



**WEALTHY SPONSORS
WHO MAKE ALL
THE DIFFERENCE**

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SCHOOLSWEET.CO.UK

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CANCELLING CLASSES FOR CAMPFIRE

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No places, no teachers, so it's off to private school

- > Ten councils spend almost £480m on private special needs provision
- > They say they can't keep up with the rising number of diagnoses

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ **Exclusive**

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THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

A revolution in the
teacher supply market

SCHOOLS WEEK TEAM

Editor:	Laura McNerney
Features editor:	Cath Murray
Head designer:	Nicky Phillips
Designer:	Matthew Willsons
Sub editor:	Jill Craven
Chief reporter:	John Dickens
Political reporter:	Freddie Whittaker
Reporter:	Billy Camden
Reporter:	Jess Staufenberg
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Cartoonist:	Stan Dupp
Financials:	Helen Neilly
	Victoria Boyle
Sales manager:	Vikrant Bassi
Sales executive:	Wallace Williams
Administration:	Frances Ogeferi Dell
Contributors:	Toby Salt
	Russell Hobby
	Carolyn Roberts
	Andrew Old
	Zubeda Limbada

Managing director: Shane Mann

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Learning & Skills Events, Consultancy and Training Ltd
161-165 Greenwich High Road
London SE10 8JA
T: 020 8123 4778
E: news@schoolsweek.co.uk

NEWS

Longer day booted in favour of sports facilities

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

The government has scrapped a £285 million pledge to fund longer days at secondary school, with the cash diverted to help to fund a £415 million pot to build new sports facilities.

The Healthy Pupils Capital Programme, announced by education secretary Justine Greening on Tuesday, will be paid for by the government's "sugar tax" and will be available from next year.

But Schools Week has been told that more than two-thirds of the funding will be transferred from the "longer working day scheme", first announced by George Osborne in his Budget last year.

The then chancellor said at least a quarter of secondary schools would be handed a share of £285 million to open for an extra hour each day. The cash would have been provided as part of schools' revenue streams to help them to offer more extra-curricular arts and sports sessions.

But the scheme has now been dropped in favour of funding Greening's capital scheme in which the cash will be spent on buildings.

Rachel Gooch, a governor in Suffolk, has criticised the move. She told *Schools Week*: "The main issue is the switch to capital from revenue funding. Largely we already have space and equipment, but we can't afford the extra hours to provide additional sports clubs and breakfast clubs.



"Extended schools was a significant initiative announced in the last Budget and has now been dropped without a whisper."

The move to divert the cash comes a week after the National Audit Office warned the government would have to spend £6.7 billion to bring every school to a "satisfactory" condition.

A total of £5.5 billion is needed for major repair works, with another £1.2 billion needed to replace parts of buildings at "serious risk of imminent failure".

Alongside the £285 million, Osborne also announced £10 million to fund breakfast clubs, and another £160 million to double the sports premium.

The government has confirmed these



pledges will remain in place. They will form part of a £1.3 billion investment in 2018-19 to help pupils lead healthier lifestyles.

Greening said the cash would help "to secure the future health of our young people".

The new £415 million capital funding will be dished out through a central formula to local authorities or multi-academy trusts, which can make spending decisions based on "local context".

Schools in smaller trusts, standalone trusts and sixth-form centres will have to bid for cash from a central fund.

The government said facilities would support children with physical conditions or mental health issues.

The government has also pledged the funding will not fall below £415 million, regardless of the cash generated by the government's soft drinks levy.

The Department for Education will confirm the allocation formula, spending guidance and bidding criteria in the summer.

Sex and relationship lessons compulsory from 2019

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

All schools will be required to teach sex and relationships after the government pledged a shake-up in academies and local authority-maintained schools.

Justine Greening, the education secretary, said on Wednesday that the government will change the law so that all secondaries, including academies and independent schools, will have to teach sex education, and all primaries will have to teach pupils about "safe and healthy relationships".

The government will also change its guidance, last updated in 2000, to make schools teach their pupils about issues relevant to the 21st century, including cyberbullying, sexting and internet safety.

The amendment also paves the way for the teaching of personal, social, health and economics education (PSHE) to become compulsory, although ministers have not said when this will come into effect.

At present, local authority-maintained secondary schools must at least teach pupils about sex through their biology curriculum, but there is no such requirement for the growing number of secondary academies.

The long-awaited announcement followed 24 hours of speculation after details of the government's plans were

leaked to the media.

Ministers say they will now work with schools to set out "suitable, age-appropriate content" on sex and relationships that will also focus on mental wellbeing, consent, resilience and keeping safe online.

The new laws, which will be achieved through amendments to the government's children and social work bill and are likely to be supported by MPs in all parties, will be subject to full public consultation. But it is expected schools will be forced to teach the subjects from September 2019.

Under the changes, parents will continue to have a right to withdraw their children from sex education and faith schools will continue to be able to teach "in accordance with the tenets of their faith", something that has been welcomed by religious groups.

However, some have questioned the capacity of schools to deal with the new subjects. Lucy Powell, the former shadow education secretary, has asked ministers for assurances that they will improve training for school staff and give them additional support to deliver the new curriculum.

The decision to change the law – a move that the

former education secretary Nicky Morgan (pictured) has admitted was considered by the last government – has been widely welcomed by MPs, charities and education unions, and follows years of campaigning.

It also comes after the chairs of five parliamentary committees wrote to Greening to request the change, and follows damning reports that linked a lack of statutory sex education to problems with sexual harassment in schools and rising rates of sexually transmitted infections in young adults.

Maria Miller, the Conservative MP who chairs the women and equalities committee, said the decision would benefit "millions of children", while the Green Party MP Caroline Lucas, who has for years tried to get compulsory PSHE, said it was a "great day" for campaigners.

Kevin Courtney, the general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said he wanted to see "high-quality and age-appropriate sex and relationships education across all key stages" and called on the government to work with teachers and provide additional "support, resources and authority" to schools.



NEWS

Private schools could lose business-rate discount

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

A council is reviewing the community benefit of local private schools to decide if they deserve generous discounts in business rates.

It is thought to be the first time a council has taken this step and while the rates cannot currently be changed for charitable organisations, experts believe pressure could be exerted on the government to allow a hike in charges if schools are not meeting their responsibilities.

Conservative-run Taunton Deane borough council in Somerset formed the "independent schools forum" last month to "engage with independent schools" over the benefits they offer to the community. Steve Ross, the independent councillor who proposed its launch, wants to find out if the community can extract more value from them.

According to Ross, independent schools in the district received a tax discount of £868,060 in 2016-17, of which more than £340,000 would normally have been taken by the council through the business rates system.

"We recognise we have to give the schools business rates relief, but we considered the time was right to seek better engagement with the schools and see whether their delivery of public benefit could be aligned with tackling local priorities," he said.

"In an area with national pressure on education, plus county pressure on children's services and libraries, and our borough having deprived wards in which

literacy is identified as a barrier to families accessing services and employment, we need to look at, and beyond, the current arrangements."

Taunton's intervention comes as the government is reviewing the role of independent schools in their communities.

Proposals set out last year in a government consultation include an expectation that private schools will support existing or new state schools and offer more fully funded places for poorer pupils.

Under current law, independent schools are entitled to charitable status providing

“Every penny counts for local councils these days

they operate on a not-for-profit basis and can demonstrate the public benefit of the education they provide.

This benefit is reviewed by the Charity Commission based on a range of factors, and gives an exemption from some taxes, including business rates.

Although councils cannot revoke an individual charity's business rate relief, other councils adopting a similar policy could prompt national action to give town halls more powers.

Schools Week also understands the idea is

being considered by the government as part of its upcoming proposals for improving social mobility.

However, the idea has been rejected by the Independent Schools Council, which represents hundreds of private schools across England.

Julie Robinson, the ISC's general secretary, said schools already worked with their local communities, offering free classes in science and languages, advice on access to universities and sharing facilities and opportunities in sport, music and drama.

"The partnership activities that can count as 'public benefit' are a matter for the Charity Commission to determine, rather than local councils."

Shadow education secretary Angela Rayner (pictured) has now called for more councils to assess what benefits they get from private schools.

"I hope other local authorities will follow this lead," Rayner told *Schools Week*. "It must be right that there should be a local examination of the contribution that private schools supposedly make to the wider community."

"Every penny counts for local councils these days and you can hardly blame them for wanting to know if organisations that can qualify as charities and get rate relief, fully deserve it."



Multi-faith assembly claim denied by Brent

Several national newspapers this week reported Brent Council as the first in Britain to allow multi-belief school assemblies in place of daily Christian worship – but *Schools Week* has found little evidence for the claim, with the council insisting its schools have been able to do this for 11 years.

The reports were based on a press release from Accord, a group campaigning for all state-funded schools to be non or multi-faith, which said the council was the first to "allow schools to be freed from having to provide daily Christian worship by instead allowing them to provide multi-belief or no-faith assemblies".

But the council has allowed multi-faith assemblies since 2006 and is not alone in "allowing" alternative approaches to daily worship.

Department for Education guidance, issued in 1994, says that schools can apply to councils to be exempt from laws written in 1944 requiring daily worship in schools to be "wholly or broadly" Christian.

A *Schools Week* investigation previously reported that 125 schools were granted exemptions in 2015, with several councils given "multi-belief" determinations, similar to those in Brent.

Accord said its claim was based on information from 23 standing advisory councils for religious education (13 per cent of the total in the UK) that nominated the council for the organisation's inclusivity award.

Be prepared, the scouts are coming to a school near you

SAM KING

@KINGSAMANTHA_

CONTINUED
FROM FRONT

Exclusive

A Surrey primary school has cancelled Friday afternoon lessons in favour of running a scouts club, using school funds to cover the Scout Association's yearly membership fees.

Weyfield academy, a member of the Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT), is one of the first primary schools to become an official scouting school – which means activities such as building campfires and exploring will take place during school hours.

Instead of Friday afternoon classes, Weyfield pupils across two year groups will work towards badges in areas such as Entertainer, Digital Citizen, International and Athletics.

The average annual cost of a scouting group can range from £50 to £100 per child, plus the cost of any additional trips, but Weyfield has absorbed the cost.

The school is currently looking to apply for extra grants from local sources and supermarket chains that offer funding and voucher schemes to make the club a permanent fixture across all year groups.

Mei Lim, Weyfield's headteacher, surveyed 350 children at the school and found that less than ten had been involved previously with

brownies, guides or scouts. She says scouting activities in the curriculum gives pupils "no reason to opt out".

"If you ask them what they do at the weekend, they're sitting in front of their computers. We've removed that barrier of participation by integrating the activities into the school curriculum. They don't have to go after school."

The initiative will run every Friday until the end of the summer term.

Ofsted rated Weyfield good in 2015 after an inadequate rating in 2014.

Rachel Wolf, from the Parents and Teacher for Excellence group, says it's up to the school how it uses its time, but warns that schools should first make sure that pupils have mastered the subjects they need to succeed in secondary school.

The Scout Association's co-curricular programme has been running for 18 months on a trial basis and is still under development, with the official website saying it is not currently being promoted or its delivery supported until there are "appropriate policies in place to effectively support this provision".

A spokesperson for the group described the co-curricular partnership as a "different way of providing educational experiences" rather

than taking time off from learning.

"It's not saying we are stopping learning and doing scouts, it's that we are using scouts to enhance and encourage learning."

Seven schools are piloting the provision. The spokesperson claims one head has reported "more attentive and engaged" pupils after incorporating scouts into the school day.

Woodside primary academy in east London – a member of the REAch2 Academy Trust – has implemented a similar framework, but has structured timetables so formal teaching hours are not impacted.



Shane Tewes, Woodside's head, says that incorporating activities into the school day have benefited "staff retention and recruitment" as well as having a positive impact on pupil behaviour.

NEWS: SPECIAL NEEDS

Hundreds of pupils forced into

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

CONTINUED
FROM FRONT

Exclusive

A lack of state-funded places is forcing councils to spend hundreds of millions of pounds to send pupils to independent special schools.

Councils sent up to triple the number of SEND pupils to independent special schools last year compared with six years ago, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal.

Councils blame the shift on a lack of funds for new state places, leaving them unable to keep pace with the rising numbers of diagnoses.

There are also not enough special needs teachers – a situation made worse by the Department for Education's lack of recruitment targets and data for the SEND sector.

But sending pupils to private schools can be costly.

Analysis by *Schools Week* shows that an independent place costs councils double that of a state place.

Dave Whitaker, executive principal of Springwell Learning Community in Barnsley, says private schools do a "great job" with their intake but that children "could have their needs adequately met in much lower-cost state provision."

If state-funded places are not available to meet a pupil's needs as specified on their education, health and care plan (EHCP) or statement, then local authorities are required to fund places at a private special school.

Freedom of Information responses from 110 councils seen by *Schools Week* reveal the councils spent an average £52,000 per pupil on independent special school places for 2015-16.

This almost doubles the £10,000 to £30,000 per pupil annual cost of a SEND pupil attending a state-funded school place, as estimated by SEND consultant Barney Angliss and Laxmi Patel, senior associate solicitor and head of education at law firm Boyes Turner, though both stress costs can be more if a pupil's needs are severe.

Councils say that a rise in pupils diagnosed with autism, social and emotional needs, or severe physical and neurological needs, has put pressure on local state school places. It is believed the increasing number of children surviving a premature birth is causing the increase.

Schools Week approached the ten councils that spent the most on SEND places at independent special schools, according to their most recent data.

In 2010, Kent county council funded 145 pupils to attend independent special schools. Six years later that more than trebled to 494, costing the council £18.7 million in 2015-16.

Essex funded 262 pupils to attend independent special schools in 2010, rising to 358 by 2015-16; in Warwickshire the rise was from 196 to 248 pupils; and in Leicestershire from 170 to 233 pupils.

In total, the 110 councils spent £480 million out of their education budgets



Barney Angliss

privately educating pupils with additional needs last year, in some cases paying an average of over £100,000 per pupil (see table right).

