk assessments in place and "appropriate arrangements" to reduce the risk posed by Covid-19. Inspectors could make follow-up visits if the call "raises concerns".

However, to make sure it has capacity, the regulator has outsourced the initial calls to the private company Civica.

James Bowen, the director of policy at school leaders' union NAHT, said the government's record on outsourcing was a concern.

"We know that some elements of the testing and tracing system have been outsourced to other companies," he said. "This is fine if it improves the response, but as we know in these cases, the results have been pretty disastrous."

He also pointed to the Department for Education's use of Edenred to deliver the national free school meal voucher scheme, which was quickly overwhelmed by demand, leaving families without food.

Hayley Dunn, the business leadership specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said outsourced callers were not health and safety experts and for the most part "must be working to a script".

HSE is carrying out spot checks to review a school's measures taken for reopening, and to minimise spread of Covid-19.

A spokesperson for the regulator told *Schools Week* it was an "experienced third-party contractor". The spot checkers had received "training on the Covid secure guidance".



James Bowen



The questionnaire they used had also been put together by HSE experts.

"The calls' aims are to identify if there are any areas of concern and assess if the risks outlined in the Covid secure guidance are being managed effectively.

"The calls are not about the more traditional health and safety practices of the school; they are concentrated on understanding and implementing the necessary controls outlined by the schools Covid secure guidance."

But if there were concerns after the initial call, the school would be referred for "further intervention", which might include a visit.

Bowen added: "Because the calls will not necessarily be conducted by fully trained HSE inspectors, this may reduce the quality of the information that is shared.

"We are also worried that whilst they are on the call, schools will not be able to enquire with inspectors or get guidance about the measures they have put in place. The data gathered by non-expert call handlers could be of limited use to HSE when it is processed."

NAHT has sought assurances from the HSE that their subcontracting efforts "will not fall short".

Civica focuses on public sector work. It

helped Spelthorne Borough Council on the outskirts of London handle call volumes during the pandemic.

It also uses health and safety software to process data to "reduce workplace incidents" as well as to control risks and track actions.

Civica declined to comment.

HSE said it assured the calls by analysing the responses recorded, but also through inspectors' visits to a "selection of premises to ratify the information given on the call".

Jane Day, the head of the Good Shepherd Primary School in Croydon, south London, said her phone call was not challenging. It seemed like "one more hurdle to go through".

"I don't know if I had not answered sufficiently, would they have prompted me more? So, I was left thinking 'well, I think I've answered them all correctly'.

"[The call handler] was pleasant and she wasn't making me feel anxious in any way, but it just seemed to be one more thing to do in a busy day."

In a bulletin published earlier this month, the HSE said enforcement could follow if inspectors encountered serious risks. However, it anticipated advice would be enough to resolve any issues.

# New 'flagship' study to solve why teachers leave

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

EXCLUSIVE

A new five-year study of 15,000 teachers will assess why staff drop out of the profession, the impact of Covid-19 and changing working conditions.

The Department for Education says the longitudinal study will serve as its "flagship workforce research vehicle" and "fill key evidence gaps on a long-term basis".

In particular, the study will help officials understand the "key drivers" that influence teacher retention and recruitment through a "focus on exploring teacher career journeys".

Crucially, it will follow teachers who leave the profession, helping policymakers plug retention problems.

The overall proportion of teachers who leave has fallen slightly from 9.6 per cent in 2018 to 9.2 per cent last year. However, the five-year retention rate has dropped to 67.4 per cent, compared with 68 per cent in the previous year.

The tender for the contract states: "Despite the importance of understanding the teacher labour market, there exists no longitudinal study of teachers in England... [The study] will fill key evidence gaps on a long-term basis, provide



sustained support to work coming out from the recruitment and retention strategy, and inform and support further reforms to improve the supply and quality of our teacher workforce."

It adds the study will "collect evidence on the factors underlying teachers' career decisions over time, from joining through to leaving the profession and beyond". It will do so by collecting a "combination of management information and evidence relating to the attitudes and experiences of teachers across different subject matter".

It will also monitor change across other policy areas to provide benchmarking data. This includes staff pay and workload, teacher wellbeing and diversity.

The survey will also "collect evidence to monitor the medium and longer term impacts of coronavirus (Covid-19) on the teaching workforce".

The first wave will be treated as a pilot and, if

successful, will run for a minimum of five years, subject to annual review.

James Zuccollo, the director of school workforce at the Education Policy Institute, said teacher recruitment and retention remained one of the most significant challenges facing schools.

"There is an urgent need to better understand teachers' career paths and why so many are choosing to leave.

"The department's plans to collect annual data from teachers could provide a valuable and much-needed source of information to help tackle these issues. We look forward to following the development of this study."

Wave 1, which will start next year, will reach a minimum sample of 15,000 teachers and middle and senior leaders across primary, secondary and special schools.

It seems the survey, alongside a new wellbeing charter, will fulfil the government's commitment to monitoring how happy school staff are.

The long-awaited findings of the first annual longitudinal survey to measure teacher workload, published in 2017, found teachers worked nearly 11 hours a day.

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

## No extra tests for lockdown learning loss measure

The government will produce a baseline assessment detailing the scale of catch-up needed for pupils after coronavirus closures – without making children sit more tests.

Renaissance Learning has won a government contract worth up to £143,000 to measure the full extent of lockdown learning losses.

The company will analyse data from schools already signed up to use its Star Reading and Star Mathematics assessments this year, and then compare that to previous results to produce a catch-up baseline.

Schools will not be expected to run further tests – one of the options under consideration.

The government said the study would help "target [catch-up] support across the system", although a final report of the findings might not be published until October next year.

The Department for Education said the research would be based on a "large sample" of pupils from years 1 to 11, but did not say how many children would take part.

A previous study by Renaissance found the attainment gap had widened by up to 52 per cent among primary pupils. This was based on the findings of just 2,000 year 3 and 3,900 year 5 pupils taking its Star assessments (computer-adaptive tests that schools use to help plan teaching and monitor progress).

The analysis had a far larger number of respondents among secondary schools, with more than 24,000 year 7 and 8,600 year 9 pupils.

The company told *Schools Week* at least 600,000 pupils took the tests in each of the primary and secondary sectors every year.

A spokesperson said it expected "similar large volumes of test data" to be used in the project, but could not give a figure as it would be down to which schools chose to run the tests throughout this year.

The original tender for the contract floated rewarding schools that took part, but Renaissance said there would be no incentives as the study was voluntary.

Plus the schools taking part were existing customers, so would still be charged to complete the tests.

The DfE cash will fund analysis. The Education Policy Institute has also been contracted as part of the study.

The government hopes the analysis will help officials understand how particular groups of pupils have been affected by time out of school.



## News

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## TV presenter deletes tweet supporting campaign

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOOTH

EXCLUSIVE

A TV presenter has deleted a tweet that supported the government's back-to-school campaign.

Kirsty Gallacher may have flouted advertising rules as she did not acknowledge she had been paid to post her support.

*Schools Week* revealed last week ministers were under fire for paying social media influencers, including Gallacher, up to an estimated £15,000 for social media posts promoting the campaign.

Dr Philippa Kaye, a celebrity GP, apologised after not originally including an ad hashtag in her promotional Instagram post. After being contacted by *Schools Week*, she amended it to include #ad and #paidcollaboration.

Gallacher tweeted twice and posted once on Instagram about the campaign – but one of the Twitter posts did not contain any reference that it was an advert.

We queried this with her agency last



week, but did not receive a response. The tweet (pictured) has since been deleted.

Tweets cannot be edited once published.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) said that an influencer who worked with a brand to post content on their own channel must clearly label their post as an "ad" if they had been paid, and if the brand had some editorial control over the content.

While it would not say whether Gallacher's post breached rules, a spokesperson added: "If an influencer did not label a post of this nature

as an ad, then they would be in breach of the advertising codes."

The ASA said it had not received any complaints about Gallacher's post, so would not conduct an investigation.

As of last week, the post had 26 retweets, including one by Gillian Keegan, the skills minister, and 159 likes.

The tweet, posted on August 27, read: "Anyone else looking forward to the kids going back to school!? I'm supporting @educationgovuk #backtoschool campaign to reassure parents on the changes and safety measures in place at schools. For or more [sic] information, visit gov.uk/backtoschool #backtoschool2020."

Representatives for Gallacher did not respond to a request for comment.

Experts told *Schools Week* her involvement could cost anywhere from £4,000 to £15,000.

The government said last week that using social media influencers allowed it to "reach a wider audience than using only traditional advertising", but has refused to say how much the posts cost.

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

## Covering black history is good teaching, says Gibb

Good history teaching should "always include the contribution of black and minority ethnic people to Britain's history", the schools minister has said.

Nick Gibb also told a parliamentary debate on the teaching of black history that he expected "more and more schools" to offer history students the chance to study migration and empire.

Ministers are under mounting pressure to make black history compulsory, with calls intensifying in the wake of the killing of George Floyd in the US and subsequent Black Lives Matters protests.

However, Gibb resisted these calls, saying teachers needed the freedom to "teach lessons that are right for their pupils".

"At the same time, the teaching of any issue in schools should be consistent with the principles of balance and objectivity,

and good history teaching should always include the contribution of black and minority ethnic people to Britain's history, as well as the study of different countries and cultures around the world."

He pointed to figures showing that one in ten pupils now studied the AQA history module on "migration, empires and the people".

"I expect more and more schools to consider offering that option. . . particularly given the publicity that [MPs]



Nick Gibb

and others have given to the issue."

Gibb also revealed that Pearson, the parent company of the exam board Edexcel, was developing a study option on "migration in Britain. Subject to Ofqual approval, it will also provide more choice to schools."

Lavinia Stennett, from the campaign group The Black Curriculum, welcomed the debate, but warned that the dearth of black history in schools "often comes down to the lack of political incentive to encourage and support teachers to embed it throughout their curriculums".

"Schools require support through examples on how to embed black history, so that it is made mandatory and all students grasp a better understanding of Britain. We are urging the government to ensure that these calls and debates are followed up with action."

# The (few) things we learned from Gav's committee hearing

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Gavin Williamson (pictured) faced questions about this year's exams fiasco and the reopening of schools when he appeared in front of the Parliamentary education committee on Wednesday morning. Here's what we learned.

## 1 DfE looking at holding 2021 exams in public buildings

Asked about the department's work to prepare for next summer's exams, Williamson said the DfE was planning "for the fact that there may need to be a different approach in terms of creating additional capacity within schools and wider use of public buildings for exam centres if that is required and needed in local communities".