The investigation follows a National Audit Office (NAO) report last week that said SEND pupils were having to "travel further, or be inappropriately placed in mainstream schools" because councils

1.22 Funding allocations do not currently reflect the need for places in special schools. The number of pupils attending special schools increased from 89,000 in 2010 to 105,000 in 2016. In our survey, 79% of local authorities said that the availability of funding for pupils with special educational needs was a major constraint on delivering sufficient places. This is because the cost of a place in a special school, while highly variable, is on average four times the cost of a mainstream primary place. There is a range of potential consequences if there are insufficient special school places. For example, pupils may have to travel further or may be inappropriately placed in mainstream schools. In the 2015 Spending Review the government committed £215 million to meet the cost of places for pupils with special educational needs. This money will become available from 2018 and will be spread over three years.

were struggling to open suitable state-funded places, in part due to the lack of funding available for new provision.

SEND teacher recruitment

Yet, even if local authorities could fund more places in local authority or free schools, they would "still face severe difficulties in the recruitment and retention of special needs teachers", Angliss says.

Whitaker adds that a "lack of expertise among mainstream teachers" in special needs is pushing pupils into state special schools and then into independent special schools once the state sector is full.

According to the workforce census, a higher proportion of teachers in special schools left their job last year (11.9 per cent last year) than in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

There were also more posts filled temporarily in the SEND, pupil referral unit and alternative provision sector (which the Department for Education categorises



together) at 1.5 per cent, compared with 0.8 across the state-funded sector overall.

At present, the department does not have targets for recruiting teachers with special needs roles and class sizes in special needs schools are also not recorded, unlike in the mainstream sector.

Simon Knight, director of education at the National Education Trust, says the lack of data makes it "currently unclear" how the challenge of insufficient SEND pupil places could be overcome.

The absence of SEND teacher recruitment initiatives is also "surprising", he added.

Capital expenditure

The cost of building new special schools is greater than commissioning places from independent schools, councils told *Schools Week*, meaning they were disincentivised in the short-term from building new schools.

Buckinghamshire council says "the most cost-effective answer is not always

to create more SEND places within the maintained system", a point repeated by Hampshire and Leicestershire councils. Hampshire says independent provision can be cheaper.

Claire Dorer, chief executive of the National Association of independent and non-maintained Special Schools (NASS), says that when social care and therapy costs for pupils is included, residential independent schools can provide the same value for money as state-funded schools.

"If you consider the whole public purse cost, there is generally far less difference to the cost of an independent special school than people think."

She says pupils are often only moved to independent schools after several "failed experiences" of provision elsewhere.

But Surrey, Warwickshire, Essex and Kent councils all say that they need to increase the number of state-funded places. Essex will fund at least 400 of the 815 needed places by 2020 to "reduce the number of pupils going to school out of county, or at independent special schools".

A spokesperson for the Department for Education says funding for children and young people with high needs will exceed £5.3 billion next year. "We trust local authorities to distribute this money based on the needs of their area."

to private schools



COUNCILS WITH HIGHEST PER PUPIL COST FOR SEND PLACES

Local Authority	Average cost per pupil	Annual transport costs	Pupils in independent special schools funded by LA	Total annual cost
Hertfordshire	£129,237.06	£247,935.00	67	£8.6 million
Swindon	£111,804.00	£178,422.00	20	£2.2 million
Waltham Forest	£106,380.42	£193,497.00	26	£2.7 million
Doncaster	£98,725.17	£261,846.00	20	£1.9 million
Enfield	£94,054.06	£623,846.00	78	£7.3 million
Central Bedfordshire	£91,502.40	£54,391.49	26	£2.3 million
Harrow	£83,015.85	£576,474.00	71	£5.8 million
Milton Keynes	£81,129.64	£216,953.80	50	£4 million

£52,000

average private
SEND place

£20,000

average state-
funded SEND
place

£480m

council spend
on private
SEND places

11.9%

teachers leave
SEND schools
each year

9.5%

teachers leaving
all sectors

‘THERE’S NO OTHER OPTION, SO FINGERS CROSSED’

This case study is based on postings to an online forum

John realises at the start of the school year that his daughter is not receiving proper SEND support at her current school.

“Anita is going into year 7 in September at a mainstream school. This was a mistake – I was trying to apply for her to belong to a special needs unit within the school.

“Now the unit can’t offer her a place, and the council has agreed that she would be best placed in a special school. They agree the mainstream school cannot meet her needs adequately at all.

“So the council has applied to two schools, even to one they already knew didn’t have any places. Both have rejected her. Now the council is applying to four cross-borough schools – all of which I’ve called, and the likelihood of a place looks pretty bleak. And I rang non-maintained special schools, and they also look full.

“I don’t know what to do. I can’t comprehend this is the end of the road and my child has to suffer because there are not enough places to meet demand.”

John* then reads the following response on his online forum: “I would research private special schools and see if they have places?”

So he does. There is a nearby SEND independent

college with a “good” Ofsted grading, but which other parents take a poor view of. Ill-feeling against the headteacher runs high. Although it’s only 10 minutes away, he dismisses it as a choice.

Another independent school, which is more than an hour-and-a-half’s drive away has places, is “outstanding” in all categories. The boarding fees are concerning: £58,831 to £68,202 a year. Day fees start from £40,752 a year.

The local authority says the nearby college has suitable provision for Anita and can offer her a place – but John refuses to agree. He contacts a SEND lawyer and takes his local authority to a tribunal. The tribunal upholds his argument, saying only the residential school with high boarding fees is capable of meeting Anita’s particular needs – proving he was right to protest.

“Now Anita has a place at the boarding school, funded by the council. I just wanted to share! She’s nervous about being away from home, it’s such a disruption to the routine she’s been used to.

“But I’m just really hoping it works out, and anyway there’s no other option, so fingers crossed.

*Not his real name

NEWS

NCTL LOSES POWER TO APPROVE TRAINING

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

The government has stripped more powers from the National College for Teaching and Leadership, telling schools to submit requests to become a teacher training provider directly to the Department for Education.

The move is a “significant” step towards the government’s absorption of the college, say experts.

Originally opened to provide a standalone teacher training agency, the government closed and sold the NCTL’s £28 million flagship teacher training centre in July 2015. Since then, its responsibilities have diminished further.

Schools wanting to become initial teacher training (ITT) providers previously sought permission from the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) which then approved or declined the request.

Updated guidance, published by the Department for Education (DfE) during the half term break, says new providers must now send requests straight to the government.

The switch is further evidence of it taking full control of the college, after it was stripped of its status as a separate body and made into an executive arm of the DfE. The department now runs all its research functions.

The NCTL board was also abolished, although Roger Pope was appointed as chair to head the group.

The changes disappointed union leaders who feared for the future of the teacher training agency as a separate organisation.

Professor Alan Smithers of the University of Buckingham said the loss of power showed that the college would be fully “absorbed” by the DfE.

He told *Schools Week* that it was “significant” that guidance on teacher training now came from the DfE.

“The NCTL is still officially an agency but has been absorbed to the extent that it has almost disappeared.”

He warned the move risks schools’ applications being “considered on the correctness of the document submitted, without any sense of the likely quality of the proposed provision that someone with a background in teaching or teacher training would be expected to have”.

Pam Tatlow, chief executive of MillionPlus, the association for modern universities, agreed the role of the NCTL was being “scaled back”, but said the switch was “unlikely to make any difference as far as providers are concerned”.

Sian Carr, former operational director at NCTL and the outgoing president of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the change was part of an ongoing review of the national college, with outcomes due to be published in April.

“I suspect [the switch of ITT provider submissions] it is part of enabling the DfE policy team and the NCTL which delivers aspects of that policy to work more closely together. As such it could be seen as a positive move so that policy and delivery are aligned.”

The DfE said the change would not make any difference in practice.

Schools must promote vocational courses

BILLY CAMDEN AND FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@SCHOOLSWEEK

“Hostile” schools must give colleges and apprenticeship providers access to their pupils to promote vocational courses after ministers backed a law change proposed by the former education secretary Lord Baker (pictured).

Schools currently have a statutory duty to promote vocational options, but have been accused by Baker of “resisting” its implementation.

Baker, who served as education secretary under Margaret Thatcher and was a key architect of the ailing university technical colleges (UTC) programme, told *Schools Week* he envisaged colleges visiting schools “once a year during the key times in September, October and November”.

He suggested a “careers day with a host of colleges and UTCs and providers coming in at once”.

“The government will decide themselves on which providers they [schools] let in, I can’t decide every bit of the policy,” he said, adding that it would not increase staff workload because teachers were not being asked to do “anything other than get the pupils into a classroom”.

The rule change is an amendment to a bill on technical and further education. It is expected to pass into law after final sign-off from MPs and should be in place by September.



Baker told the House of Lords last week that “every word” of the proposed changes was needed because it was going to be “met with great hostility in every school in the country”.

Leaders of local authority-maintained schools and academies will now have to ensure there is an opportunity for a “range of education and training providers” to access pupils between 13 and 18 to promote “technical education qualifications or apprenticeships”.

Janet Clark of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers said joint working between schools and colleges benefited “all young people”, but warned a law change was not the answer.

“Legislation is not the right way to go. It does not promote harmonious collaboration, and using language such as ‘hostile’ to describe schools is inappropriate.

“If everybody was funded properly, we wouldn’t be in this situation.”

The age range included in the amendment means that UTCs – which have faced huge problems with recruitment at 14 – will also benefit, says Baker, who admitted that a transition at 14 “presents marketing difficulties”.

The legislation will also apply to special schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision academies, and will require schools to prepare a policy statement setting out the circumstances in which providers of technical education will be given access.

The bill has already won support from the academies minister Lord Nash, who said it would “promote technical education and apprenticeship opportunities more effectively so that young people can make more informed and confident choices at important transition points”.

Ofsted funded again to seek out illegal schools

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

The government has committed a further £1 million to fund Ofsted’s team that investigates illegal schools, despite the watchdog still failing to bring a single prosecution against an unregistered school.

Initially funded for one year, the illegal schools team was created after former chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw last year warned that pupils in hidden schools were at “significant risk of harm and indoctrination”.

Negotiations over renewing the funding – which runs until the end of this month – had dragged on since at least mid-December.

But Ofsted announced on Wednesday that funding had been agreed for another year and will support seven specialist inspectors to continue rooting out unregistered schools.

Schools Week understands it is close to the £1 million sanctioned by former education secretary Nicky Morgan last year, although the Department for Education (DfE) refused to confirm this.

Meanwhile, it was reported last month the team had identified 170 suspected illegal schools said to be attended by up to 3,000 pupils. The Independent reported just 21 had been shut.

Legal cases are also being prepared, but *Schools Week* understands the watchdog is yet to deliver a successful prosecution.



All the cases sent by Ofsted to the Criminal Prosecution Service so far have been knocked back.

The government previously said it is attempting to toughen up rules around illegal schools, and make enforcement action easier.

But Victor Shafiee, Ofsted’s deputy director, unregistered schools, reportedly said last month that he was “optimistic” about “a number of cases” against illegal schools.

“If I thought this was going to take 10 years [to fix] I would be really, really disappointed. It’s not.

“We need to make an impact very, very quickly and act as quickly as we can with the DfE and the local authority.”

Wilshaw had previously said he was “concerned that not enough is being done to stop this illegal activity”, acknowledging it was difficult to build a legal case to prosecute such schools.

Speaking before the funding agreement

was reached this week, he told *Schools Week* the taskforce was doing a “great job in identifying a growing number of illegal schools and preparing the evidence for prosecutions”.

He added: “I would be astonished if the DfE decided to withdraw or curtail funding for what should be an absolute government priority – keeping children safe by ensuring that they attend mainstream provision subject to regulation and inspection.”

He first raised alarm bells about illegal schools in a letter to Morgan in November 2015. The watchdog had been requested to inspect 28 schools and found 15 were operating illegally.

His most recent letter to the former education secretary in May last year said inspectors were “hearing about suspected new cases every week”.

An Ofsted spokesperson said: “We’re very pleased that the DfE has agreed to provide funding for the unregistered schools taskforce for another year, allowing Ofsted to continue this very important work.”

The DfE did not respond to a request for comment. A spokesperson has previously said: “Unregistered schools are illegal and unsafe. We have given Ofsted additional resources to root them out and we will take action, including closing the school or working with the police as necessary. Where children are being put at risk or not receiving a suitable education, local authorities and the police have clear powers to intervene.”

NEWS

THE DIFFERENCE A WEALTHY SPONSOR CAN MAKE

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Donations from wealthy sponsors are helping academy trusts to safeguard school trips, breakfast clubs and sports competitions as other schools are forced to axe provision as the funding squeeze bites.

Ark Schools tops the table with its hedge fund sponsors handing over £6.2 million last year, an average of more than £150,000 for each of Ark trust's 35 schools.

The David Ross Education Trust also listed donations of nearly £1 million from its sponsor David Ross, the co-founder of Carphone Warehouse. A fundraising bash raised £121,000 alone.

Parental donations are also rising. The West London Free School Academy Trust, which runs four schools, received £156,320 last year from parents, up from £41,538 in 2015.

But school leaders say the donations are creating an uneven playing field, with some schools axing their services to meet an estimated 8 per cent real-terms cut in school funding by 2020.

Donations are "driving inequality"

Jon Chaloner, a trust chief executive and founding member of the Headteachers' Roundtable, told *Schools Week*: "In terms of equality of access to excellent provision, the growth of such funding is driving greater inequality between those who have the 'right' contacts and can raise funds in this way in comparison to those who simply do not."

Ark Schools used the £6.2 million from its sponsors to fund the trust's growth, as well as to pay for its "English mastery" curriculum, bursary schemes, and music opportunities.

Ark is a charity set up to distribute the philanthropic donations of its hedge fund financiers, which include the former Conservative party treasurer Lord Stanley Fink, and Paul Marshall, former non-executive director at the Department for Education.

The David Ross trust uses office space belonging to its sponsor, the David Ross Foundation, without charge. Accounts say this equates to a £110,000 donation.

The foundation made another donation of £680,000, with Ross's donation of £121,000. The funds are used for enrichment activities that include sending pupils to a "space camp" in the US and taking part in the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival in the UK.

Some sponsors scale back donations

Schools Week's "philanthro-philes" investigation last year revealed how tens of millions of pounds are poured into schools from the pockets of multi-millionaires.

But some sponsor donations are falling. Ark Schools received £9.3 million in 2015 – nearly £3 million more than last year.

The trust said it wants to be "entirely financially self-sustainable in the future".

Accounts also show the Inspiration Trust received £37,500 from Publish Interest Foundation, a grant-making charity connected to its founder, Sir Theodore Agnew. In 2015 it donated £100,000.

Agnew also donated £40,000 from personal funds in 2015, but no such transactions took place last year.

A trust spokesperson said the donations vary from year-to-year, and usually support specific initiatives. "We're very grateful for Sir Theodore's support, not only in terms of finance but also in time, advice, and expertise."

The Harris Federation – set up by millionaire CarpetRight founder Lord Harris – received £400,000 in donations in 2015, but didn't list any for 2016. The trust did not respond to a request for comment.

Schools turn to parents

Other trusts use donations from parents to help to fund their enrichment provision.

The West London Free School Academy Trust allows parent across all its schools to set up standing orders. The "level of donations to schools" is also listed as one of the trust's key performance indicators.

Accounts show donations for 2016 surpassed £150,000, nearly quadruple the £41,538 in 2015. Activities funded by the donations include summer productions, additional textbooks and museum trips.

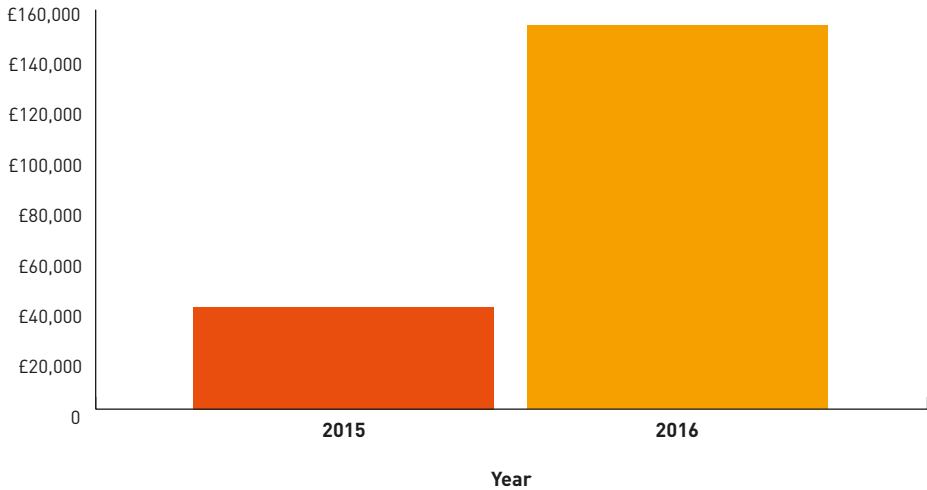
Chief executive Toby Young said the trust makes it "clear that if they [parents] don't make a contribution their children will still have full access to the extra-curricular programmes".

The Holland Park School, in Kensington, west London, was given £125,000 from the Holland Park Schools Trust, an independent charity set up by donors, to fund breakfast clubs and sports clubs that the academy would "otherwise been unable to run".

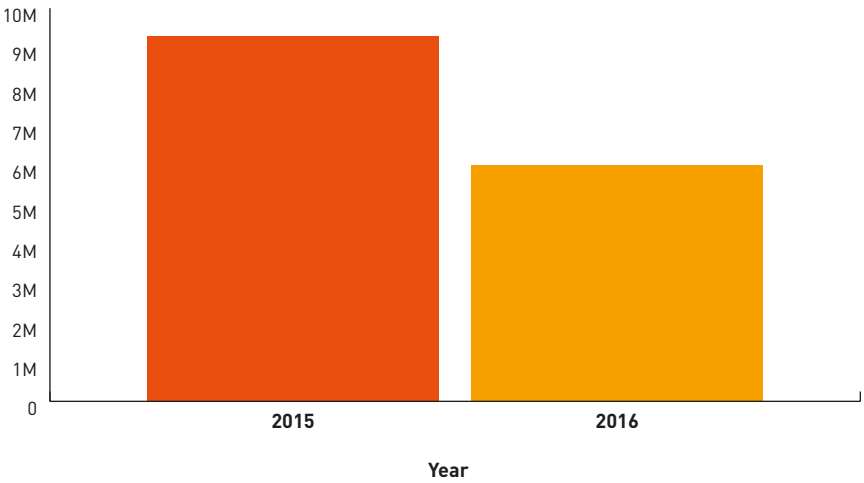
It's the state's duty to fund schools

Chaloner said that while many schools

Change in parent donations at West London Free School



Change in donations for Ark



"crave" such funding boosts, the knock-on effect is that schools and trusts "solely operating on public money do not have the ability to match salaries offered elsewhere".

Malcolm Trobe, interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, added it was "great people want to donate to schools".

But he warned: "The difficulty is that it's

creating an uneven playing field. It always reverts to the bottom line – it's the state's duty to provide sufficient funding for schools to deliver a quality education."

The Department for Education has said the core schools budget has been protected in "real terms since 2010, with school funding at its highest level on record at more than £40 billion in 2016-17".



THEODORE AGNEW
INSPIRATION TRUST



DAVID ROSS
DAVID ROSS
EDUCATION TRUST



STANLEY FINK
ARK

NEWS

DESPERATE FOR A SUPPLY TEACHER

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN *Investigates*

Hundreds of schools are using apps to employ supply teachers in a bid to cut out crippling recruitment agency fees.

But they should be “cautious” about using the online technology as its lack of face-to-face verification could lead to fake teachers heading into the classroom, say some union leaders.

A *Schools Week* investigation has found two organisations – Teachers Register and Sick Cover – that have launched supply teacher apps. Their processes have been likened to Uber, the taxi-request service, and Tinder, an online dating service.

Teachers and schools can use their phones to sign up, giving the same details they would to a recruitment agency but without a finder’s fee once a teacher is placed.

Two other companies are testing similar technology but are running the matching services through their websites until their apps are ready. Another, Uber Education, operates solely on the web.

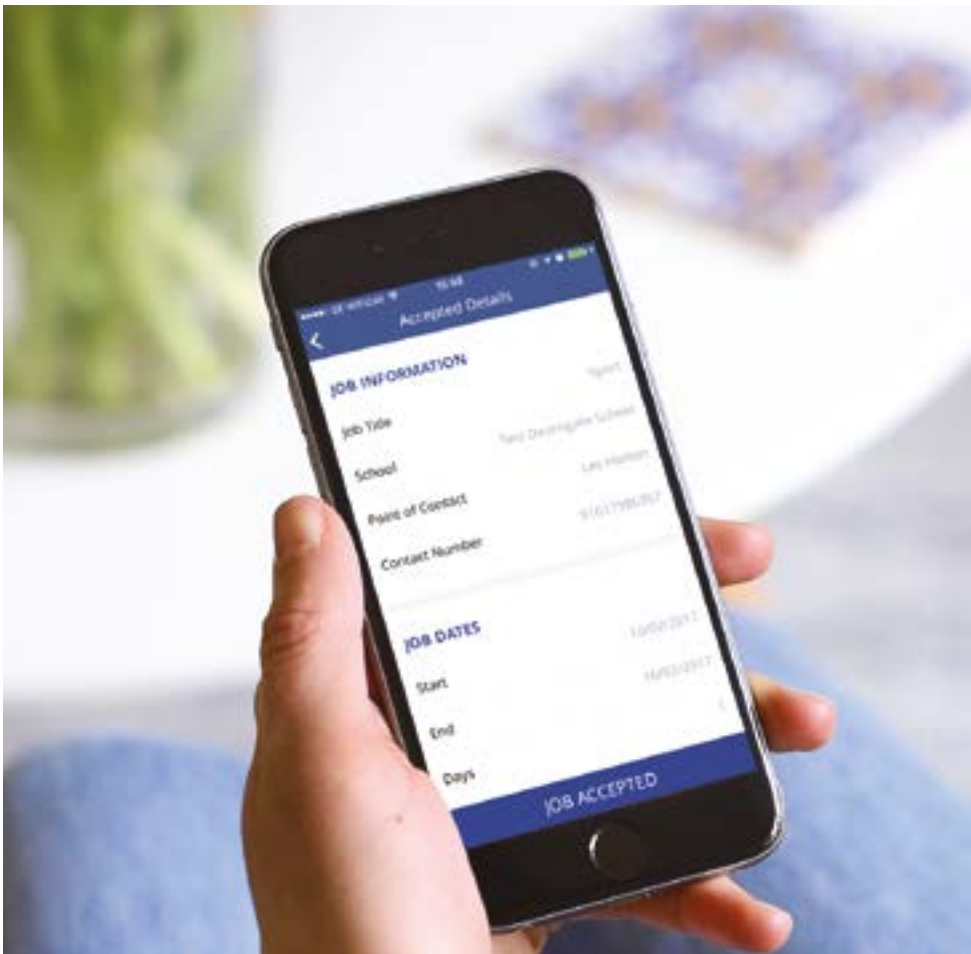
Despite launching less than a year ago, take-up of the apps has been rapid, with nearly 12,500 supply teachers and 120 schools using Teachers Register, and 200 supply teachers and 10 schools using Sick Cover, according to the companies.

Both aim to help schools to save hefty recruitment agency fees, which have rocketed in recent years. The annual spend by schools for supply staff reached £1.26 billion in 2014-15, soaring up to £190 million from 2012-13.

Previous *Schools Week* investigations have found “predatory” recruitment agencies blamed for fuelling the teacher recruitment crisis by “hoovering up” job seekers and offering them to struggling schools for tens of thousands of pounds in placement fees.

Creators of the teacher supply apps claim they give schools the ability to save up to 75 per cent on their annual agency spend.

They say that traditional recruitment agencies will, for example, charge schools



£200 for a teacher for a day – with only £110 of that going to the teacher. The rest is taken by the agency as a finder’s fee.

The apps cut this charge to about £10 a day, although some are free (see page 9 for breakdowns of what each service offers).

Unions, however, say the apps are “clearly open to safeguarding risks” as they do not require candidates to be met in person.

Valentine Mulholland, head of policy at the National Association of Head Teachers, said: “The face-to-face meeting is the crucial point here. If you look at identity fraud it is around the fact that anybody can say ‘I am Jane Smith’ and they could use the details of someone who is not currently working as a teacher.

“Something this flaky is going to attract people who may have other intentions than teaching.”

She puts the rise of the apps down to school budgets at “breaking point” and an “out of control” teacher recruitment crisis

that together have created a “perfect storm” for people to offer cheaper and accessible solutions.

Andrew Morris, head of pay at the

National Union of Teachers, said schools were “desperate” for a new way to employ supply teachers that cut out recruitment agency fees. These “Tinder-like apps” could be it, he said, but warned there was a safeguarding risk if procedures were not “done properly and thoroughly enough”.

The app creators say their safeguarding checks are robust, with every teacher who signs up “fully vetted” before they are put in contact with schools.

James Fall, founder and chief executive of Sick Cover, told *Schools Week* his app uses another company called Yoti that verifies candidates through a digital identity system.

“The teacher scans in his or her passport, they then upload a selfie and Yoti uses biometric matching, the same as border control, to check the person is who they say they are,” he said.

The apps pride themselves on the speed and ease of their services, with an estimated time of just 10 minutes to register.

Teachers upload a picture of themselves and necessary details from their CV such as their work history, teaching subject and references, as well as evidence of their qualifications. They also state their day rate, which is non-negotiable.

Schools go through a similar sign-up process and once approved they can begin searching for supply teachers.

HOW DO THE APPS WORK?

To find a candidate, schools type in the specifications they require; for example, an English teacher for five days from March 5. A list of the closest English supply teachers geographically to the school then pops up on the app and the school can decide which applicant they want to employ, based on their profile.

The chosen teacher is then given a push notification via the app and can begin talks to establish a contract, cutting out the need for a recruitment agent. Once agreed, the teacher heads to the school to begin work.

To get paid, teachers fill out time sheets

via the app every week. Once completed the school receives an email and push notification asking them to approve and pay the teacher.

And if a school is really impressed with a teacher and wants to take them on full time, the apps will not charge a placement fee.

Recruitment agencies usually charge schools about £10,000 if they want the supply teacher full time.

Conor Powers, communications manager at Teacher Register, said the service creates “less hassle while saving money” for users and helps those teachers who feel “harassed by recruitment consultants”.

‘The app is a lot less hassle and I’m making more money’

Thousands of supply teachers are signing up to apps to find work because they are “fed up with being taken advantage of by frustrating” recruitment agencies.

Robert Dann, a 32-year-old history supply teacher from Suffolk (pictured), has “reluctantly been forced” to work with recruitment agencies for the past three years because there was “no alternative”.

He said he has been frustrated by the agencies taking a 40 per cent finder’s fee every time he gets work. He says their high fees are “crippling” education by adding fuel to the teacher recruitment crisis.

Dann stumbled across Teachers Register online in November last year.

Since signing up, he has been able to find work “a lot easier

with a lot less hassle” – and is making more money.

“I had to visit some recruitment agencies two or three times, have photos taken, and all the rest,” he told *Schools Week*.

“With the app they check it all online and it is done in a flash compared with the agencies.

“Time is money when you’re working for yourself so it took all of the hassle away from that. In a couple of hours I was registered and ready to work.

“Since signing up I’ve found work really smooth and quick. I used to stand by my phone at 6.30am waiting to see if anything came up. Then I’d have to work out where the school was and plan my journey and all the rest of it.

“With the app I instantly see where the school is, how long it will take from my house and I can choose there and then

whether to accept the job or not.”

Dann, who says the supply teacher apps “are a thing for now”, is now in a long-term placement teaching history at a school in South Yorkshire. He has direct communication about his contract and pay with the school, something that he describes as “liberating”.