## 2 Exam timings will be confirmed in October

Although Ofqual has already published its response to a consultation on the 2021 exam series, a decision on whether to delay exams was delayed for further consideration.



Williamson told MPs the idea of pushing exams back later in the summer was still under "active consideration and discussion".

Pushed on when the timetable would be announced, Williamson said it would come "very shortly. Definitely the month of October".

## 3 DfE knew of algorithm's impact on poorer pupils in July

It was revealed on A-level results day that pupils from the lowest socio-economic background saw the biggest drop in calculated grades at C or above. Although more detailed analysis subsequently published by Ofqual shows the same group saw a smaller reduction in the very top grades.

Michelle Dyson, director for qualifications, curriculum and extra-curricular at the Department for Education, told MPs the DfE

was given data in July which showed "the degree to which they'd been downgrading by socioeconomic status".

She explained the DfE would usually get "no information from Ofqual until the Tuesday evening before results come out on a Thursday", but this year they "did get more information beforehand".

"We did have some data right at the end of July to show us the degree of inflation in particular subjects, e.g. music and German, so we could think about the impact on universities."

## 4 SEND review won't be out until 2021

A landmark review into provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities won't be published until "the early part of next year", Williamson said.

Ministers commissioned the review last September, amid mounting concerns about the "postcode lottery" of support available across England.

But Williamson said the review would be "reporting later than I would have liked to have seen it".

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

# School rebuilding programme 'will be disappointing' at first

A top civil servant has warned that the government "will be disappointing more people than we please" during the early years of its new school rebuilding programme.

The government announced in June that it is to embark on a 10-year school rebuilding programme, with £1 billion set aside for the first 50 projects and more cash expected to be allocated in this autumn's spending review.

Details of the announcement are still sparse. But Rory Kennedy, the Department for Education's director of capital, said the government will use school condition survey data to "make sure we reach the worst buildings in the country first", and that it will focus on "structural elements and not fixtures and fittings".

He also said the department would need to be "transparent" in its selection of priority projects so it's "clear how we're doing it and it's fair" – as there will be no bidding process.

Speaking to a Westminster Education Forum webinar on Tuesday, Kennedy added: "Having worked on building schools for the future,

the last major school rebuilding programme, I'm warning colleagues ... that unfortunately, delighted as we are with the settlement, inevitably we will be disappointing more people than we please in the first few years as we prioritise, and those decision points are always going to be difficult."

The government's current school rebuilding scheme, which is called the priority school building programme (PSBP), was launched in 2014 and was supposed to be completed in 2021. But in 2018 it was revealed that the second phase of the programme was to overrun until December 2022.

Kennedy added the long-term nature of the new rebuilding programme would allow the DfE to "completely change how we procure".

He said the 10-year programme "should give us a lot more leverage, a lot more purchasing power", and said the DfE would be looking to "use that to best effect, not simply to drive value, but also to really promote modern methods of construction".

The civil servant also revealed there would

be no bidding process for the programme, with schools instead selected based on condition survey data, verified by "responsible bodies" such as councils.

"Bidding rounds have all sorts of unintended consequences that I think we're all aware of in terms of how do you avoid rewarding the best-written bid versus the best evidence of need," Kennedy said.

However, he accepted that "there will be things that colleagues know about their estates that our condition data collection doesn't tell us", as data for some schools may be four years old.

"We definitely want to give responsible bodies the chance and the opportunity to challenge our assessments," he added. "What we're not doing is opening the doors to everyone and saying 'apply now' because that wouldn't be a good use of people's energy, time or money."

The National Audit Office said in 2017 that it would cost £6.7 billion to bring all existing school buildings up to "satisfactory" condition.



# Leadership programme adopts American approach

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Leading academy trusts will adopt the concept of "leverage leadership" for a training programme set to reach up to 240 teachers and leaders in its first year.

Leverage leadership, the brainchild of Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, the American educator, promotes classroom observation, coaching and training of teachers and using data to drive instruction and evaluate staff.

It will form the basis of half of the Department for Education's new exemplary leadership programme, revealed by *Schools Week* earlier this year.

The £1.5 million contract has been split into two. The first half has been awarded to Star Institute, the training and development arm of Star Academies, in partnership with Dixons Academies Trust, Outwood Grange Academy Trust, the Inspiration Trust and the Leverage Leadership Institute.

The programme, which will be delivered online, will follow the principles of leverage leadership to "guide school leaders in how to establish a strong school culture (routines and behaviour management), effective teaching founded on direct instruction, and aspirational outcomes for pupils through a knowledge-rich curriculum".

Under an initial trial, set to cost £250,000, leaders from 120 schools will follow a series of "see it, name it, do it" cycles. According to the trusts, this will allow participants to "both explore the theory and are supported in its implementation in the context of their own school improvement priorities".

If the trial goes well, they will receive a further £500,000 to cover another two years.

The involvement of the Leverage Leadership Institute is likely to raise eyebrows through its parent organisation Uncommon Schools.

Uncommon, which runs charter schools in the US, the equivalent of free schools here, has been criticised for its no-excuses discipline policy, which has been



described as "authoritarian". Earlier this year the organisation relaxed the approach in the face of mounting criticism.

Mark Gregory, a regional director at Ark Schools, who participated in the Leverage Leadership Institute Fellowship a few years ago, disagrees with criticisms that it is too prescriptive.

"I'm well aware of the criticism that it's really structured, but up to a point that's really, really helpful," he told *Schools Week*, admitting that earlier in his career he had "wanted that structure".

"I wanted someone to say 'do this and this and this and you'll be all right' and then to develop myself on top of that, to not have to build that whole thing from the bottom off. This is a really solid foundation and I think that's what's great about having more people involved in it."

Bambrick-Santoyo, defines day-to-day instruction as "observing classrooms, coaching teachers to make them better, leading or planning professional training for teachers, using data to drive instruction and evaluating teachers".

Kathleen Sullivan, the institute's managing director, said: "Leaders need to see a model of what a skill looks like when it's done well. Then name it, ideally using common, concise language, which is the key to remembering it. Lastly, they need to 'do it', if leaders don't commit the skill to muscle memory during professional development and immediately after, they will not learn it."

Ark has been using elements from the

Leverage Leadership model in its training and coaching for at least five years.

Gregory says the "see it, name it, do it" coaching method is a "really powerful process to take people through".

He also praises the so-called "data-driven instruction", which involves leaders and teachers looking at students' work together.

"As a principal I was not in the habit of diving into what the books were telling me. I was much more interested in what the spreadsheet told me, but diving into the books . . . brings me so much closer to the frontline, to what the teachers are doing, to what the kids are learning. It's a really important part of school improvement."

The second half of the contract has been awarded to Christ the King Catholic Voluntary Academy Leicester and St Martin's Catholic Academy in Leicestershire, working in partnership with ResearchED.

According to the group's Twitter account, it will run a "national programme to help schools develop knowledge-rich curricula and embed exemplary behaviour".

Tom Bennett, ResearchED's founder, said his organisation would support the programme, provide training and oversee quality control, but would not initially receive any of the funding.

"Once the programme funding is over we'll look at continuing it on a commercial basis, at which point rED might be a recipient of any revenue or dividends from the courses. But not until then."

# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## It's time to tuck in your shirt and do your job, Prime Minister

'Incompetent and inept'.

That's the latest conclusion over the latest government failure to hit schools.

Our report today that a rookie coding error on the test and tracing booking site could be behind thousands of people unable to get checked for coronavirus is just another government failure in an ever-growing list.

Earlier this week we revealed how schools were being forced to wait nearly four days just to get advice from health experts on how to respond to positive coronavirus cases.

The government had promised schools "rapid" assistance from health officials who will "guide them through the actions they need to take" following positive cases.

Another broken promise.

At such a crucial moment in the fight against coronavirus, as cases rise and a second wave looks imminent, the government has hit a new low.

Teachers and pupils can't get tests. School leaders can't get advice on dealing with

outbreaks. They can't even run a website.

It is utter chaos and it's not good enough: our schools and our nation deserve better.

As Sarah Ray says this week (page 23), this generation of school leaders have risen to the biggest challenge of their careers.

The last thing we need is to lose them to exhaustion and fatigue, just when we, and ministers, need them the most.

It's going to take a huge effort to keep schools going.

Education secretary Gavin Williamson has just shrugged off criticism of his fiasco-ridden tenure by blaming others.

He waffled his way through attempts by MPs this week to get reassurances he's back in control of the situation.

We agree with education unions, it's time for Boris Johnson to step up and get a grip of this before it's too late.

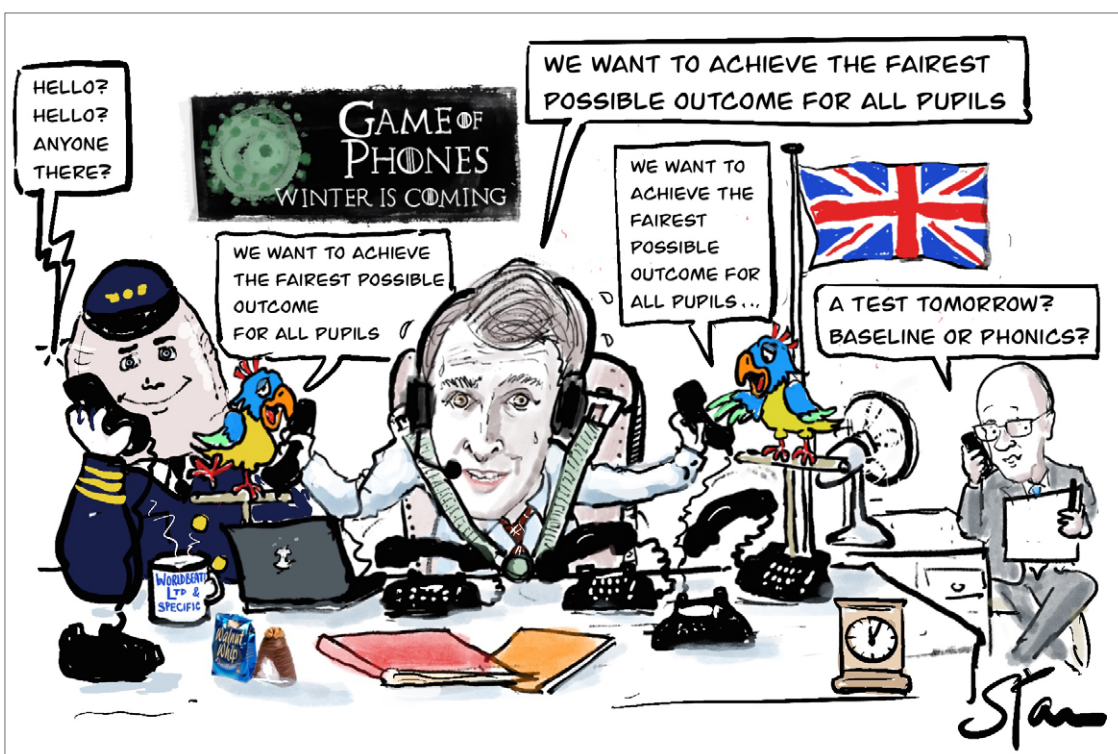
It's time to tuck in your shirt and do your job, Prime Minister.