HER? THERE’S AN APP FOR THAT



TEACHERS REGISTER

Teachers Register launched its app, available on iPhone and android, in August last year and currently has nearly 12,500 supply teachers and 120 schools signed up.

The service is free for a school that books a teacher for five days in a month, but the company charges £199 if a teacher comes in for six to ten days. The price then goes up £100 for every 10 days after that.

Frequent users can pay £2,999 a month for an unlimited package.

The organisation claims to save schools up to 75 per cent on their annual agency spend.



SICK COVER

Sick Cover launched its app in September last year and has about 200 supply teachers and 10 schools using its service. Signing up is free for schools and teachers.

The app is in the early stages, but a spokesperson says that once the no-fee period days is over Sick Cover will charge a school £14 for every day a teacher is placed. He would not say what that no-fee period is.

There is no placement fee if a school wants to take a teacher on full time after coming through Sick Cover.



TEACHERISE

Teacherise is currently trialling a similar app to Teacher Register and Sick Cover around Warwickshire.

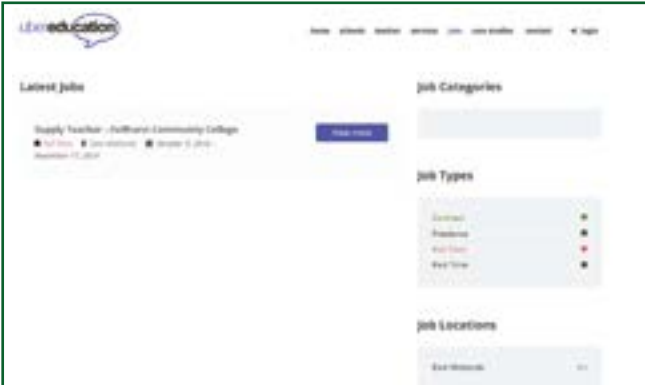
Its algorithms allow the organisation to “predict how good the fit” between a certain teacher and a certain class.

Using the same technology as Uber, its app will also use live traffic information to send teachers to schools that

are geographically close to their homes.

Teacherise will charge schools £7 a teacher for each day he or she works at a school.

A spokesperson would not disclose how much interest it has generated as it is currently “in talks for getting extra funding”.



UBER EDUCATION

Launched in July 2016, Uber Education is an online platform that puts teachers and schools in direct contact.

Teachers register with the platform and develop a profile with their subject specialism, relevant experience, fees and availability.

Schools can search for teachers in their area and make a booking direct.

Schools rate the teacher afterwards; these are then available to other schools. Teachers with low ratings are “less likely to receive bookings although they may reduce their rates to generate work”, say the platform’s creators.

Uber Education is free to sign up to and claims to save about 20 per cent on a school’s annual agency spend.



THE SUPPLY REGISTER

The Supply Register (TSR), launched in May last year, is an online platform that allows schools and supply teachers to find work directly with each other.

It currently is used by more than 1,000 teachers and more than 100 schools.

Unlike the other platforms, TSR does face-to-face interviews with every candidate before signing off their application.

The service follows a similar process to the other apps and platforms, but if a school cannot find a suitable teacher from its register, local recruitment agencies are automatically contacted to find an alternative.

TSR, which is currently testing an app to work alongside its website, charges a finder’s fee of between £6 and £12 a day.

NEWS

UPDATES ON OUR CAMPAIGNS

DfE amends guidance on pupil nationality

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

UPDATE

The government has amended its official guidance on the duty to collect pupil nationality data following a substantial campaign by *Schools Week* that found schools were demanding copies of non-white pupils' passports.

Since last October, schools have been asked to record pupils' nationalities and countries of birth as part of an annual submission of data known as the "census".

But an investigation by *Schools Week* found that vague guidance led some schools to demand copies of pupils' passports or to ask parents to confirm their children's asylum-seeker status.

It was later revealed the duty had been imposed as a compromise between former



education secretary Nicky Morgan and then home secretary Theresa May. May wanted stricter checks on children's immigration status.

The education department initially said

the data collection was purely for analysis. However, it launched a review after poor practices emerged, *Schools Week* has now learnt.

Updated guidance added to its website in January clearly explains that parents can refuse to provide the nationality data for their children – something that was not communicated last year to schools or parents.

Schools can also record refusals in their census submission as opposed to trying to guess the data.

Department officials will also "enhance transparency" by collating the use of pupil data by other government departments and will investigate to see if any "reasonable efforts" can be made to "ensure that appropriate data collection procedures are followed".

Ed Humpherson, general director of regulation at the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA), welcomed the "further improvements".

He suggested the department writes to headteachers before the next autumn school census to "help them to inform parents...of their rights in regard to this collection".

Humpherson was responding in a letter to concerns raised by Jen Persson from the Defend Digital Me campaign group. Persson told *Schools Week* that parents should have "no surprises" regarding data usage.

While schools have a duty to request the nationality information, there is no requirement for them to request a child's passport or birth certificate.

Instead, schools should include the information as "stated by the parent or guardian".

ECDL crossed off 2019 league tables

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

UPDATE

The government has dropped the controversial European Computer Driving Licence qualification from its performance league tables from 2019.

Investigations by *Schools Week* previously revealed how the "fast-track" qualification, which counted towards a school's performance in league tables, was sometimes taught in three days.

Schools Week also revealed that the number of pupils passing the qualification soared by nearly 350 per cent in 12 months.

Now the Department for Education (DfE) has dropped the qualification – which has the full title of BCS level 2 ECDL certificate in IT application skills – from counting towards league table scores from 2019.

BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT, which runs the qualification, said the omission

was because new national curriculum requirements for computing would mean many year 11 pupils develop the skills covered by the qualification in earlier school years.

A statement by the organisation said it was "aware that this decision may affect your [schools'] curriculum plans for teaching September 2017".

However, it said that the qualification was still approved by Ofqual and would attract performance points for those students completing year 11 before the summer of 2018.

A study by Education Datalab previously revealed that pupils taking the qualification on average received a score equivalent to an A grade, despite achieving an average score of below a C across their GCSEs.

Ofqual is now investigating how long it takes to complete the ECDL qualification,



and Ofsted has warned inspectors to watch out for gaming in schools that enter full cohorts of pupils.

A spokesperson for BCS said the ECDL defined the "skills and competencies necessary to use a computer and common computer applications". It continued to be an "effective and relevant qualification, and it is one that we will continue to support and deliver to existing and new students".

But the skills and needs of employers and aspirations of learners were "constantly changing". The organisation is awaiting approval for a new qualification to replace ECDL, the BCS level 1/2 technical award in digital literacy.

This would give pupils the "ability to use technology creatively, efficiently and safely to live, learn and work in a digital society", the spokesperson said. A decision is expected later this year.

When it announced last year that ICT GCSE and A-level would be scrapped, the government said that a number of "high-quality technical and vocational qualifications in IT can also count in... performance tables".

These allowed pupils an "opportunity to gain skills and knowledge not usually acquired through GCSEs, such as digital literacy and web design".

The approved list also omits two more technical ICT qualifications; the OCR level 1/2 Cambridge national certificate in ICT, and Pearson BTEC level 1/level 2 first award in information and creative technology.

A DfE spokesperson said: "We want pupils to choose qualifications that are in their best interests and help them to reach their full potential. We conducted a comprehensive review of the ECDL qualification, which concluded that it does not demonstrate the characteristics of a technical award."

Trusts are ignoring rules and expanding, say MPs

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

UPDATE

The government has been urged to investigate any trusts flouting expansion rules after a *Schools Week* investigation revealed that "paused" academy chains are taking over new schools.

The education committee published the findings of its inquiry into multi-academy trusts (MATs) this week, warning that it was "far from clear" if the government could cope with further expansion of the academies system.

The report flagged issues with a "scarcity" of suitable sponsors to run new academies and included highlighting an investigation by *Schools Week*, published in January, which found some of the 57 sponsors barred

by the government from taking over new schools had actually expanded.

The committee warned the government to ensure only quality sponsors could expand, adding ministers should "investigate any claims of trusts flouting bans on expansions".

MPs also said they were "concerned" at the growing number of failing schools shunned for potentially transformative takeovers because they were "unattractive" to new sponsors – something covered extensively by *Schools Week*.

The report said: "The government should give greater support for schools that are deemed unattractive to sponsors and play a more active role in rebrokering through regional schools commissioners."

The committee warned that pushing

for more academies would put "further pressures" on the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education Funding Agency.

MPs called on the government to ensure adequate planning and resource over the next six years if schools were still expected to keep converting.

Neil Carmichael, chair of the education committee, suggested that ministers encourage local authorities to create multi-academy trusts.

"If the government is to pursue the goal of further academisation, it will need to work with local authorities and allow those councils with a track record of strong educational performance to use their expertise within their education department to create MATs."

The committee also said that it was too early to tell if MATs were more successful than local authorities in tackling under-performance.

Resurrecting an issue from its previous report, the MPs also said the lack of clarity between the responsibilities of Ofsted and regional schools commissioners confused schools, and called for a new MAT inspection framework.

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said a "growth check" was already in development to ensure that only "good trusts" take on new schools "when they are ready".

He added that local authorities were already able to form academy trusts, as long as less than a fifth of its board had council links.

CEO leaves Bright Tribe

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

The chief executive of Bright Tribe academy trust, Kathy Kirkham, has resigned.

The former civil servant stood down following a turbulent few months that included a government investigation and the trust pulling out of two struggling schools.

A Bright Tribe spokesperson said the move was long-planned, with Kirkham having worked alongside Mary McKeeman, now appointed as her successor, for "some time".

Kirkham will also continue working for the trust in an "advisory capacity".

McKeeman steps up from school improvement director at Bright Tribe. The trust's website says she has a "proven track record of bringing about rapid and sustainable improvement" since joining in 2015, boosting the overall percentage of pupils achieving A* to C by 8 per cent.

Schools Week revealed in December that Bright Tribe had pulled out of sponsoring two struggling schools in the north of England, despite receiving extra funds from the government as part of its northern academy hub scheme. The two Durham schools, however, did not form part of this funding.

In November, one of the trust's own schools was put into special measures, with staff issuing a vote of no confidence in the academy chain.



Kathy Kirkham

A government investigation, published earlier that month, found Bright Tribe, and the Adventures Learning Academies Trust, both founded by sponsor venture capitalist Michael Dwan, had breached rules over payments to trustees.

It found nearly 80 per cent of trustees at the trusts had related-party transactions. The rules allow no more than half.

However, no financial notice to improve was issued. Bright Tribe said at the time it would continue to "positively work with the Education Funding Agency to ensure we remain fully transparent in all of our financial activities". It now had a "fully operating in-house model for support services".

RSC TAKES BACK HER NOTICE

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Vicky Beer, the regional schools commissioner for Lancashire and West Yorkshire, has changed her mind about heading a new multi-academy trust.

Schools Week revealed earlier this month that Beer had resigned to become executive leader of the Greater Manchester Learning Trust (GMLT), which runs Parrs Wood school in Manchester.

She told colleagues the offer was "too tempting to turn down".

But in a letter sent to parents at Parrs Wood during the half-term break, Suzannah Reeves, GMLT chair, said Beer had decided to stay on as RSC, a position she has held for about 18 months.

"She [Beer] has assured me that the decision to stay in her current role is not one she has taken lightly and that her decision is not in any way a reflection on GMLT or our school," the letter read.

"Whilst disappointed that Vicky will no longer be joining us, we respect her decision not to and are now recruiting a replacement executive principal for the trust."

In an email, Beer told colleagues that after reflecting on the "progress made across Lancashire and West Yorkshire" since she became RSC, she had decided that her



Vicky Beer

priority "should be to continue with this work over the coming years".

A senior political source told *Schools Week* Beer's sudden change of heart calls into question how she could continue to do her job and led to questions over the "pressure the Department for Education (DfE) put on Beer to stay".

Schools Week understands she has not been offered extra cash to stay on.

A DfE spokesperson said it was "pleased Beer is staying on as an RSC and we are looking forward to making the most of her knowledge of Lancashire and West Yorkshire".

At the time of her resignation, Beer said she was "aware" of the potential conflicts of interest of her joining GMLT. She approved academy conversion of Parrs Wood despite vocal opposition from parents and teachers.

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NEWS: WHILE YOU WERE AWAY

Crumbling buildings will cost billions, says spending watchdog

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

The National Audit Office (NAO) last week released a report on capital funding for schools. Key findings include:

1. The increase in need for school places is being met so far – but cracks are showing

Demand for school places is continuing to grow. The government says primary place demand will rise another 220,000 by 2019, with a massive 574,000 (21 per cent) extra places needed at secondary level between 2016 and 2025.

The report found local authorities have been able to provide “sufficient school places to meet demand” so far.

Schools have also done so by keeping a “considerable” number of spare places.

Although primary numbers rose sharply in previous years, spare capacity fell by just one percentage point to 10 per cent between 2010 and 2015. Meanwhile, falling pupil numbers and additional places in secondaries meant spare capacity grew from 10 per cent to 16 per cent.

Capacity is not distributed evenly across regions and cracks are beginning to show. One in five local authorities that responded to a NAO survey said they accepted longer travel times as part of their plan to provide sufficient places.

Nearly three in five councils also said that availability of land was a “major constraint” on delivering school places.

2. The government spends nearly 20 per cent over the odds for free school sites

The government paid 19 per cent more than official land valuations for free school sites, the report found. Twenty sites cost 60 per cent more.

The NAO said a lack of alternative sites could make it necessary to pay above the odds.

The new LocatED company set up to purchase and manage free school sites should now drive efficiencies.

3. More than £200m spent on snapping up potential school sites

The report found securing a site was adding “significant delays” to opening free schools.

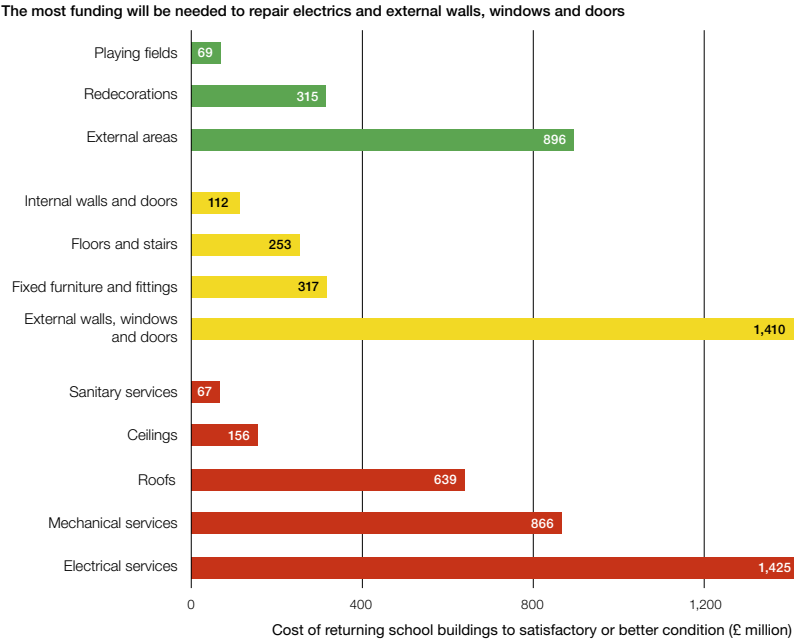
As of September last year, the Department for Education (DfE) had deferred the opening of 30 per cent of free schools, mostly over land problems.

Six free schools have been in temporary accommodation for more than four years.

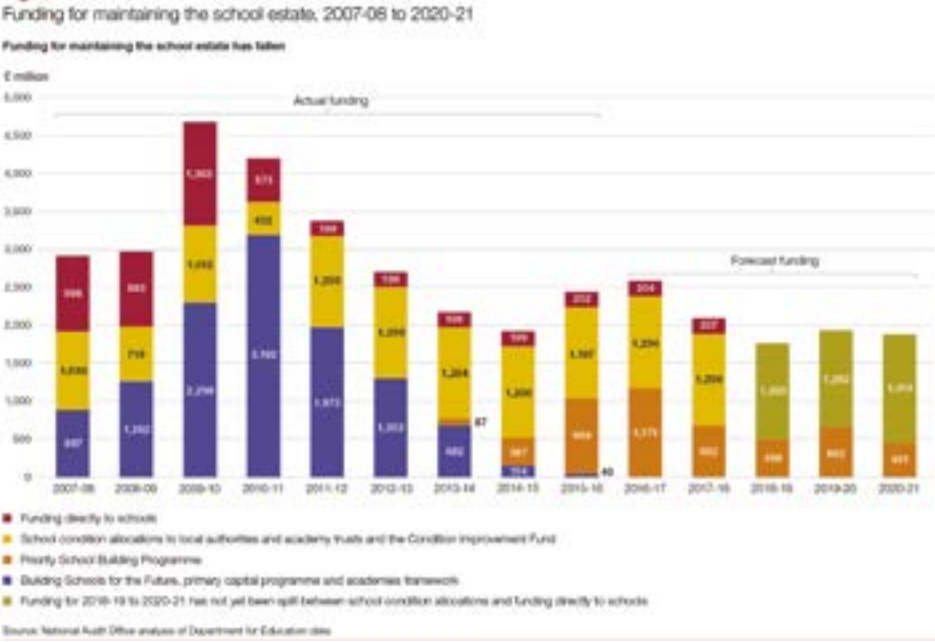
Now the government is buying up land in areas where there is an expected need for places, before free schools have been approved.

A total of £207 million has been spent

Estimated cost of returning the school estate to satisfactory condition or better by building element



Source: National Audit Office analysis of Department for Education data



so far buying up 19 such sites. Twelve are linked to approved applications, and the DfE expects to buy more land this way in the future.

4. £6.7bn needed to bring every school building to ‘satisfactory’ condition...

A massive £6.7 billion would have to be spent to bring schools up to a “satisfactory or better” condition, mainly because about 60 per cent of schools were built more than 40 years ago.

Broken down, £5.5 billion is needed for major repair works, and £1.2 billion to replace parts of buildings at the end of their lives or “at serious risk of imminent failure” (see table).

The costs vary significantly by region – from £2,100 per pupil to return schools to a satisfactory condition on the Isle of Wight and in Northumberland and Enfield, compared with just £100 per pupil in Stoke-on-Trent, and Knowsley.

But the report acknowledges the government does not yet have robust data on school condition, although the results of a £36 million property survey are due out at the end of this year.

5. ... but those costs will DOUBLE by 2021 as more buildings reach the end of their lives

The department says that many of the older buildings will need to be replaced or significantly refurbished “soon”.

Department modelling suggests the cost of returning all schools to a satisfactory standard will double between 2015-16 and 2020-21.

(The report did warn the modelling was at an early stage, and more accurate estimates should be available later this year).

6. Limited cash could create ‘perverse incentives’ for heads to let schools fall into disrepair

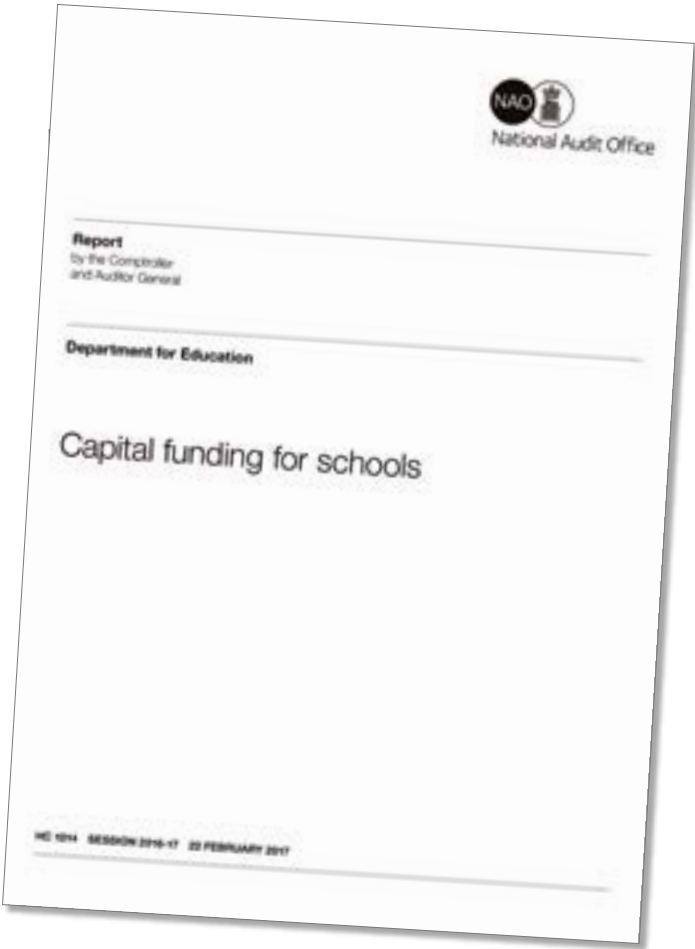
The department will spend an average of about £2 billion per year (until 2021) on school condition funding – way down on the spend of previous years (because they included major projects such as Building Schools for the Future).

The report also found that there is a risk of creating “perverse incentives” – as school leaders could let buildings fall into such poor condition to meet DfE replacement criteria.

There is also “limited mechanisms” to hold councils and academy trusts to account for keeping their buildings in good shape, the report found.

The government offers Condition Improvement Funding, which has a “core priority” to address a “significant condition need” to smaller academy trusts.

But the report found that one-fifth of Condition Improvement Funding (£90 million) was actually spent on allowing “good” or “outstanding” academies to expand – despite the funding pot applications being oversubscribed by between 2.5 and 4.3 times for the past four years.



Teachers work up to nine hours more than in 2013

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Teachers are working an average 54.4 hours a week or nearly 11 hours a day, the government's first comprehensive survey into workload reveals.

Primary teachers and middle leaders work an average of more than 55 hours, with secondary school teachers working more than 53 hours a week, the government's long-awaited *Teacher Workload Survey* found.

However, secondary school senior leaders say they work 62-hour weeks, more than 12 hours a day.

The findings were "markedly higher" than the 45.9 hours recorded in the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), which measured the workload of secondary teachers.

The government report said this suggests "some increase in workload has been seen between 2013 and 2016". It will now use the findings to "target our work at the areas of most concern".

Chris Keates, general secretary of NASUWT, said: "Once again, the government's own data confirms that teachers and headteachers are dealing with unsustainable workload demands on a daily basis, and much of their time is being spent on activities that are either unnecessary or that could be undertaken

by staff other than teachers."

A total of 218 schools and 3,186 teachers completed the survey, the first of its kind. It will now be carried out every two years and was agreed by the government as part of its response to the 2014 Workload Challenge.

Keates said that despite its delay, it still "cannot hide the inconvenient truth that the government's actions to date have failed to tackle the causes of excessive workload and working hours that are blighting the lives of teachers".

The report also found a third of part-time teachers said 40 per cent of their total hours were worked outside school hours.

Less experienced primary teachers reported working 18.8 hours a week out of school time, two hours more than experienced colleagues.

The analysis found that the individual experiences of teachers – for example, how their performance was evaluated by their manager – had a greater impact on workload than school-level factors such as school size.

The report said: "The implication is that effective interventions to reduce workload would need to target teachers across the population of schools."

Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said

the findings showed the government "recognises the severity of the problem for teachers", but questioned its action plan as "unambitious".

It includes the opening of applications for the £75 million teaching and innovation fund, announced last week by education secretary Justine Greening.

A Department for Education spokesperson said it had published a "clear action plan" setting out steps to tackle the issue.

It includes new guidance to encourage schools to give teachers more opportunities to work flexibly, a poster and pamphlet to help schools to address marking, planning and data management – and a commitment to a lead-in of at least a year for schools to prepare for changes to the curriculum, qualifications or accountability.

A spokesperson said the survey revealed that "we are right to focus on removing unnecessary workload related to marking, lesson planning and administration of data and we will use the findings to further target our work at the areas of most concern."

"But there is no silver bullet to solve this, and we don't underestimate the challenge, which is why we want to continue to work with the profession to explore new and innovative ways to address it."



Review of older teachers wants extra evidence

A government review on the implications of teachers working until their late 60s wants to gather more evidence – despite being published a year late.

The Department for Education finally released the interim report from its *Teachers Working Longer* review last Friday.

The review was set up in October 2014 to make sure pension age changes did not detrimentally impact the workforce.

An interim report was due to be published in February last year. Board minutes show the initial report was finalised the following month, but it has waited almost a year for ministerial sign-off.

Despite the delay, the report produced just three "overarching" conclusions: experienced teachers are a valuable part of the workforce; everyone in education has a part to play in maintaining teacher health; there is a "strong case" to continue the review past its original two-year time frame.

The government now plans to commission more research, including "in-depth qualitative research with a small number of schools" and possibly "larger-scaled surveys of teachers and school leaders" looking into the issues of teachers remaining in the classroom until they are at least 68 if born after 1979.

The report was issued alongside the government's *Teacher Workload Survey*. It is unclear when the final report – originally due to be published in autumn last year – will now be published.



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EDITOR'S COMMENT

@miss_mcinerney | laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk

Words are all we have, so let's choose them carefully

In a bid to recover some of the optimism of the 1990s, I've been listening to Boyzone this week. (You can judge, I don't care, they're great.)

Their 1996 cover of the BeeGee's *Words* was a particularly apt soundtrack for something I saw during my daily morning perusal of the Department for Education's job listings.

The advert was for an administrator to work in the "SEND, Disadvantage and Character Group", "a newly formed" work division.

I winced. First, the phrase "disadvantage" is irksome. The department uses it as a synonym for "poor", but that always feels downright rude. Being poor is, indeed, a disadvantage. But so is being rich and having neglectful parents who prefer to stare at their iPads rather than speak to you. Or being a kid in a grammar school area after you've failed your 11-plus. Those are disadvantages too, but you can bet no civil servant is being put to resolving them.

And then there's the throwing-in of special education needs with disadvantage, as if the two are synonymous. More charitably, one might argue that these are both groups that "under-achieve", except we don't really know if that's true. A problem

for the special education needs sector is that we have pretty poor data on which to gauge expectations. Ofsted inspection data suggests SEND schools are almost all amazing; but employment outcomes are weak. So, what does that mean? That pupils are under-achieving? Or is it perhaps society that requires improvement?

And then – worst of all – is the inclusion of "character" in the top line, which makes the whole thing sound like some kind of mini-ministry for the morally corrupt.

Robin Gibb's mellow tones helped to remind me that these are "only words" but, as the song continues, sometimes words are all we have to change people's hearts. And I couldn't shake that the label change reflected something of a shift in priorities.

A little digging has proved that hunch correct. It seems this group was previously labelled as the "closing the gap" group. Under the previous prime minister, the focus was on reducing the chasm in educational outcomes between the wealthy and the poor.

This had its own problems. It didn't recognise the issue of children with special educational needs as a schools' one. The group was instead always placed in a "children's services" box

and the focus was on health and social services, rather than on improving educational attainment. But it did make clear that the priority was about gaining an equality between differing groups.

This work now seems to have been split into two. In one division there is a "social mobility group" but, noticeably, it is in a different part of the DfE to the "SEND, Disadvantage and Character group", as if to suggest that social mobility is for some but not for "you difficult lot" who need a separate group over here.

The shift from gap closures to social mobility is also worth noting. Since taking office Justine Greening has talked relentlessly about social mobility. But what does it mean? The conception seems to be that given the right amount of help everyone can lift themselves up by their bootstraps. There's no need to focus on closing the gap, because one might do that by limiting the top, and that's a bad thing. So instead one ought to

give a foot-up for those at the bottom.

But we come back to the constant problem that some groups simply cannot "pull themselves up", which doesn't mean education shouldn't offer support, but I think at the heart of my irksome feelings about the "SEND, disadvantage and character" label is that they seem to create a notion of "the complicated ones who just need a bit of a push", which is overly simplistic.