SCHOOLS WEEK



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## SEND review won't be out until 2021

Julie Cordiner

This delay is not acceptable; it preserves a broken, unfair system. There won't be any changes to the high needs block of dedicated schools grant until 2022-23. Meanwhile, deficits continue to grow in local authorities and schools as they try to provide statutory services and support for pupils with SEND against a backdrop of inadequate funding and significant disincentives to be inclusive. Of equal concern is the lack of transparency on how the review is being conducted. There's a steering group that doesn't publish minutes, and little evidence of any consultation beyond a mention of talking to stakeholders.

## 'Parental engagement is key to overcoming continued disruption'

Janet Downs

The Edurio report (foreword, Leora Cruddas) is a formidable piece of research. But it can't be seen as representative. Respondents, self-selecting, were mainly from schools that were urban, advantaged (fewer than 20 per cent FSM pupils) and academies. That said, it's right that educating children and young people is a collaborative process. As is often said, it takes a village to raise a child.

## I've had to tell 17 SEND pupils they can't come to school – and I'm furious

Jo Stoaling

Thank you Dominic Wall for raising the issue that hundreds of special school headteachers have strived to change and deal with throughout July and August. Whilst the guidance issued may in principle look straightforward to many, sourcing FFP3s when companies are sold out, being on waiting lists for fit testing and already not having huge amounts of available space when separate rooms/hygiene rooms are required, makes the application of guidance extremely challenging.

Every head I have spoken to wants every child back to school. We are all working every hour sent to achieve this safely for our pupils with complex needs. I was saddened [your words that] you had "failed" to achieve the required PPE.

## REPLY OF THE WEEK

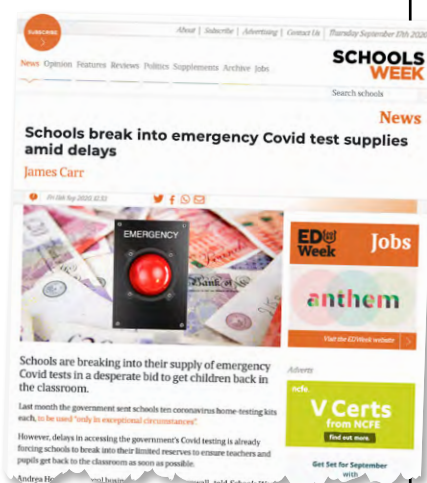
Graham Parker

## Schools break into emergency Covid test supplies amid delays

I am deputy of a large secondary school in north Norwich. Norfolk is apparently an "area of enhanced support", but I have been trying unsuccessfully all day to get a test with national portal so that I can return to work on Monday. I

have even been refused by the local university hospital that had been offering special tests for key workers through lockdown.

My head has had to resort to the emergency test kits so that she has a chance of her deputy back early next week. We contacted the DfE today to order more tests, but were told none was available. What is so very astonishing is that with so much pressure on schools to be open for economic reasons, and a general consensus among staff that we need to do our bit in almost a Blitz-type spirit, the government has got this so very wrong. We need testing availability, and now, or the whole thing will unravel in days.



THE REPLY OF THE WEEK WINS A MUG. CONTACT US AT [NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK](mailto:NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK) TO CLAIM

As a headteacher who has worked with you throughout this crisis, you have led the way to make change, get everyone back to school efficiently and have supported your colleagues locally and nationally throughout. We will all keep working together and supporting each other and as a collective work together to ensure everyone's return, respecting as we always do the importance of safety for all pupils and staff. Thank you for everything you have done.

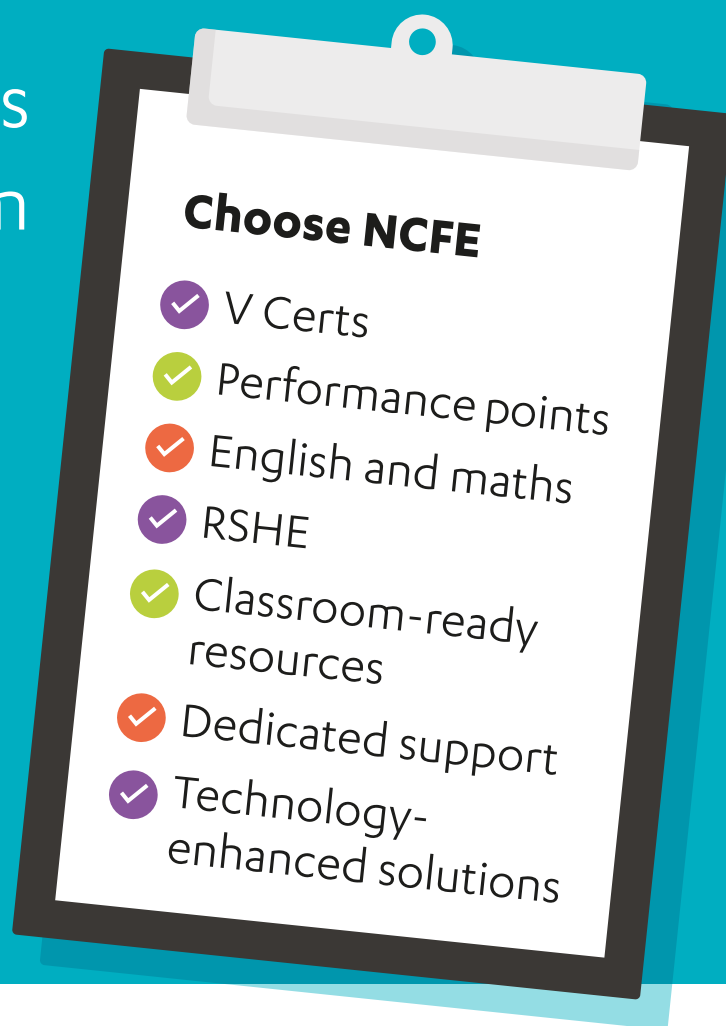
Simon Knight

This really does capture the way in which the shambles that is the government's response to the pandemic is impacting on special schools, those who attend them and their families. Clarity of thought and clarity of action is desperately needed from the government, not false promises that repeatedly fail to materialise.

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# Profile

JL DUTAUT | @JLDUTAUT



**“If you've made a mistake, learn from it together rather than dropping policy bombs from a great height”**

**Andy Hargreaves, professor of education, writer and policy adviser**

**JL Dutaut meets an influential academic trying to reconcile himself to the fractures in his life and society at large**

**M**emoirs of educational academics are a pretty rare thing. If not altogether anonymous, bar the inevitable popularisers and marketeers, educational academics tend to remain in the background of their work. What do we know, really, of the life and times of John Dewey or Maria Montessori?

Yet a memoir is what Andy Hargreaves has just

written, casting himself as the subject of his own reflection on education and social mobility. It's a move that's possibly creating a new genre of educational writing and a whole new form of accountability for a field that is often criticised for its distance from the real world. Think, for example, of the Gove/Cummings-inspired label of 'the Blob'.

It's ironic in a way. Hargreaves hails from Accrington, a town whose football club, Accrington Stanley, is famous for not being famous thanks to a milk advert which cast it as the ultimate

non-entity. "Accrington Stanley? Who are they?" asks one boy. "Exactly," answers his milk-drinking friend.

So, who is he? Well for starters, he's a supporter of Burnley FC, considered by Accrington fans one of their chief rivals. He's been listed among the top 10 influential education academics in the United States, is an honorary professor at the University of Swansea, a visiting professor at the University of Ottawa, a research professor at Boston College, a distinguished visiting professor at Hong Kong University and Professor II at the University



# Profile: Andy Hargreaves

Andy back left with his late middle brother Colin (centre) and his eldest brother Pete on the right, on his Mum's last visit to Canada in her late 80s. About 12 years ago



of Stavanger in Norway. He recently assisted the Scottish administration in evaluating the Curriculum for Excellence – often derided here by ministers and policy influencers – and is currently conducting research on behalf of the ARC Education Project, an international consortium of education ministries and professional associations.

The author of 30 books and countless articles on educational practices, policies, structures and reforms, Hargreaves wrote his second, *Curriculum Practice*, five years before the creation of a national curriculum and 25 years before Ofsted took any interest in schools' 'intent, implementation and impact'.

Yet in England, where he started his career as a primary teacher in 1973, you would be forgiven for thinking he's as anonymous as his home town's football club. That's despite carrying out work for the DfE, the SSAT and the National College for School Leadership on expectations, raising achievement and teacher effectiveness in the New Labour years. A testament, perhaps, to the sheer size of the pendulum swing in educational politics in the Westminster system.

But at the age of 12 in Accrington, his future career was an unlikely one. So has anything changed for that town's children in the interim? And what does Hargreaves' decision to quit the country for Canada tell us about the answer?

Born and raised "on the wrong side of the tracks" – "Although," he adds with a northern lilt still evident in his speech, "in Accrington all sides of the tracks were the wrong side of the tracks" – he thrived at primary school. "I had teachers, particularly one teacher who really was everything



Meeting FM Nicola Sturgeon of Scotland in his role as elected President of the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) and also as Advisor to Scottish Government, 2016

Ken Robinson would have wanted."

The youngest of three brothers, he was the only one to pass the 11-plus and things started well at grammar school. "I had a good first year. I was in the top stream in the top school and in some ways I was the top kid, especially in maths and in Latin. I was eager. I was enthusiastic. And then me dad died."

## "In Accrington all sides of the tracks were the wrong side of the tracks"

The Americanisation of his speech comes to the fore as he recounts the fallout. "It wasn't so much its direct impact on me but more the impact on my mom." She had a breakdown. His two older brothers were working in factories and keen to start adult lives of their own to take the pressure off her, but it left Hargreaves at home as a young carer – in 1964 a phrase many years from political invention. "Suddenly I found I didn't get to school for months on end before 11 o'clock in the morning."