In the end, these really are just words. But it strikes me that ministers would do well to consider what their priority really is for this group, and find a way to talk about the three in a way that makes sense. Maybe it could be the "excellent schools for all" group. And it could take seriously the achievement of children with special needs, with actual education policies designed to help these groups. Or how about looking at the truly disadvantaged children whose abilities are already far behind by age 11 and almost never catch up?

Hmmm. I wonder what are my chances of making this change if I was, say, an administrator in the department? I'm sure I've still got that application form somewhere...





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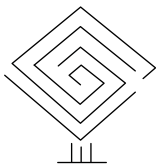
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For more information and to apply, please contact **Phil Southern:**
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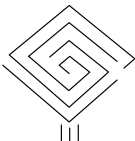


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For a confidential discussion, please call Sir Dan Moynihan, CEO of the Harris Federation, on 020 8253 7777.

Closing date: 13th March 2017

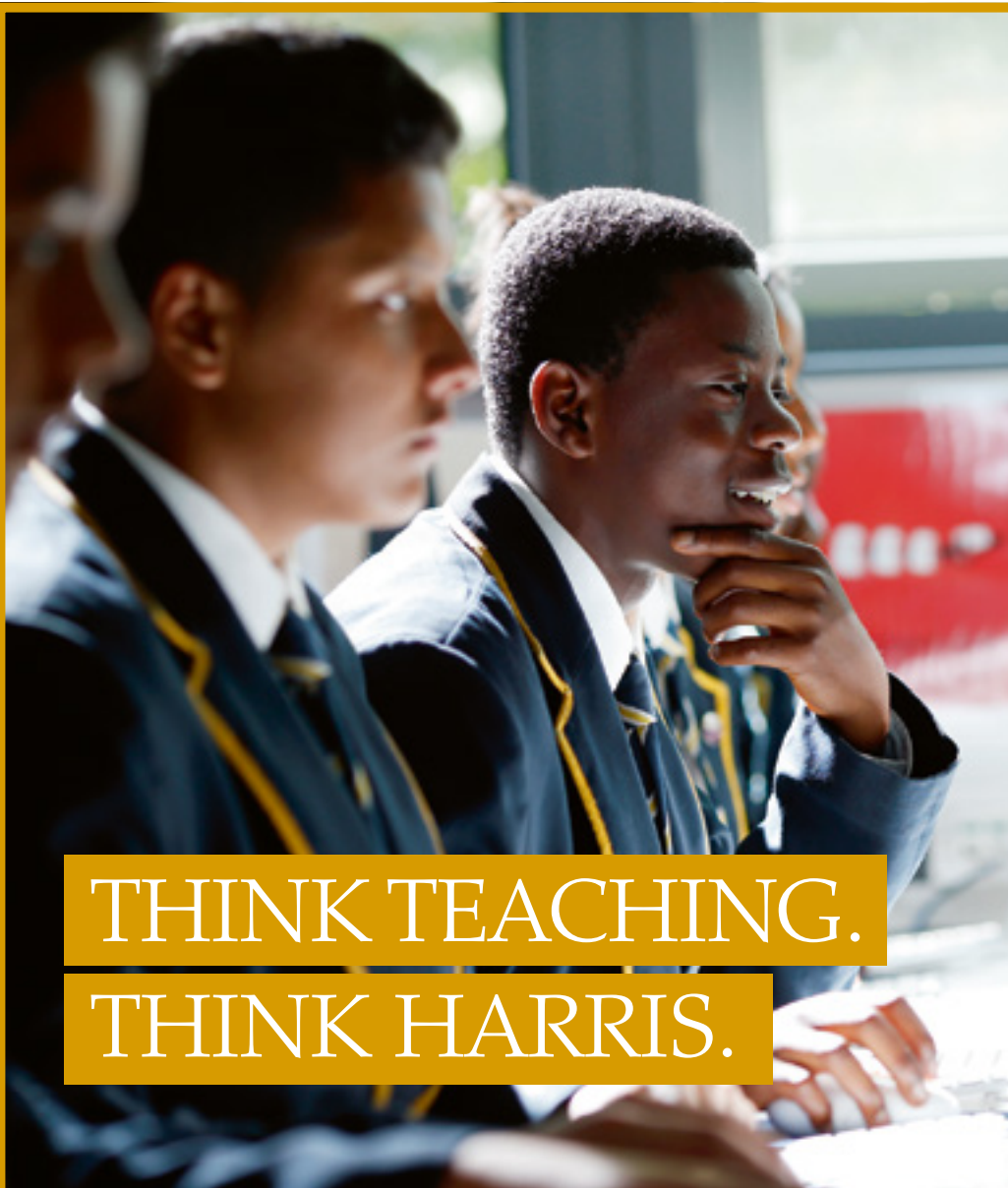
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@Bad_SBM

You mean this actually hasn't happened yet? OMG from past experiences of meeting both I thought it had.

College promises chartered status – but who will qualify?

**Peter Routledge**

At one time, four years training or a top-up year on a degree, plus one year actually doing the job, was enough for qualified teacher status. If chartered teacher status is a cut above, what will it allow a teacher to access? How is it different to a masters? If by chartered you mean ten years and a higher level of dedication and continuity to the job then, yes. A ten-year certificate of chartership is an excellent idea. We have chartered accountants and chartered engineers who have proven they have what it takes to stand the test of time and meet standards. But these charterships should not be a fast track or quick route to management.

**Sean Connelly**

No mention of a pay rise if you qualify, so not much point to it.

Inspectors are human – and that's the problem

**Colin Richards, Cumbria**

Becky Allen argues persuasively that we need both human inspection and non-human data to judge the effectiveness of a school. She is also right to argue for us trying to do it better, but knowing that we will never be able to do that with complete or near-complete certainty. She acknowledges that inspectors are human but sees that as "the problem".

I agree with the first part of that sentence but not the second half. It's only a problem if we need and expect God-like certainties based on absolute standards of judgment. Inspection can't and never will deliver those but nor can any other form of evaluation.

It's Uber, but not as you know it – how the teacher workforce will change

**Leon Cych, London**

It will lead to all the problems of the gig economy that we already have. Something like an uber-app for school staff is cost and not value-driven. Do we wish for institutions that can exploit working conditions of some to bolster the aspirations and progress of others? A school is a community but obviously the increasing use of "systems led" data might determine otherwise.

**Brian Taylor, address supplied**

A fascinating article. I believe there is no doubt that the platform supply system is on its way, I do not, however, think that it will work in the interests of learners – in fact, quite the opposite. It is not reasonable to apply the Uber "anyone can be a taxi driver" approach to the management of teaching professionals unless the model is tweaked and I doubt this will be the case. Many who currently do supply will simply give up and do something else. Drive a taxi perhaps, the pay is likely to be better.

**@Mktadvice4schls**

Umm – the problem is attracting teachers. Uber works because a lot of people can drive and there were high barriers to becoming a taxi driver

Ministers looking at replacement 11-plus, say grammar heads

**Janet Downs, Bourne**

Perhaps ministers, members of the Grammar School Heads Association, supporters of the 11-plus and Nick Timothy should read PISA 2015 results. PISA found "in countries where students are sorted into tracks at an early age (early tracking), the socio-economic status of students has a greater impact on students' scores in science compared with countries where tracking is delayed to a later age".

In other words, the earlier selection began, the greater the effect of pupils' economic and social background on their performance. PISA recommended delaying selection. I suspect that's one PISA nugget that Nick Gibb won't include in his next speech.

The high cost of switching sponsors

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Ian Taylor, Bristol

Is the school transfer market becoming like that of the football league? Will outstanding schools wanting to join a chain start to employ their own agents to obtain the best deal? We already have rich sponsors owning multi-academy trusts (MATs), just like they own football clubs.

Super managers, like regional schools commissioners, are being bought up by MATs (50 per cent of RSCs so far). Poorer performing schools are relegated so no MAT wants to buy them.

All the money in "the game" is gravitating to the top and little is left for grassroots education. The poorer teams are left with part-time professionals called teaching assistants. The richer clubs have season ticket "requests" and expensive uniforms that exclude poorer families who find it a struggle to purchase them.

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REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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PROFILE

LAURA MCINERNEY
@MISS_MCINERNEY

John Roberts, chief executive, Edapt

John Roberts's Instagram feed is enough to make the average person sick. Not only does the 33-year-old spend what seems an impossible amount of time atop mountains, his fitness is so equally peaked that one recent video on social media shows him doing more than 20 press-ups with a child kneeling on his back.

Still, Roberts is no stranger to annoying people. When he set up Edapt in 2011, a teachers' union alternative that offers employment protection, but without a whiff of collective action, he received a barrage of hatemail. When former education secretary Michael Gove praised the "marvellous organisation", the barrage became a deluge.

"We knew that setting up Edapt was going to be controversial. Some of the phone calls were pretty aggressive, the emails were abusive, but you have to put that down to change. It is disappointing when you know that some of the people doing it are teachers. But changing the status quo is about making things better, not being liked, so we just acted calmly."

It's a classic response from Roberts who, despite the bionic physique and over-achievements (he was an assistant head by 24), is a relentlessly affable and laid-back character with a Lancashire drawl and huge laugh.

Roberts lives in Manchester and has placed Edapt's head offices there, too. But we meet near Westminster in central London where he is meeting investors. After grabbing a coffee and taking photographs, he asks to go outside for the interview. "I like being outdoors!" he says, despite not having a coat.

Roberts is not one for life's comforts, mind. He rock-climbed as a teenager before signing up to the Royal Marines at 18. "I wanted to be a navy pilot. I liked the sense of service. I liked the sense of adventure. It had a team aspect to it. I went to a careers advice session and I'm not quite sure how it happened, but I ended up ticking the Marines' box."

He received a bursary to study physics at Sheffield, with the intention of going into the Marines straight after, at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It never happened. One Sunday, a little hungover from a heavy Saturday night, he climbed a rockface in Sheffield. And then fell.

"I was used to falling. You fall a lot when climbing and you get used to controlling it. But this time I slipped and I remember thinking 'this is bad news'. I knew I couldn't control this one."

He fell 25ft, the height of a two-storey house, landing on a carpet of rock with his arm outstretched below him. "It just crumpled. My elbow was hanging out; I could see it."

His injuries, which included a dislocated elbow and broken wrist, made the road back to Marine fitness a long one. But he had managed it by the time he was nearing the end of his degree.

Home for Christmas he offered to help out at his uncle's sprouts farm, but when his back was turned and his concentration elsewhere a forklift caught the back of his knee, lurching him forward and crushing his knee between two trucks. In an instant, his cruciate ligament – the thin tissue that holds the top of your leg to the bottom half – tore in two.

"It was incredibly painful. All I remember thinking is 'the Royal Marines is now definitely over'."

With characteristic determination he was yet again able to rehabilitate himself within a year to the needed point of fitness. But there was a problem. One operation to repair his knee had required a 'midline incision'. The cut disbarred him from entering service. The Marine dream was over.

Roberts is sanguine about it all. Some of his peers who

“CHANGING THE STATUS QUO IS ABOUT MAKING THINGS BETTER”

went to Afghanistan didn't come home or came home significantly altered. "I signed up for the challenge and I would have gone, but who knows what I missed."

Working first for a climbing wall company, he was looking for another job with the same element of service of challenge and decided to apply to Teach First. After all, how different is an inner city classroom to a warzone?

But he looks sheepish as he recalls his first year teaching at George Tomlinson school in Bolton. "I thought teaching was going to be much less of a challenge than it was when I stood in the classroom for the first time."

"I remember one pupil, let's call her 'name redacted', who was having a birthday and so decided she was going to lie on the bench at the back of the class. I was trying to take the register, going through the sorts of processes you build up that are now breaking down because it's a girl's birthday... And I'm saying 'come on, come on, we can sing happy birthday, but you have to sit on your seating plan'. She refused. So I explained I would have to escalate it to SLT. She says 'that's not happening either' and so calls her mum on her phone."

Within minutes, Roberts was greeted by name-redacted's mum, shouting at him for not celebrating her daughter's birthday while the class was going wild. "We needed to get behaviour under control, the systems were not working."

He coped, using skills acquired as a self-confessed geek at St Peter's Catholic high school in Orrell, Wigan, where his most nerdy project was creating an altimeter – an instrument that measures height – for a GCSE project.

"You can get an altimeter on a watch now, but you couldn't in 1999. So I wrote to Motorola and managed to get one of their barometric sensor pressure gauges they used on jets and managed to wire it up to be sensitive enough to about 1m. So I could jump on the desk and the reading would change on the output display."

"It didn't work well and I ran out of time as it was over-ambitious. The teacher, Mr Hayes, was quite cool, but refused to predict me an A* because I didn't finish. Still, I was upgraded and got an A* in the end anyway."

Using the same ingenuity, Roberts developed a software program to help teachers at George Tomlinson track behaviour, which Ofsted credited with helping the school move from requires improvement to good with outstanding features.

After three years, however, Roberts was burned out. He planned to leave, ski for a season, and then return. However, a delay during a trip visiting schools in New York, caused by the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull, left him stuck in a room with other teachers who started riffing on the potential for disruption in education.