Hargreaves spent his secondary school career trying to reconcile the school's expectations with his reality and the "teams and captains and head boys" culture of grammar school with the



Andy (centre) with his brothers on holiday in Isle of Man



Andy as a teenager (centre) age 17. My eldest brother, Peter and his fiancée Shirley on their first visit to Accrington back from Canada

working-class culture of his family, friends and neighbours. He was trying to live up to both.

Seamlessly, he segues into analysing issues still impacting education in England today, and the contrast with Amanda Spielman's comments about 'lacking aspiration' couldn't be starker. "The head of Spring Hill primary school where I went sent a wonderful letter describing how that all plays out for Asian girls today, trying to live with two cultures and bring them together. It was and is also true for white working-class kids, and I think we have to not put these against each other but see them both as being equally important."

Reconciling cultures emerges as a theme as we speak. There's the reconciliation of linguistic influences in his speech patterns, the reconciliation of class and ethnic cultures, but also the reconciliation of primary and secondary



# Profile: Andy Hargreaves



**‘Trying to live with two cultures was and is also true for white working-class kids’**

Delivering a US National Public Radio Lecture at the The Citadel of Free Speech, in Ohio, February 2017

schooling cultures or, as some might have it, of traditionalist and progressive approaches. “Everything that my primary school gave me, my secondary school didn’t apart from one notable exception, who was my geography teacher.”

Prominent in his career has also been an attempt to bring together practitioners and policy makers, and it seems, in his view, to have fallen on deaf ears in England. His comments are diplomatic, but they only thinly veil his critical view of the current UK government in that regard, not least in respect of their coronavirus response which is totemic of a system that does policy to schools, rather than with them. “If you’ve made a mistake, apologise fast and get on and try and learn from it. Do it together rather than dropping policy bombs from a great height.”

“Coronavirus is like working in a very difficult school on a national basis,” he adds. “In the best systems [among which he cites New Zealand, Scotland and Wales], teachers have been allowed to be the first responders. The worst systems have run off fear.”

He is scathing about “quasi-totalitarian leaders who are smug about their majorities, where the economy has more priority than the people, the stock market has more priority than jobs and election results have more priority than children.

“And you can decide who those countries are,” he adds.

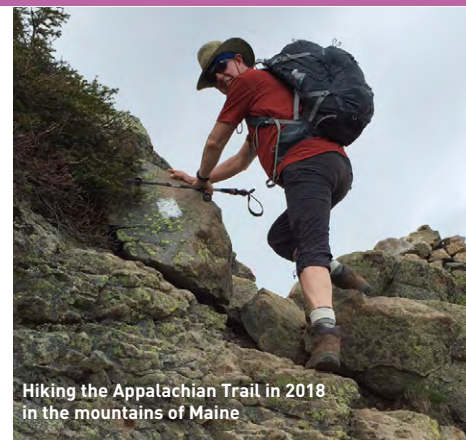
It was the stifling of education research under Margaret Thatcher’s government that drove him

to Canada in 1986. “It became impossible to do your job as a university professor with integrity.” After five years of working with Tim Brighouse in Oxford – “with local schools and local teachers, working on things of importance to them as equals” – it was time for a new chapter.

That year, he published *Two cultures of schooling: The case of middle schools*, following on from his PhD thesis on the same theme. Developed by Sir Alec Clegg (“probably the most innovative Director of Education in England, in the West Riding of Yorkshire”) when Hargreaves was still at primary, middle schools were a central policy recommendation of the 1967 Plowden report. Today, it is the only one of its recommendations that has not been adopted into legislation in one guise or another. Others included the banning of corporal punishment, state-funded nursery provision and the introduction of ESOL/EAL programmes.

Clegg “wanted to extend the primary school philosophy up to 12/13 years old.” Hargreaves’ research showed why the reality was difficult to achieve, but in the process he learned something else, which speaks to the current mantra of evidence-based practice. “I really began to understand teachers as a product of their environment, rather than just what’s the right and the wrong way or the best and the worst way to teach.”

His own abrupt transition to secondary and young adulthood may explain his deep desire



Hiking the Appalachian Trail in 2018 in the mountains of Maine



On fieldwork to the North of Ontario on Bearskin Airlines with part of my Boston College graduate team, Shantee Washington (left) and Mark D’Angelo (right)

for conciliation. In the end, Hargreaves made it through with the grades for university. But even his application offers a lesson about what and who we consider legitimate. “I thought I had nothing to put on my application because I wasn’t in any clubs. I didn’t have time to. But I had hiked the Pennine Way when I was 17, which I’d planned and executed.”

The fractures and disconnects Hargreaves experienced didn’t stop him from attaining a long and influential career advising governments and global organisations like the World Bank.

But the world is a different place. “The generation I grew up in, we had quite a lot [of social mobility] because there was lots of room at the top. It’s much harder for kids now. Internships, clubs, the more you rely on an expanded CV, the harder it is for kids from disadvantage to show what they can do.”

Sadly, for Hargreaves, England is not different enough.

It’s optimistic to think a memoir could contribute to the course correction he believes our society needs, but reconciling academia with its roots in the real world doesn’t seem a bad place to start.

And neither does Accrington, come to think of it. Though reconciling its fans with Burnley’s may be too big an ask for anyone.

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**SARAH RAY,**  
National CEO networks director,  
Forum Strategy

## Knee-jerk government directives must stop before leaders burn out

**Expert senior leadership teams have supported one another, but they must now be afforded the space to make decisions without constantly reacting to government, writes Sarah Ray**

The past six months have been described as stormy. For trust and school leaders it's been more like a hurricane. The sense of responsibility and unpredictability has been enormous. Leaders ensured their schools remained open for key workers' children, whilst concurrently being faced with the need for organisational recalibration.

What we know now is that being part of a team, with a diverse range of experts working together, has been critical.

But there are risks ahead. September is normally awash with buoyant energy, ardent aspirations and renewed vigour. Worryingly, many school leaders have not had the summer break they deserve.

Significant energy is required now more than ever, as leaders focus on risk management, more guidance, staffing issues, "catching up" and the anxious possibility of lockdown. Headteachers and senior management teams warn they face unsustainable and excessive workloads amid the pandemic and

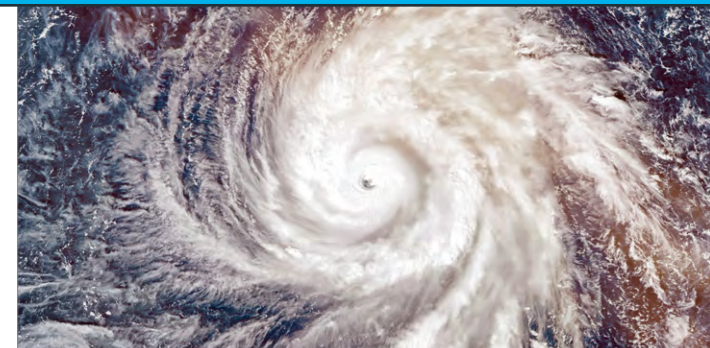
changing policy around school operations.

Feedback from our members has overwhelmingly indicated that being part of a sustainable and established trust has made the job more viable. Trust CEOs have stressed the importance of colleagues in central teams with diverse expertise in premises, technology, HR,

procurement, resource management and communications.

They have been able to draw on these experts in their field, allowing them and headteachers to focus on the key pillars of people, purpose and learning. Access to such proximate expert support has also provided a much-needed "psychological safety net".

However, for some leaders – particularly those who have felt isolated – there is growing talk of fatigue and even of bringing retirement forward. Demographic trends mean we already face an exodus of experienced leaders in their mid-to-late 50s, so this is a major risk to the system. As a sector we now need a period of stability and



consistency, so retaining experienced leaders is vital.

To their enormous credit, trusts and school leaders have largely maintained public confidence throughout. The Edurio Covid-19 Impact Review demonstrated that most stakeholders feel their school has coped well: 87 per cent of staff and 72 per cent of parents reported they were happy with their school's handling of Covid-19 disruptions.

We work with about 200 academy

our leaders, after months of pressure, are energised and inspired, not only to stay, but to ensure our schools and pupils thrive through and beyond this pandemic?"

The prime minister recently spoke of the power of education as a great equaliser and transformer. Rediscovering this depends on purpose and people, not more prescription and instability. We need Ofsted and government to trust leaders with the job of taking stock and planning ahead. They must at all costs avoid a knee-jerk return to high stakes accountability that could exacerbate fatigue.

Leaders now need from the government the trust, stability and freedom to work with their people, to set about shaping a renewed and shared sense of purpose for the next stage. The sector needs to be allowed to spend more time looking outwards to prioritise what our communities require in the medium to long term, and less time looking upwards reacting to government.

This generation of trust and school leaders has risen to the biggest challenge of their careers. The last thing we need is to lose them to exhaustion and fatigue, just when we need them most.

*Schools Week is the official media partner to the third annual National #TrustLeaders Conference, which takes place on Thursday.*

**“ There is growing talk of fatigue and even bringing retirement forward ”**

trusts, and throughout conversations with our member CEOs and COOs we have consistently been struck by their desire to put people – pupils, staff and parents – first. But beneath the calm exterior and now that school premises are open for all, we remain concerned about leaders' wellbeing.

We've learned over the past six months that leaders need to put on their own life jackets first; be surrounded by expert teams (not replicas of themselves); and look outwards to their peers and networks for support and advice with managing change, rather than simply upwards to government.

A vital question for next week's third National #TrustLeaders conference is: "How do we ensure



# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**The biggest looming crisis in education is at risk of being missed in the frenetic news cycle, writes Eleanor Harrison**

From August's algorithm crisis, to the controversy surrounding school reopenings, teachers and pupils have rarely been far from the front pages.

But despite the influx of news, there's a chance that the biggest crisis facing young people could actually fail to hit the headlines.

Namely, that if we don't act now the class of 2021 could end up being the most disadvantaged cohort in recent memory.

The biggest problem of all facing this year's cohort was the government's action taken to address August's algorithm crisis. When ministers opted to let grades be based on teacher assessments, it was hailed by many as a solution to the problem.

But rather than solve the problem, it simply moved it back a year.

Let's look at the picture as it stands. Year 11 and year 13 pupils are entering a crucial year in their schooling on the back foot. Research from the National Foundation for Educational Research found that students are beginning the year three months behind in academic learning due to school closures.

This problem will be even worse for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Research from the Sutton Trust has established that young people from poorer backgrounds are less likely to have had access to a decent workspace at home.

Meanwhile, it would be naïve to pretend that learning will not continue to be disrupted. Three-quarters of teachers fear they will not be able to teach to their usual standards during social distancing.

Even before learning was severely



ELEANOR HARRISON

CEO, Impetus

## The class of 2021 could be most disadvantaged in recent memory

disrupted by the pandemic, two-thirds of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds didn't achieve the passes in English and maths GCSEs that previous Impetus research has highlighted as so critical.

But with the move to teacher-assessed grades, these pupils now face a double handicap. Firstly, they are set to

competing with many from last year's cohort who will have benefited from centre-assessed grades.

Although the full picture is not yet clear, many students from the UK and overseas may also have deferred their 2020 university place or decided not to apply. They could re-enter the system in 12 months, creating additional

“Using teacher assessments simply moved the problem back a year

take GCSEs and A-Levels next summer under what seems likely to be the old, much tougher grading system.

Then, when they apply for places in further and higher education, or on training schemes, they will be

competition.

It is absolutely vital that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are not squeezed out.

A temporary solution may be the targeted use of contextual admissions,

so that talented young people from disadvantaged backgrounds get the chance to study at top-tier universities.

But this could also be the moment to consider long-term reform and finally change our university admissions process.

Young people looking to enter work or training also need to be sure that opportunities will be out there. The government's £2 billion Kickstart scheme to help young people into work is welcome. We will be asking for a clear framework to measure its success, so that we can be sure it is working as intended or adapting where there are emerging challenges.

The looming crisis overall demands the urgent action of government, schools and charities.

These actors must work together to address disrupted learning, focusing on young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The National Tutoring Programme will go some way to help with this, but it's highly likely that more intervention will be required.

Government, meanwhile, must stand prepared to fund it. Schools should look to utilise the expertise of national and local charities which have experience working with schools to give young people that extra support they will need.

Every young person should be allowed to go as far as their talents will take them, irrespective of background. Covid-19, and the disruption that has come with it, is the biggest threat to that aspiration in recent memory.

But there is still time to not only prevent the tragedy of a lost generation but also build a better, brighter and fairer future for all young people.



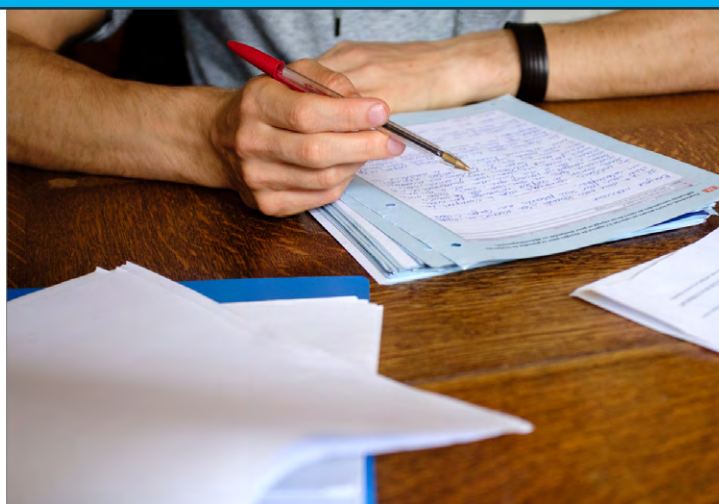
# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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DAISY  
CHRISTODOULOU

Director of education,  
No More Marking



## Teachers' time is being wasted on inconsistent marking methods

**The Teacher Assessment Framework used to mark writing in primary school takes a long time to apply – and isn't even that reliable, writes Daisy Christodoulou**

Teachers frequently report that one of the most time-consuming aspects of their job is marking. Given that time at the start of a frantic new year is in especially short supply, it's more important than ever that teachers don't spend unnecessarily long on it.

Extended pieces of writing are particularly laborious to mark. At primary, the statutory national rubric for writing, the Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF) is very specific about the features of good writing, and so can take a long time to apply to each pupil's work.

Yet despite the time it takes, there's plenty of evidence to suggest that this type of rubric-based assessment doesn't deliver very consistent results.

Comparative judgement (CJ) is an alternative method of assessing writing that does not rely on a rubric. Instead, teachers read two pieces of writing and make a holistic judgement about which is the better script. Many different teachers make

a series of such decisions, and those decisions are combined to provide a grade for every piece.

The organisation I work for, No More Marking, carried out a study in 2019-20 funded by the DfE and the charity NESTA that compared the consistency of grading when using either comparative judgement

script was graded by at least eight different teachers.

For both CJ and the TAF, there were three possible grades: Working Towards (WS), Expected Standard (ES) and Greater Depth (GD).

Our findings were pretty striking. First, we found that CJ was more

actually matches up pretty well to the average TAF grade. Let me explain. Lots of teachers worry about whether they'll get the same grade using CJ as using the TAF.

To look at this, we averaged out the grades our teachers gave each script using the TAF. For example, if four teachers gave a script EXS, two gave it WTS, and two gave it GDS, then the average would be EXS. This process gave us a more reliable "average-TAF" grade for each of the 349 scripts.

Then we compared that average TAF grade to the CJ grade for each script. We found that for 79 per cent of scripts, the CJ grade and the TAF grade matched.

Furthermore, because 79 per cent of CJ and TAF grades matched, they actually agree more often than any two individual markers using the TAF (who, if you remember from the above, only agree 64 per cent of the time).

We've published the scripts and grades so you can take a look yourself.

Teachers' time has never been more precious. With comparative evidence showing a better marking policy is available, what better support could we offer them?

“ Teachers' time is precious and a better marking policy is available

or the TAF. We worked with an independent researcher from Oxford University, Anne Pinot de Moira.

In early March we ran a year 6 comparative judgement assessment in which more than 7,000 teachers judged over 33,000 pieces of writing. Our guidance for teachers is simple: we ask them to make a professional judgement about which is the better piece of writing.

Meanwhile, we recruited a senior local authority moderator and 30 experienced primary teachers to work with us on grading a smaller sample of 349 of these scripts using the TAF.

The moderator trained the teachers in using the TAF, and then each marked a pack of scripts. Each

consistent than the TAF.

For the TAF, the chance that a particular piece of writing would be given the same grade by two different markers was 64 per cent.

But for CJ, the chance that a particular piece of writing would be given the same grade by two different uses of CJ was 86 per cent – much higher.

Second, we found that if each script was marked by four different teachers and those grades averaged out, then the reliability of the TAF reached the same standard as CJ. However, this obviously takes a lot longer: we found it took eight minutes to mark a script this way with the TAF, but just four with CJ.

Thirdly, comparative judgement

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**Everyone knows England's "middle tier" school system – with MATs, TSAs, LAs and more – is complex, but it's even more varied than many realise, writes Toby Greany**

Anyone who has recently tried to explain the English education system to overseas visitors will be sharply aware of its startling complexity." So wrote the Educational Endowment Foundation's Becky Francis in her foreword to our 2018 report on the 'self-improving school-led system'.

I have been reminded of Francis's observation during lockdown, as I have been working with a team of US academics on a book chapter about the middle tier between individual schools and central government. I frequently finish another explanation about local authorities (LAs), multi-academy trusts (MATs), teaching school alliances (TSAs) and so on, and find they are staring at me, incredulous.

The view that England's "middle tier" is unhelpfully fragmented is widely acknowledged. We have had various proposals for how it could be reformed, including one from Laura McNerney and Matt Hood, another from Tom Richmond, and an interesting study by Sara Bubb and others for the Local Government Association about how much it all costs.

But what is perhaps not always sufficiently acknowledged (including in some of these solutions) is how incredibly varied this "middle tier" now is.

Let me illustrate this, using findings from my July article in the Journal of Education Policy. I gave anonymous names to the five LA areas we studied – Northern, Western, Eastern, Suburban and Urban.

It's clear they have massive differences.

Western, for instance, is attempting a managed transition away from what the



TOBY GREANY

Professor of education, the University of Nottingham

## We must invest in LA leaders' skills, rather than leave schools to go it alone

LA director described as a "dependency culture", in which schools relied heavily on its historically well-regarded school improvement team. To do this, the LA reshaped its school improvement service, "using systems leaders in a more focused way" to provide school-to-school support.

Northern was reported by one headteacher to have "foreseen its

schools with adviser visits, numeracy and literacy support and subsidised professional development.

Eastern had in the past struggled with pupil performance and its relationship with schools, so had appointed a new senior team to reengage with academies to foster a stronger, city-wide approach. This team is also building a network of

**“One primary headteacher said: “It’s been like the collapse of the Soviet Union”**

own demise" and, from 2010 onwards, encouraged local schools to establish an Education Partnership. The partnership, which is funded by an annual subscription from member schools and from traded services, provides

teaching schools.

Meanwhile, school leaders in Suburban described an LA that had historically provided very good support, but descended into rapid decline post-2010. According to one

primary head: "It's been like the collapse of the Soviet Union." This meant that schools were left to fend for themselves, which "led to a real fracturing in relationships".

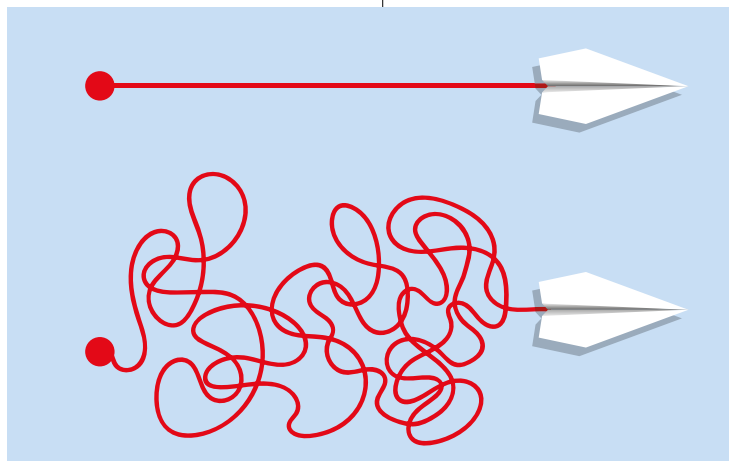
Finally, in Urban, the LA team was encouraging all its schools to join one of the 12 local MATs, while trying to reinvent its own role as a "champion for children".