"I came away thinking about allegations, and strike

JOHN

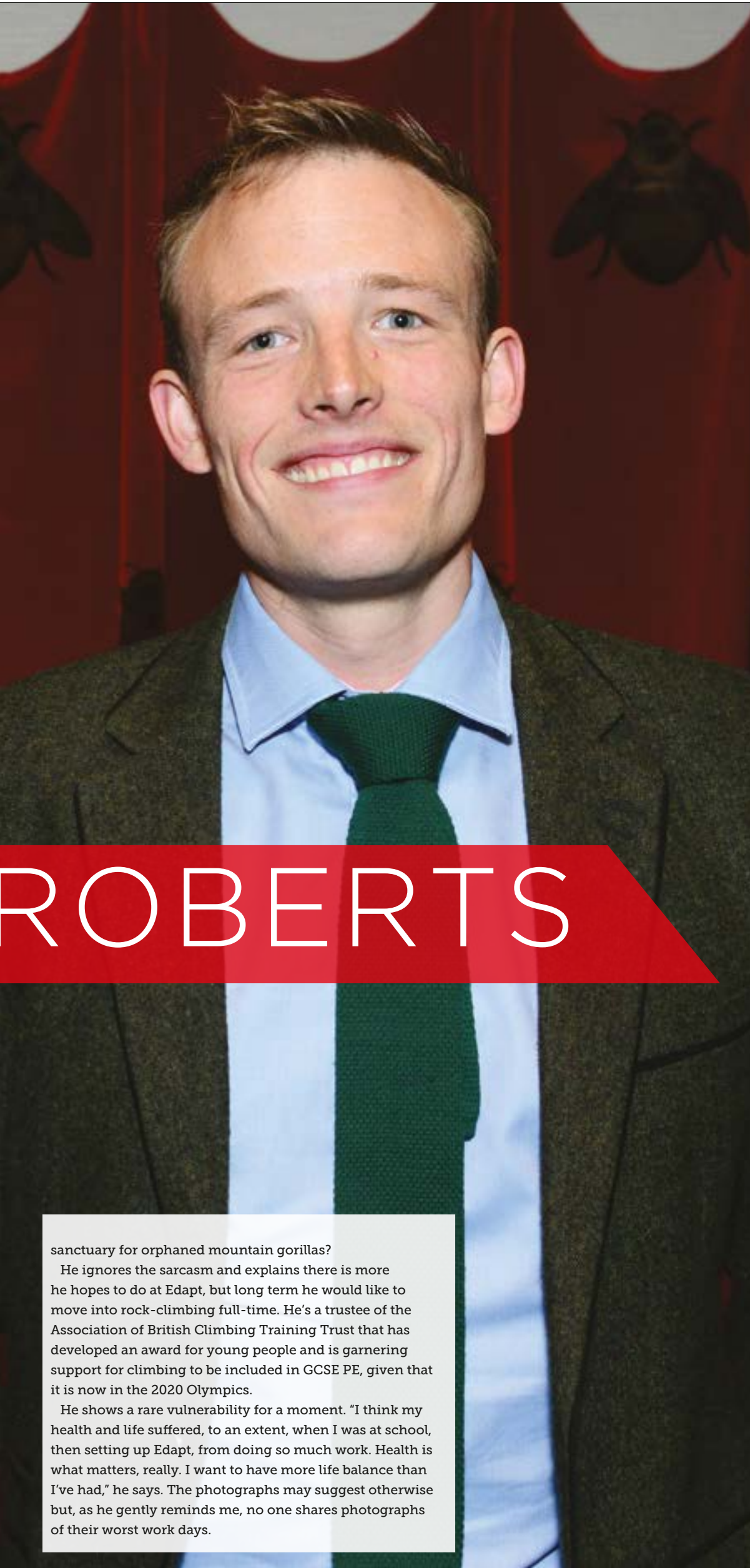
action, and why people were switched off from unions. I started wondering why no one had created an alternative so I thought I would investigate the barriers to entry."

Over the next two years he spoke to hundreds of people, commissioned research, found a legal partner, built a board of directors, got investors. By 2012, the product was ready to launch and within a few months had more than 1,000 subscribers.

But Roberts found himself thrust in a "bizarre" situation when Gove sent a letter insisting Edapt be given a seat at the table during his discussions with the teacher unions – a move that inflamed the general secretaries. Relationships, fraught for a time, have now largely calmed down.

In the end, Roberts believes the organisation offers teachers a different service, from the ease of sign-up through to the type of representation during a dispute. He also argues that it allows teachers who are uncomfortable with involvement in collective actions to still have a form of employment protection. It isn't to everyone's tastes, he agrees, but he believes it triggered the unions to start improving their own services, and the feedback and growth numbers suggest there is demand for the product.

After five years is he getting itchy feet? Is he perhaps planning a new super-recruitment agency to solve the teacher shortage while simultaneously building a



ROBERTS

sanctuary for orphaned mountain gorillas?

He ignores the sarcasm and explains there is more he hopes to do at Edapt, but long term he would like to move into rock-climbing full-time. He's a trustee of the Association of British Climbing Training Trust that has developed an award for young people and is garnering support for climbing to be included in GCSE PE, given that it is now in the 2020 Olympics.

He shows a rare vulnerability for a moment. "I think my health and life suffered, to an extent, when I was at school, then setting up Edapt, from doing so much work. Health is what matters, really. I want to have more life balance than I've had," he says. The photographs may suggest otherwise but, as he gently reminds me, no one shares photographs of their worst work days.



Roberts climbing in South Africa during an Easter holiday during his Teach First years



Roberts as a child

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What is your favourite book?

This is impossibly hard. I read lots in my late teens and early twenties, but have read less in the past few years. But if I was pushed, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. I read it cover to cover lying in bed one evening. As I finished the last page, I remember taking a deep breath, turning off the light and being glad I could sleep and start a new day.

What do you feel most grateful for?

The learning, experiences, health and friendships that a life of climbing and the outdoors has given me, and my parents for giving me the freedom to do it.

If your house was burning down, after saving humans and pets, what one item would you save and why?

Boringly practical, but my MacBook Pro. It would be the quickest and easiest thing to use to keep everything running smoothly, communicate with friends and family, and to get going building everything back up.

If you were invisible for a day, what would you do?

Find Trump's tax returns and secretly place them on a journalist's desk.

If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

Unbreakable tendons.

TOBY SALT

Chief executive,
Ormiston Academies Trust



RUSSELL HOBBY

General secretary,
National Association of Head Teachers

An opportunity (area) too good to be missed

Embrace the chance for change in the government’s 12 social mobility “opportunity areas”, say Toby Salt and Russell Hobby.
Use the funds to kick-start sustainable projects, says Salt; most important, says Hobby, invest in local people

As long as pupils from independent schools are still more than twice as likely to attend a Russell Group university, we should all focus on doing everything we can to support social mobility in the UK. The secretary of state’s intent and the philosophy behind opportunity areas is therefore a wholly good thing and we should park our cynicism and embrace the programme.

I was initially sceptical about why the 12 social mobility “cold spots” had been pinpointed. However, it started to make more sense after I learnt that areas were selected based on the social mobility index, with a mixture of rural and urban areas prioritised so “what works” could be tested in different settings. In each area there is a clear need to provide additional opportunities and a leg up where children haven’t got the means, networks or geographic opportunities on offer to them. Investing in social mobility in this way chimes with both my personal values and the work that we are doing through Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) to raise aspirations and broaden horizons for our students through our enrichment charter.

We should learn from past endeavours to give this programme the best chance of success:

- With the overarching funding pressures that schools face, it is easy to be sceptical about any pots of money that pop up for isolated projects. However, in this funding environment more than ever, we should ensure that we don’t look a gift horse in the mouth when additional resources are available for schools. OAT has academies in three of the twelve areas and we are already rolling up our sleeves to get involved with local roundtables and strategy meetings.
- Local collaboration and targeted funding can make a difference. We have seen some stunning successes and some disappointments with initiatives before, including education action zones, Excellence in Cities, networked learning communities and behaviour improvement partnerships... the list goes on. This is a little different though, as opportunity areas are driven and directly supported by the secretary of state.
- A two-year funding and reporting window is short, but we must be disciplined to build long-term, sustainable programmes

in each of the areas, so that the legacy of opportunity areas long outlives the investment; £72 million is not an

“These areas provide a catalyst for collaboration”

insignificant amount to enable us to kick-start impactful work.

- It is tempting to grab headlines by backing shiny pet projects, but I believe success will be more sustainable and effective if we utilise the opportunity areas resource to get to grips with some of the obvious and more mechanical issues that we all face, such as recruitment and retention, and cost-saving through shared procurement and services.

- We mustn’t turn inwards or be self-serving. In the education sector where money is tight, scrutiny is high and competition exists between trusts and schools, there is an inclination to build walls around our institutions. Opportunity areas provide a catalyst for collaboration.

- But.... we need to ensure that we are collaborating not *coblabberating*, as one colleague once put it. We need to agree on the outcomes that we want to see, not just chat about the problems over coffee and cake.

In summary, it is a fantastic opportunity and a milestone politically for the government to recognise the need for additional resources to be channelled into these areas. The cynics, the special interests and those trying to push pet projects must not take away from the wider benefits that could be achieved if we embrace this programme.

We all want youngsters to get the opportunities they never would have had, to have access to the best teachers, to learn from skilled subject leaders and to have rich cultural and social literacy. If we keep focused on these goals we can look back in a few years and feel proud that more young people have done better because of opportunity areas. So let’s get on with it and fast – we need resource and action now!

Opportunity areas are a welcome commitment to social mobility. They demonstrate a legitimate concern that all parts of the country should have a high quality education system. They target resources, support and attention and are no doubt inspired by the success of the London Challenge – which has been surprisingly difficult to transfer to other parts of the country. How can we ensure that opportunity areas learn the right lessons?

There are many explanations for the challenge’s success, but an important feature was that it was “by London, for London”. For opportunity areas to truly work they must adopt the same principle: home-grown solutions to their particular circumstances.

I note this because there has been a tendency in government policy to adopt the “export model”, parachuting leaders and staff into a school or an area to bring in new practices. Although this may be a necessary short-term fix, it has not generally proved sustainable. This is particularly true at a regional level where teachers have been understandably reluctant to move long distances, as demonstrated by the failure of the National Teaching Service.

People have rightly said that even in a school dubbed as “failing” there are still examples of good and excellent practice. This is even more true of a whole area or region. There will be great leaders, great teaching, great collaboration and great initiatives in every part of the country. They need nurturing and spreading. Even better, these local successes are shown to work in the particular context of the area.

One thing is sure, what may work in a large urban secondary school, for example, has no guarantee of working in small rural primary schools. The UN development teams used to call this philosophy “positive dissonance” – don’t fly the experts in with their solution to a local problem; find where some of the locals have already solved the problem and spread that more widely.

So, for opportunity areas to take off, a few guiding principles are key:

- Each area will face different challenges, begin by understanding them and craft a customised set of solutions.
- By all means bring in stimulus and ideas from outside, but focus most of your efforts on nurturing local solutions and people.

If you haven’t got enough teachers, for example, think about how you can develop talented teaching assistants before you spend thousands on relocation packages.

- Focus on developing people. We don’t need more structural changes; the secret to social mobility is no secret at all: great teaching for the pupils who need it most.

- One of the difficulties with local solutions and leadership is where the right to act as a system leader has been artificially restricted by the use of accreditations and badges. We need to look again at eligibility for national leaders of education and teaching schools to ensure that solidly good schools can participate as well as the outstanding.

“The initiatives need to add up to be larger than the sum of their parts”

- The initiatives deployed in the area need to add up to be larger than the sum of their parts rather than compete with each other for money and, more importantly, attention. A local team of leaders should form a steering group to manage this process.

- The London Challenge took time to flourish. The opportunity areas should be a long-term project, with long-term goals. The measures of success should reflect this. This will require cross-party support, locally and nationally. Local politicians must have a stake in the project, so that momentum is maintained when the attention of Westminster moves on.

As Toby’s list shows, a long parade of initiatives focusing on local improvement has had mixed results. We have focused too often on titles and structures and new governance arrangements at the expense of real change in the classroom. We also have not given projects a chance to thrive before moving on to the next big idea. If opportunity areas become a long-term commitment to supporting local leaders and teachers in tackling their own distinctive challenges, then perhaps they might just stick.

Carolyn Roberts outlines what an ethical leadership code might look like and why it is needed

The Association of School and College Leaders is launching a year-long project to develop a code of ethical leadership.

Between this year’s ASCL annual conference, which opens next Friday in Birmingham, and next year’s conference, we will invite experts from within and outside education to form a national commission and share their views to help us to navigate our way through the educational moral maze.

Doctors have the Hippocratic oath. Accountants have a code of ethics. Lawyers have a code, a professional ethics helpline and Ethel, the ethical guru who guides them through dilemmas they might face in practice.

We have the teacher and headteacher standards. The former says that teachers should “uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics”. The latter talks of “moral purpose”, “positive relationships and attitudes” and “leading by example”.

We would all agree with those sentiments, but what do they actually mean? How do we interpret them in practice? And shouldn’t the public know what these ethical standards are? Our aim is that the code of ethical leadership will provide a more detailed guide.

People who study ethics use several



CAROLYN ROBERTS

Carolyn Roberts, honorary secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, headteacher of Thomas Tallis school, Greenwich, south London

Finding a way through the educational moral maze

approaches to help professionals to agree what is right and wrong.

- First, rights. Human rights have a powerful tradition with a particular importance for vulnerable children and young people. How do we feel about the education of refugee children, in the UK and in the rest of the world? Do we have an ethical responsibility to do more? How do these children fare in our own schools and colleges?
- Second, duties. How do we balance always doing the right thing for an individual child or young person, with the rights of the rest of the pupils in our schools and colleges? There are times when we feel we must exclude an individual pupil to protect the safety of others. What ethical responsibilities

“Shouldn’t the public know what our ethical standards are?”

do we have for the excluded child or young person?

- Third, virtues. What sort of people do we want to be and what sort of young people do we think should emerge from the statutory education system? The accountability system could skew our behaviours towards

putting pressure on children and young people to perform. Therefore, how do we balance the fact that good exam results are a route to further and higher education with the wider aims of education, such as producing well-rounded individuals?

These are ethical dilemmas that teachers and leaders face every day. We talk about them with colleagues, with our governing bodies, sometimes with our parent bodies and communities. But there is no national framework that allows us to explore and test these dilemmas against a set of ethical principles.

Teachers and leaders have highly complex professional duties and the ethical decisions they make – to do the right thing, to achieve a good result – are of enormous significance to the development of children and society. Schools are also the subject of intense public debate. A headteacher or principal will be confronted with all sorts of views; everyone has been through school and so expands upon their own experience. Our ethics should provide clear and well-grounded principles about what is good and bad, right and wrong.

We need to be clear about what we are doing, why we do it, who we do it for, to whom we are accountable and how we do it. This time next year we hope to have formulated some answers to these questions.

If you would like to share your views on this important issue, please email us at codeofethics@ascl.org.uk and have your say.