Certainly there are some commonalities across the five areas, but together they highlight that "middle tier" responses to national policy shifts are far from uniform.

Rather, they reflect the accumulated actions and logics of multiple players interacting with contextual factors, such as deprivation levels, rates of academisation and the size and political make-up of LAs. Critically, different "middle tier" responses may also be linked to academic outcomes. While Northern has sustained its high performance over five years and Eastern has seen a gradual improvement, Suburban's collapse means it performs well below pre-2010 and expected levels.

In conclusion, England is 10 years into a natural experiment in which multiple versions of the new "middle tier" are emerging. But these developments have received too little attention from policymakers or researchers, leaving practitioners on the ground to learn their way through the complexity.

In this highly-varied landscape, we need to invest more in helping local areas to learn from each other. We must also develop the skills of LA leaders to initiate and facilitate successful local partnerships. The alternative – "stepping back" and hoping schools will "self-improve", as seen in Suburban – appears naïve at best.





# Get back to school with BBC Bitesize this Autumn

**S**chools have opened their doors again but this Autumn term looks very different with staggered school days, year groups in bubbles and possible localised school closures.

Following the success of last term's Bitesize Daily lessons, we have launched **BBC Bitesize Autumn 2020** to support teachers, parents and students during this uniquely challenging term.

We've done that by working with teachers across the UK to enhance the special curricula developed by schools, trusts and local authorities over the last few weeks. Bitesize Autumn 2020 offers collections of resources for teachers to use in the classroom, to incorporate into homework projects, or for parents to use if they're in a lockdown situation.

**"Going back to how we do things is simply not an option."**

**Dr Emma Kell, teacher and author.**

There are four Autumn 2020 offers: catch-up lessons for primary children who missed out on key concepts last term; resources for years 1-9, we've called This Term's Topics; weekly Live Lessons for primary schools; and the usual great resources for GCSE, Nationals and Highers students.

**This Term's Topics** is all about what the BBC does best, delivering engaging short-form video, clear concise text, quizzes and infographics - along with extra content from teams like BBC News and Natural History Unit - all mapped to this autumn's special curricula.

The topics content will also include an array of fantastic resources from a range of educational publishers and partner organisations including Twinkl, White Rose Maths, Chester Zoo, the Met Office, Eden Project and the National Literacy Trust.



**Primary Catch-Up Lessons** are here to help children who have missed key concepts in Maths and English.

Home schooling hasn't been easy, so our catch-up lessons are simple guides to help students in years 1-6 catch up on any learning they may have missed, delivering key learning from last term's Maths and English curricula including content from Bitesize Daily lessons.

**Weekly Live Lessons** will bring primary schools and year groups together for fun and interactive shared learning.

The new season of Live Lessons kicks off on September 14th with a special lesson looking at well-being and the impact of lockdown, produced in partnership with the Premier League.

The first Live Lesson will be broadcast live on the BBC Teach website at 2pm on September 14th. Then from September 21st, there will be weekly programmes for KS1 and KS2 classes, alternating between literacy and numeracy.

**GCSE:** Our comprehensive suite of GCSE and Nationals/Highers self-study modules, which cover the majority of topics and exam boards, will continue to form the backbone of the BBC Bitesize offer to Year 10 and 11 students.

Bitesize functionality allows users to save favourite guides and monitor their own progress, offering an ideal complement to classroom based learning.

**"Catching children up will present a challenge to teachers as they return, easing them into a new routine of learning will be another test altogether."**

**Andrew Cowley, Deputy Headteacher at a South London school.**

BBC Bitesize Autumn 2020 content will be updated regularly throughout the year and can be used whether children are learning in school or at home.

BBC Bitesize is there for teachers and students this Autumn to help them make a success of a challenging term.

**All BBC Autumn 2020 content can be found on the BBC Bitesize website.**



# Reviews

## BOOK REVIEW



### Teach Smarter: Efficient and Effective Strategies for Early Career Teachers

**Author:** Adam Riches

**Publisher:** Routledge

**Reviewer name:** Sameerah Mussa, teacher of English, Midlands Academies Trust

The is a CPD book that lives up to its title. As an early-career teacher myself, I've found *Teach Smarter* has provided an excellent introduction to popular theory such as Rosenshine's principles of instruction while touching on other areas of the teachers' standards such as planning, expectations and assessment for learning, including feedback and questioning. All of its headings are separated into further subheadings, making it easily accessible for readers to dip into the text and delve into extra information as needed. Overall, this is a fruitful resource that I wish I'd had before starting my PGCE course, and a welcome update on others in its genre. Best of all, Riches is not afraid to criticise areas of pedagogy, which both makes *Teach Smarter* more credible and provides important critical context.

The Questioning chapter is undoubtedly an excellent read. The subheadings divide the questions into categories e.g. probing questions, cold calling and even multiple-choice questions. There is a simple definition underneath, before Riches provides further examples drawn from real-life situations. What more could a trainee ask for? My practice particularly benefited from the chapter on 'probing questions' and the idea of starting off broad and then taking time to refine the discussion. Here Riches' critical framing really comes into its own with an impressively simple and effective excoriation of Bloom's taxonomy. He then goes on to provide the alternative questioning techniques that I wish

PGCE course providers spent more time on. My experience of Bloom's taxonomy being held up as a paragon for differentiation is still recent, yet my short classroom experience already leads me to agree with Riches that it has many, many flaws.

The behaviour management chapter entitled Expectations touches upon areas that I had also neglected within my training year. No pages are wasted in this book; the importance of teacher-parent relationships is addressed and given the emphasis it truly deserves. He suggests being prepared for these parents to ask how they can support their children at home. I particularly like the idea of having a plan and a response prepared for these situations that doesn't require you to provide additional learning for the student or to generate extra work for you! Reducing workload is a key message throughout this book that I am sure early-career teachers will appreciate.

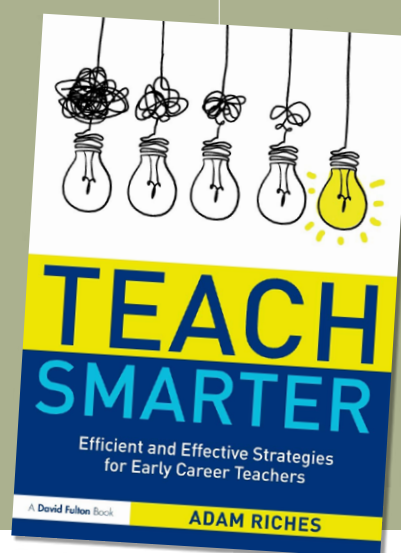
However, there are some adjustments that a second edition would benefit from, chief among them being the lack of images. The only images appear in the seating plan chapter to aid visual interpretations of classroom spaces and layouts. Ironically, this is the least relevant chapter in the post-Covid

age of children in rows facing forward, but the author wasn't to know that at the time of writing. A term is a long time in education! The lack of images throughout the rest of the book contrasts sharply with the feel of the title page, which is all bright greens and blues.

More importantly, for a book published in 2020, there are also some glaring omissions of important research and practical pedagogies, not least retrieval practice and spaced learning. I've come to really value these in my own lessons and this gap, added to the visual sparseness of *Teach Smarter*, means I would be far less likely to recommend this book to other trainees and early-career colleagues looking to improve their classroom practice than the likes of *Teaching Walkthrus* by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli.

However, this is a book that ought to earn its place in CPD libraries, and should probably be read before trainees have started their course. At the very least, it should feature before they

complete it. It touches upon vital information, and I enjoyed reading about the importance of cultural capital, the variations of a classroom layout and using whole-class feedback to reduce workload. No single book can cover everything, and looking past its presentational staleness, it offers many great takeaways.



# Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is **Robin Conway**, director of research and innovation at John Mason School

@JMSREFLECT

## EEF Blog: Five-a-day – Achieving Effective Learning Behaviour in Our Classrooms

@kirsten\_mould

I have found the EEF's evidence reviews and guidance reports hugely useful in identifying areas in which I can improve my practice. However they can go into a great deal of depth, which can make it difficult to find the time to read and engage with the ideas during a busy term. Their summary sheets are very helpful, but I am really enjoying their blogging where practitioners and experts distil their findings in a useful and accessible way. This piece by Kirsten Mould is just such an example, with some key ideas from a range of EEF guidance reports distilled into a single piece with the theme of achieving effective learning behaviours. The piece is clear, its ideas are well-explained and a range of questions peppered throughout help us reflect and plan how to implement the guidance. As Mould concludes, "planning these apparently little details into our daily routines means we will develop strong relationships, while teaching and modelling resilience."

## TOP BLOGS of the week



### Strategies to Increase Pace

@Tom\_Needham\_

Whether receiving and giving feedback, I have often discussed pace as an issue in lessons – at times too much, but often too little. A well-paced lesson, it seems to me, has a quite distinctive feel. But it is not easy to capture for someone exactly what that is, much less how to achieve it. Needham does an excellent job of addressing this issue, arguing that "a 'pacey' lesson is an efficient lesson: the time spent in class will be maximally productive with little to no time wasted at all." He then goes on to outline nine key strategies to build pace into a lesson, all clearly explained and achievable. This is an excellent piece, full of practical advice and one that has instantly joined my file of useful reads, both as a reminder for myself and to share with others.

### What Lies Beneath

@greeborunner

Zoe Enser has been highly prolific recently and selecting just one of her excellent blogs to recommend is no easy task. However, this one stands out for its originality and honesty, as she reflects on the behaviours she exhibits as a leader and the possible

reasons for these. She frames some of these with ideas drawn from her reading around women in leadership, but I think they will resonate more widely than that. It is very important that educational leaders reflect on their own behaviours if we are to improve and develop and also to support the next generation of leaders. Enser concludes that she doesn't "have any real answers other than to be aware of what I am doing and saying ... We are always a work in progress." Even without "answers", the piece is worth reading both as a model of honest self-reflection and for the way it might resonate with many current or future leaders; you are not alone.

### A Right to Professional Comment

@greg\_ashman

If Greg Ashman doesn't always get the recognition his thoughtful and well-considered blogs deserve, it is likely purely because the context in which he is writing (education in New South Wales) does not always translate perfectly to the English context. There are some references here that British teachers may not fully understand, including to a particular literacy initiative known as 'L3'. However, the wider message is an important one. I am lucky enough to have been encouraged by my headteacher to engage with online learning and to share my voice. Unfortunately, that is not always the case; a number of teachers only post anonymously (or not at all) for fear of a backlash from their employers. Yet we have recently seen examples here of concerns over policy being disregarded by government until it was too late to spare teachers and students from significant stress. Ashman makes a powerful case that, respecting certain professional courtesies and behaviours, teachers "have a right to comment on matters related to their professional expertise" and that their voices should be heard. This is hopefully a message leaders at all levels will heed.



# Research

UCL Institute of Education will review a new research development each half term. Contact them @IOE\_London if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

## How are maths departments responding to the challenge of blended learning?

**Dr Becky Taylor, senior research associate, UCL Institute of Education**

**W**hen schools closed to the majority of pupils earlier this year, the immediate challenge for teachers was how best to enable pupils' learning to continue. With our ongoing research into attainment grouping on hold, we were keen to understand how maths teachers were adapting their practices for remote teaching and to gather information that might be helpful for planning for future closure mitigation measures.

In May, we sent a survey to the heads of maths at schools participating in the Student Grouping Study and followed up in June with interviews. By this point, schools had had some time to put arrangements for remote teaching into place. We asked the participants about provision for and pupil participation in Year 7. We were particularly interested in what schools were aiming to provide and how this differed by pupil prior attainment and by disadvantage. In total, 49 maths leads completed the survey and 17 were interviewed.

We found that maths departments were taking broadly one of three approaches to remote teaching: continuing to follow their existing curriculum as planned; following it at a slower pace and/or with reduced content; or aiming to review and consolidate previous learning. Now that schools are open to all or most pupils, this means that they are facing quite different challenges as they reopen. The government's and others' responses to mitigating the effects of school closures – including the National Tutoring Programme – will need to be sensitive to these differing needs.

Schools with established online learning practices and infrastructure



were able most readily to move to blended learning, whereas schools in which such approaches were not established reported obstacles to finding strategies they felt could work. Schools have now been asked to devise plans so that remote learning can be put immediately into place if any pupils are required to self-isolate. Our research underlines that these approaches should, as far as possible, be integrated into schools' 'normal' classroom practice and curriculum offer, so that the transition between school and home learning is as smooth as possible.

Many maths departments depended on maths websites that offer videos and automatically-marked tests. However, this meant very limited opportunities for pupils to engage in mathematical talk, metacognitive activities or receive formative feedback. In addition, pupils often had very few chances to interact with teachers and with each other

during their learning. Almost none of the schools we spoke to facilitated live interactions between pupils, with many citing safeguarding concerns rather than technical issues. Software

developers should be encouraged to develop guidance for teachers to facilitate teacher-pupil interaction during future closures and website developers need to consider ways of facilitating interactions and personalised feedback. Schools also need clear guidelines so that legitimate safeguarding concerns do not unnecessarily restrict opportunities for learning.

Like much research already published about learning during lockdown, we found that pupil participation was unequal. As well as Year 7 pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with low prior attainment were participating less and, when they were participating, were less engaged. This was due not just to limited access to technology, but also lower levels of parental involvement with school work, as well as new personal or family-related challenges faced by vulnerable pupils during the lockdown.

We found that low attainers and other disadvantaged pupils also faced significantly greater restrictions in their opportunity to learn maths during lockdown. These restrictions included a reduction in the scaffolding or additional adult support available to low prior attainers, and being offered a more limited range of task types and resources. Recovery curricula and interventions should not simply focus on a rush to catch up or remedial teaching but should also include more challenging mathematical work and a focus on all the fundamentals of mathematics.

Like all teachers, maths departments faced a huge struggle in developing remote teaching at short notice, and a lot was achieved in a short period of time. Now that we have time to reflect, teachers need to adopt – and be supported to adopt – strategies that enable more pupils to experience positive outcomes, whether teaching is classroom-based or remote.



# WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

## MONDAY

Gavin Williamson was his usual enthusiastic self when he contributed to a webinar celebrating 150 years of state education this week.

As the education secretary took the chance to tell delegates he wanted to use the opportunity presented by Covid to reform the education system, the groans of 24,000 school leaders could almost be heard in the distance.

But the irony of Williamson talking about the future when discussions are inevitably going on behind closed doors about his own future was not lost on us.

## TUESDAY

Former education secretary Justine Greening may have had her time at the DfE cut cruelly short by ex-PM Theresa May, but she seems determined to solidify her legacy as the ed sec who cared most about social mobility.

The former MP for Putney, who stood down at last year's election, has put out a video calling for 100 new opportunity areas across England to be announced in the autumn budget.

The problem is very little is known about whether the 12 existing opportunity areas that she set up have achieved what they set out to do yet. The DfE itself acknowledged back in 2017, when Greening was still on the seventh floor of Sanctuary Buildings, that we won't know if the policy has



worked until at least 2021.

Still, 100 opportunity areas has a good ring to it. But we won't be holding our breath...

## WEDNESDAY

Congratulations to Mike Amesbury, whose draft law to cut the cost of school uniform has made it to the committee stage in the House of Commons.

We reported in February that the government is supporting the Labour politician's Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Bill, meaning it has a much greater chance of making it into law than those normally introduced by backbench MPs.

But not everybody is as enthusiastic about the bill, which would require the education secretary to issue guidance for schools and councils about the cost aspects of school uniform policies.

The Schoolwear Association has warned that the bill could result in "unintended consequences" if it's not implemented correctly, and warned against ruling out "sole supplier"

arrangements.

What possible reason could a body representing the companies that profit from the often outrageous costs of school uniforms have for opposing a bill to make them cheaper?!

\*\*\*

We know being education secretary is a tough gig, but you'd have hoped Gavin Williamson would know the difference between his agencies by now.

While he was busy not answering any questions and getting away with it during today's education select committee hearing, Gav switched his exams regulator and schools inspectorate around and made a comment about Ofqual carrying out visits to schools.

We know the cavalry from Ofsted has been sent in to clean house at the stricken exams regulator, but we don't think they've got as far as organising and clandestine inspections yet Gavlar.

## THURSDAY

The health secretary Matthew Hancock was hit with a barrage of questions about the inability of school staff to get Covid tests when he appeared in the House of Commons.

Even Tory MPs were raising concerns on behalf of schools in their constituencies.

Luckily, like our Gav, Matty Moo Moos is a man completely across his brief, so we can all expect the problems to be sorted right away...





HABERDASHERS'  
ASKE'S  
**FEDERATION**



The Haberdashers' Aske's Federation is the UK's longest-serving network of state schools, leading five primary, four secondary and a teaching school in South East London and Kent, each proud to embody a rich history of education excellence.

Our heritage dates as far back as the 1680s. A haberdasher, Robert Aske, left a substantial sum to build a school and educate 20 disadvantaged young people – giving them the chance to better themselves and lead fulfilling lives. This act of selflessness continues to give us purpose to this day.

Over the years, we have built a reputation for educational excellence. We have developed our practices, expanded our curriculum and adapted with the times, to produce an all-round education which is pioneering and relevant to this day.

The Federation is at a pivotal point in its journey of school improvement with a new CEO leading the Federation, there is a feeling of genuine excitement across our schools. We are looking to recruit three critical Senior Leadership roles to join us on this journey:

#### **Primary Principal, Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham Temple Grove Free School**

We are looking for a Primary Principal to lead Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham Temple Grove Free School. The Free School is now well established as an over-subscribed and highly successful Primary school. It is an 'outstanding' school, which serves its local community well.

#### **Primary Principal, Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Temple Grove**

We are looking for a Primary Principal to lead Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Temple Grove. This is a truly exhilarating opportunity for a driven and dynamic school leader to lead the school's journey of improvement to becoming a school where children can flourish and achieve their very best.

#### **Mathematics Consultant, Atlas Teaching School Alliance**

We are looking for a Mathematics Consultant to join the Federation's central consultant team. This role would suit a candidate with extensive experience and understanding of the Mathematics curriculum, assessment and delivery. As a Federation Consultant, the successful candidate will provide practical support, guidance and consultancy in each of the Federation's secondary schools and to schools in our wider network.

Bound by the Haberdashers name, our inclusive community in the heart of South East London is alive with diverse backgrounds, personalities and passions. We are building a culture where pupils, parents, teachers and staff selflessly serve each other, centred on traditional values and behaviours.

#### **Join the Haberdashers' Trust and belong to something more**

- An extensive support network, opening doors to countless growth opportunities.
- An established name, which you can be proud to work for
- An unrivalled legacy, born out of Robert Aske's vision to reach young people through education.

Each of these posts are suitable for leaders who have the highest of expectations for what can be achieved. Successful candidates will be able to motivate and inspire others with a clear vision, and have determination to drive school improvement at pace.

If you are motivated by working in a challenging and supportive environment where the key outcome is our shared desire to achieve the very best for our children and young people to secure life chances from which they may not otherwise benefit, if you are a talented, tenacious and passionate leader, we hope you will consider applying to Haberdashers' Aske's Federation.

***Join the Haberdashers' community. Belong to something more.***



# Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of School Improvement

**Reports to:** Chief Executive Officer  
**Location:** New Forest and Southampton  
**Salary:** L25 - L31 (£74,103 - £85,827, subject to national pay awards)  
**Full Time (Teachers Pay and Conditions)**



An exciting opportunity has arisen to join an established, successful and growing Multi Academy Trust. Trustees are looking to appoint a Deputy Chief Executive Officer to enhance the already substantial and successful Inspire Team.

We are a truly collaborative, values led Trust, thriving on the positive relationships and willing involvement of like-minded professionals. We are looking to recruit an individual to champion school improvement, with the insight to identify and promote best practice, and the courage to challenge our schools to improve even further, by leading partnership working across the Trust's academies and within the wider system leaders' network.

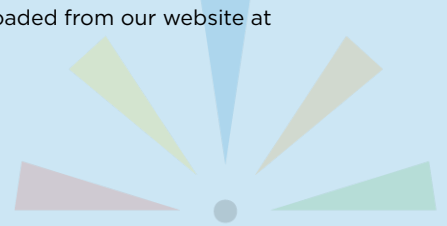
This newly created role is an exciting opportunity for an exceptional and inspirational primary school improvement professional who has the aspiration, integrity and ability to help support the ongoing improvements across the Trust's academies. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer will be at the heart of this work.

We are looking for a Deputy Chief Executive Officer & Director of School Improvement who shares our values and who has the drive and resilience to achieve our strategic vision. They will be committed to implementing educational excellence across our Trust, supported by the CEO, the Trust Strategic Leadership Team and a committed Board. I hope you share our sense of excitement at the opportunities that lie ahead to further build and grow our successes.

Applicant letter, full job description, person specification and application form can be downloaded from our website at [www.inspirelearningpartnership.org/deputy-chief-executive-officer/](http://www.inspirelearningpartnership.org/deputy-chief-executive-officer/)

Please return your completed application by email to [hr@ILPartnership.org](mailto:hr@ILPartnership.org)

**Closing Date: 12th October 2020 at noon**  
**Interview Date: 3rd/4th November 2020**



## DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL CURRICULUM AND INNOVATION, LIVINGSTONE ACADEMY, BOURNEMOUTH

**Hours:** Full time role  
**Start date:** January 2021 or Easter 2021  
**Salary:** Negotiable, equivalent to Assistant Principal



**LIVINGSTONE ACADEMY BOURNEMOUTH**  
 an Aspirations Academy



**ASPIRATIONS**

Aspirations is a multi academy trust with a deep sense of moral purpose, determined that children receive an excellent education.

Livingstone Academy Bournemouth is an innovative new school for children aged 4 to 18 opening in September 2021 in the heart of Bournemouth. Our ambition is to ensure that all young people leave school equipped with the skills and knowledge to thrive in their future lives and careers in the digital age. Young people must be creative, critical thinkers who can create technology as well as consume it.

Our inspirational Director of Digital Curriculum and Innovation will work closely with experts to design and develop ground breaking new curriculum resources and approaches to learning.

The role is pivotal to the development of the curriculum at Livingstone Academy Bournemouth which will be pioneering in its approach to equipping young people with the knowledge and know how to succeed in their future lives and careers in the digital age. We aim to revolutionise education by bridging the gap between industry and education,

capitalising on the best tools and technologies that the gaming and broader creative digital industries have at their disposal

Learn more about Livingstone Academy at [www.livingstone-aspirations.org](http://www.livingstone-aspirations.org)

If you would like to discuss the Trust's vision for this role before applying, please contact Steve Kenning, Managing Director, at [stevekenning@aspirationsacademies.org](mailto:stevekenning@aspirationsacademies.org) or on 07753 496548.

Visit <https://www.aspirationsacademies.org/work-for-us/> to find out more and apply.

**Closing date for applications is 4pm on Wednesday 7th October 2020.**

**Interviews due to take place on Wednesday 14th October 2020 at Aspirations Academies Trust, HQ - World Business Centre 3, Newall Road, Heathrow Airport, TW6 2TA**





**Southway Primary School**  
The best in everyone™  
Part of United Learning

## Principal

**Do you have a passion for school improvement and a proven track record in raising standards?**

Southway Primary Academy is looking for an ambitious, inspirational, and innovative Principal to drive rapid school improvement and further raise the quality of education for all pupils. As part of United Learning, a national group of academies and independent schools, our mission being 'the best in everyone' and to improve the life chances of the children and young people in their care.

Southway is a large school with the capacity for 630 pupils in Bognor Regis.

As Principal, you will demonstrate a clear commitment to Southway and its community. You will model outstanding leadership and set high expectations for students and staff. Your professionalism, expertise and enthusiasm for education will be evident each and every day.

If you are looking for an exciting, challenging and highly rewarding role within a Group that offers a strong commitment to professional development, we encourage you to visit us.

**Find out more and apply**  
<https://www.unitedlearningcareers.org.uk/current-vacancies>



## Chief Executive Officer

Remuneration: Competitive  
Blackpool

Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT) is the major educational provider in the Fylde peninsula. It has now received approval to become an academy sponsor in its own right.

FCAT is looking for an inspirational leader, with vision and imagination who understands the unique structure of a Multi Academy Trust, builds relationships and influences others. The CEO would work closely with the board and the chair in setting and driving a strategy of relentless improvement.

The individual will be comfortable with a corporate governance style and the required financial reporting and planning regime. Education or CEO experience is not essential however, candidates must demonstrate ability to lead a multi-disciplinary organisation and drive its growth and development.

For an informal and confidential conversation please contact our advising partners at GatenbySanderson: Ross Highfield or Paul Aristides on 07891 138 886.

To apply please visit [www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe62312.1/chief-executive-officer-44/](http://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe62312.1/chief-executive-officer-44/)

**Closing date: Monday 7 October 2020.**

**GatenbySanderson**



**Skills Builder**  
PARTNERSHIP

## Education Manager

Are you an outstanding education leader, who wants to transform how schools and colleges build the essential skills of their students?

The Skills Builder Partnership is an award-winning social enterprise. Our mission is to ensure that one day, everyone builds the skills, experiences and aspirations to succeed – beyond just a set of qualifications.

If you want to be part of an inspiring team, and benefit from opportunities for rapid growth, development and challenge, we want to hear from you.

**Salary:** £38,000-£44,000 subject to review in 12 months

**Closing Date:** Monday 21st September 2020

**Locations:** The Midlands  
Visit [www.skillsbuilder.org/jobs](http://www.skillsbuilder.org/jobs) to find out more and apply.



## Head of Academy

Pennyman Primary Academy is a large, complex academy for over 400 children. This includes a specialist designated unit provision for around

55 children. Therefore, Pennyman is a fully inclusive and exciting learning community, where unlocking each child's unique potential is at the heart of learning. This is reflected in the Pennyman motto 'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'.

This Head of Academy role is varied and complex in scope and would therefore be ideally suited to an innovative, forward-thinking school leader who has an unequivocal commitment to serve children and their families with a commendable proven impact. Being able to demonstrate this for outcomes and life opportunities for children in areas of disadvantage, including for those with special needs would be advantageous.

Visits to the academy are actively encouraged and should be arranged by contacting **Mrs Lucy Simpson**, PA to the Executive Head Teacher, on **01642 304406**. During the visits, masks will be provided and there will be no access to classroom bubbles.



**TEES VALLEY**  
EDUCATION  
[www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk](http://www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk)





FALKLAND  
ISLANDS  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOL

## Principal of Secondary

Contract term: Up to 4 years

Start date: January 2021 or April 2021

**This role is a unique opportunity to live and work overseas, leading a secondary school in an English school system.**

**We will provide:**

- an environment for an effective leader to flourish
- competitive salary Grade A – ranges from £60,302 to £76,209 plus annual 25% gratuity at the successful completion of contract, maximum annual package £95,260
- collaborative executive leadership team
- financially secure school
- favourable income tax rates
- a unique and beautiful environment to live and work
- airfares for the post holder and dependants at the beginning and end of contract, as well as airfares for return flights after every full year of the contract
- a relocation grant
- accommodation to rent
- free education locally for dependent children to GCSE level and possible allowance for overseas studies thereafter

**Closing Date: Applications by Sunday 27th September 2020**

The successful applicant will join a well-resourced, financially secure school with a supportive staff team, small class sizes and students who are keen to learn. You will work closely with the Executive Headteacher and Principal of Primary to ensure all learners have opportunities to reach their full potential.

We are looking for a school leader who will build on the recent, excellent progress and ensure it is embedded into the core of our school to secure a sustainable future and good outcomes for all. The capacity to innovate and shape pathways for our all-ability intake is essential. The successful candidate will inspire the Senior Leadership Team, work closely with the Primary School and engage the entire community in the pursuit of continued excellence.

**School Website:** <https://www.secondary.ac.fk/>

**For more information please contact Kim Greenland**

**E-mail:** [kgreenland@sec.gov.fk](mailto:kgreenland@sec.gov.fk) or **Tel:** 00 500 27420



### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: BEHAVIOUR

This is an exciting time to join Landau Forte Academy, Amington. We are a forward thinking 11-16 academy on a mission to provide high quality education for our local community. We have high expectations for our students and our academy is built upon our shared values: ambitious, brave and kind.

Our Assistant Principal will be responsible for all aspects of student behaviour and attitudes, organising and implementing sustainable structures and routines. They will lead and develop a team and contribute to strategic planning.

If successful you will become part of our community. You will be supported in your career with opportunities to achieve nationally recognised qualifications. We care about our staff and staff well-being is integral to our decision making. We also offer a meal allowance, free parking, gym membership and a Healthcare Cash Plan.

For further information and to apply please visit [lfct.org.uk/careers](http://lfct.org.uk/careers).



**AVANTI** SCHOOLS  
TRUST

**Are you an inspirational leader with a passion for inclusion and improving the life chances of all pupils? If so, this is a chance to join the high achieving team at Avanti Trust Schools.**

We are looking for two inspirational leaders with a passion for inclusion and improving the life chances of all pupils.

We wish to appoint an excellent Assistant Headteacher in Frome & Exeter to lead whole school SEND and ensure that pupils receive the support they need to be successful.

Avanti Park is a community (non-denominational) middle (deemed primary) 3-13 maintained school located in the Somerset town of Frome.

Avanti Hall is a community (non-denominational) all through 4 - 16 maintained school located on the outskirts of Exeter.

If this sounds like you then head to our careers page [avanti.org.uk/careers](http://avanti.org.uk/careers) or get in touch with [carolyn.dickinson@avanti.org.uk](mailto:carolyn.dickinson@avanti.org.uk) for more information.

**Closing Date: Midday (12 noon)**

**Monday 28th September 2020.**



## Director of Primary Education

Start Date: 1st January or as soon as possible thereafter

Exciting opportunity following the promotion of the current post-holder to her first CEO post, for an ambitious and effective senior leader, with QTS and a strong primary background, to take on a crucial strategic leadership role in this highly regarded and successful Church of England Trust.

Our successful candidate will lead, support and coach a strong and committed team of Primary headteachers across schools in Kent and East Sussex and will play a lead role in the further

development of the quality of education and professional development across the Trust's primary school portfolio. The successful candidate will also have a unique opportunity to contribute to the wider educational work of the Trust; a Trust that is well-known for the quality of its work and the significant contribution it makes to the shaping of national policy, and which benefits from strong relationships across the education sector.

Full candidate pack at [www.tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk/employment](http://www.tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk/employment)

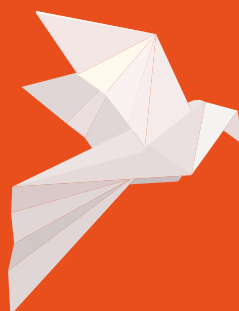
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[advertising@schoolsweek.co.uk](mailto:advertising@schoolsweek.co.uk)

# GET RECRUITMENT READY FOR 2020/2021

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packages available at Schools  
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[www.educationweekjobs.co.uk](http://www.educationweekjobs.co.uk)