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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

To view individual blogs visit www.schoolsweek.co.uk/reviews



Our reviewer of the week is Andrew Old, teacher and blogger @oldandrewuk

Peer marking

By @grumpyteacher17

Peer marking is not effective, this post argues, apart from saving time marking short-answer tests and going through one piece of work with the entire class. Students do not yet know enough to be effective markers, and that is why they are in class in the first place. "They are apprentices, not journeymen, never mind master craftsmen."

How do bad ideas about assessment lead to workload problems?

By @daisychristo

Daisy Christodoulou has been using her blog to discuss her recently published book on assessment. In this post she describes how some of the bad ideas about assessment, particularly reliance on prose descriptors, are also bad for teacher workload. Short-answer and multiple-choice questions can be used more effectively in assessment than teachers realise – and they save time.

We are not elite cyclists

By @NWMaths

Since the 2012 Olympics there has been an interest in borrowing the idea of "marginal gains" from the world of cycling for use in education. These are small changes that would allow small improvements. This post discusses whether world-class cycling is an appropriate model for where we are as teachers. The author observes that, unlike in the highly competitive world of top cyclists, teachers still have large gains available to them by concentrating on some of the central aspects of teaching.

Sorry!

By ijstock.wordpress.com

This post considers whether teachers would

benefit from admitting their mistakes. The author says that he had been told never to admit a mistake or apologise to parents. He discusses whether this ethos is harmful to the profession. "Apologising requires some courage, particularly where there is a worry that such an apparent admittance of weakness may be exploited – but by working on that assumption we tar everyone with the same adversarial brush. In fact, admitting an error is a demonstration of strength that in the vast majority of cases will resolve an issue quickly – and in the long run we are all the worse-off for the failure to accept as much."

Brainstorm your thoughts on this sugar paper, and then I'll tell you what I've already decided we're going to do

@thefish64

Managers in schools tend to say they want to listen to staff, even when they don't. The author of this post describes meetings in which people end up trying to guess what the meeting's chair wants them to say. He suggests that it would be easier if chairs gave their opinions up front, rather than hoping to manipulate a discussion in the right direction.

The secret of my (maths) success

By @HeatherBellaF

Heather Fearne, who taught maths to her own children, firmly advocates giving priority to teaching fluency, rather than thinking children can be taught to understand more complicated maths problems without first becoming able to work fluently with the constituent parts of the problems.

Boring but important

By @HuntingEnglish

Alex Quigley argues that not everything can be immediately interesting in itself and that it may be important for students to change their attitude to learning what might seem boring: "Students who can better manage their boredom are more likely to succeed as they can sustain their practice, whereas an appeal to endless engagement can see students succumb to distraction and ultimately suffer."

Should teaching methods be prescribed?

By @amfordhamhistory

One of the limits to discussions of teaching methods is the assumption that if you argue against a teaching method you think it should be banned, or if you recommend another, it should be compulsory. Michael Fordham argues that teachers need autonomy to teach as they wish, but not unlimited autonomy.

BOOK REVIEW

Preventing and Countering Extremism and Terrorist Recruitment: A best practice guide
Author Hanif Qadir
Publisher John Catt Educational
Reviewer Zubeda Limbada, director of ConnectFutures



Hanif Qadir has produced an exceptional book that combines his experience as a former extremist with his subsequent extensive, dedicated and painstaking work in the Active Change Foundation where he tries to interrupt others moving into violent extremism. It has no footnotes, no bibliography, just his experience, but it is essential reading for anyone working with young people and trying to make sense of radicalisation and the various initiatives to prevent it. It focuses on Islamist extremism, but would have resonance across the field.

The book has three main parts, preceded by an introduction that tells of Qadir's journey into (and out of) al Qaeda in the early 2000s. Part A details the current landscape – government policy and the underlying issues and challenges. Part B, "Tackling Extremism", forms the bulk of the book, ranging around the ideology of extremists, how they recruit, how vulnerable people change and how to intervene. This also contains seven case studies of people that Qadir has worked with and who he (mostly) successfully managed to turn round. The insights make gripping reading. "The Islamic Standpoint", tackled in part C, details the historical roots of extremists and Kharijite terrorists and their techniques of radicalisation. This section shows how they falsify the Quran and the Sunnah, and reveals their ignorance and lack of scholarship.

A number of stark but complex messages pervade the book. First, it is foreign policy that is the key motivator for becoming involved, that is, the perception that Muslims are globally under attack and that the US, UK and Europe are the enemies. Recruiters then use religion to justify duties and actions. Yet this does not mean that interventions should not tackle religion; Qadir thinks that the role and significance of faith in people's lives is simply not appreciated in countries that separate politics and religion. He shows the importance of lengthy, seemingly endless

discussions of faith in eventually turning people away from violence.

The second complexity is the UK's Prevent strategy. Qadir confirms that this has been seen to stigmatise Muslims, and that mistakes have been made around the Prevent "duty" – and in promoting a "British Islam". Yet he points out a dilemma in joining the growing critique of Prevent: recruiters can capitalise on this apparent extensive opposition to justify an anti-government stance and action. Qadir gives useful information about the work of Prevent and Channel, with real examples, although he outlines the need for a more "robust" approach. This means that institutions must attain common knowledge (about people falling into extremism), industry knowledge (what the central departments issue as guidelines) and expert knowledge (what specialists say about changing trends).

A third complex change relates to the speed of radicalisation. It had been thought that people were gradually

groomed, yet Qadir reveals how young people can be radicalised in weeks. Social media is key (plus ease of travel). With trust in authority declining, the established media networks are seen as, at best, selective, biased and untrustworthy. Alternative media sources are often accepted as factual, and extremist networks dump multiple strands of information in a way that becomes credible and acceptable to their intended

audience.

For schools, critical thinking skills and safe spaces for discussion are paramount. Grassroots, frontline radicalisation is shaped by engagement and relationship building, and deradicalisation is the same. You should not shut down conversations. Qadir gives a compelling example of a teacher who blamed ISIS for Israeli airstrikes on Palestine and would not answer a student's questions, forcing the boy to search for information on (extremist) sites. Ironically, the same teacher then raised the alarm to his superiors.

Finally, he points out that only an effective network of community-led initiatives can have long-term impact. Large-scale youth movements, adventurous training activities, leadership programmes, female and family engagement, social media campaigns: all these will soak up a sense of mission and starve ISIS of human resources. There is inspiration as well as deeply grounded insight in this book.



Geoff Barton has emerged as victor in the battle for the coveted general secretary post at the Association of School and College Leaders. He takes over from interim general secretary Malcolm Trobe, who took over from Brian Lightman, who took over from John Dunford.

In a world where we increasingly worry about women’s place in leadership, one might raise an eyebrow at this succession of men taking the lead trade union role. Yet, it hasn’t always been this way.

ASCL’s history traces back to the Association of Headmistresses, started by Frances Buss and Dorothea Beale – pioneers of women’s education.

If you think we are in extraordinary political times today, spare a thought for Dorothea Beale who, after being sent to school in Paris in 1847 at 16, found herself in the 1848 revolution and escaped to London just in time to avoid bloody uprisings in the street.

She attended a school in Harley Street and there met Frances Buss who attended evening classes while helping her mother to set up a private school to fund her father’s unsuccessful artistic endeavours.

Later, Buss would take over the school, which changed its name to North London Collegiate School and which still exists today. She titled herself the “headmistress” – a phrase she is credited with creating – and stayed in post throughout her career.

Meanwhile, Beale went on to head the Ladies’ College in Cheltenham, taking it from admitting 80-something pupils to

THE PAST WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER



WHO STARTED ASCL?

LAURA MCINERNEY

well over 500.

Both publicly pushed the government to take girls’ education as seriously as that of boys. Both were invited to give evidence at an education committee inquiry in 1865 (yes, the committee process we report on each week is that old), and in 1869



Frances Buss



Dorothea Beale

Beale wrote *Reports on the Education of Girls* to accompany the inquiry.

It is a wonderfully rich report that reads like a Dickens novel. “Mr Giffard found that girls ‘spell better, read better, write from dictation better, master the facts of history and geography


better than boys; but translate, analyse, and parse worse, are not so quick and accurate in arithmetic, algebra, and Euclid, and less able to deal with themes and general questions.” Or, “according to Mr Fitch, they are better in reading, in English exercises, often in history, in religious knowledge; in all else worse.” And “Mr Hammond pronounced their reading, spelling, arithmetic, and grammar unsatisfactory; the history superficial; the geography somewhat better; English composition successful.”

The report notes the evidence from several contributors that women struggled more with maths. Although, from the vantage of 150 years later, it appears this struggle was likely only relative to how well girls were performing at their other subjects and not relative to boys’ achievements.

Beale also used data to support her view that girls deserved a better deal. Experiments held at universities in the mid-1800s allowed girls to sit the same exam papers as boys before blind-marking them. The girls held their own; in many cases, they excelled.

The two helped found the Association of Headmistresses in 1874 to push for more girls’ education, with Buss taking the lead as president for over two years, until her death on Christmas eve in 1894. She was 67.

Beale lived a further 12 years and died aged 75. At the time she was still working as a principal, her 48th year in the role.



A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

On holidays, innit.

FRIDAY:

We were rudely awakened from our holiday slumber by Michael Gove, former education secretary, tweeting our editor at 1am in the style of a drunken former lover standing out the window shouting about “the good times we once had”.

His final flourish of ending with #timeforsomeschoolsweekbalanceatlast was particularly sweet. We love that you care Michael. But what can we say? It’s you, not us. Sorry!


MONDAY:

After a weekend to calm down and reflect, WiW was missing Michael. So we set out to look for other friends of his and found Electoral Commission records showing

who gave him financial support for his leadership bid.

And lo, we only found that Lord Nash, an education minister appointed by Gove in 2013, had flicked him £3,500.

Nash made another appearance in our lives on Monday when he was giving one of his turns in the House of Lords, where he is



the minister for the school system.

A Freudian slip revealed that he may think as highly of the Department for Education’s online presence as most of us do, when he

urged his colleague Lord Watson to “go on to the department’s webshite [sic]”.

Sad to say, when we checked the transcript for parliament the next day the error had been removed. But, for the record, we heard. And we feel your pain.

TUESDAY:

Say what you like about Ofqual’s chief regulator Sally Collier, at least she’s honest.

Schools Week devotees will remember she was very open about the long time she thought it would take for her to fathom out her job.

Well this week, Collier said she had been “amazed how transparent we are as an organisation”.

One might think that’s because she has spent her entire career working in a civil service that seems bent on hiding as much information from the public as possible. One might think that, of course. But we couldn’t possibly comment.

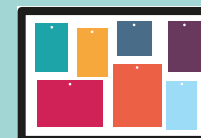
WEDNESDAY:

Theresa May gave her full support to the free schools programme at prime minister’s questions today. Or we think she did.

When quizzed by Liberal Democrat MP Sarah Olney about a recent damning report from the National Audit Office on capital funding that questioned the government’s approach to opening new free schools, May said: “Yes we have had free schools. And I understand she raises a concern about that. But what we have seen through the programme that we have had, of free schools, and academies, that has been continued under this government, is to ensure that we are creating more good school places across this country. That’s what we want to do and that’s what our policy will continue to do.”

It’s not the clearest answer we’ve heard. But hey, why use a few words when loads in the wrong order will do!

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Ben's cakes rise to the occasion

FEATURED

A Birmingham schoolboy has raised £5,000 selling homemade cakes and jam to teachers and classmates.

Benjamin Sheard, a year 7 pupil at Erdington academy, sold the baked goods to raise funds for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

Benjamin, who made the cakes at home with his mum Emma and five-year-old brother Jimmy, started baking after his grandad Jim died eight years ago. He donates the proceeds to a different charity each year in memory of Jim.

Staff at the academy have been keen to support the 12-year-old with his fundraising. As Erdington's assistant headteacher Liz Cross says: "We want all pupils to pursue causes they feel are important."

Andy Bird, chief executive of Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust, which runs Erdington academy, praised the pupil's entrepreneurial skills.

"We are proud to have a pupil like Benjamin at Erdington. He is a prime example of how to develop skills that we want all our pupils to learn.

"His charity work is a real reminder to us all about the importance of family. We hope he will inspire others."

About £5 supports a working guide dog for a day, but Benjamin's £5,000 will cover a year's puppy walking. Miles Northwood, fundraising development officer from



Sue Bushell from Guide Dogs for the Blind, Benjamin and Sinclair the dog



Benjamin with his mother, Emma, and Sue Bushell

Guide Dogs for the Blind, said: "We rely on donations to continue our life-changing work. Every pound raised makes a difference to people living with sight loss. As a guide dog owner myself I know the amazing difference a guide dog can make to someone's life and would really like to thank the Sheard family for their fundraising efforts."



Benjamin with Sinclair... and cake

CLASSROOM LEARNING MEETS SCI-FI

An artificial intelligence (AI) platform that personalises learning for students has won a global education award.

CENTURY technology's personalised learning platform scooped the Best Use of AI in Education prize at the Global Annual Achievement Awards for AI. The platform uses algorithms that get to know a student the more they engage with it.

The technology records patterns of behaviour, including what learning style works best for each student, and offers feedback and suggestions to help to fill any knowledge gaps.

Combining cognitive neuroscience and big data, the cloud-based platform also allows teachers to track their pupils' progress using data reports and identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Developers claim the software will also help to relieve teachers' workloads by automatically marking students' work as it is completed.

Priya Lakhani, founder and chief executive of CENTURY tech, said: "We have been working with teachers and students to engineer a platform that really makes a difference."

CENTURY has also won a silver award for start-up learning provider of the year at the Learning Provider Awards and made it to the finals at the technology conferences TechCrunch Disrupt and the recent BETT awards.

Dumbledore (aka D&T teacher Mr Prince) performs magic for pupils



School library becomes Hogwarts for a night

A Nottingham school joined the wizarding world of Hogwarts to celebrate national Harry Potter book night.

Trent college's Devonshire library became Hogwarts, with a visit from Albus Dumbledore (aka head of D&T, Mr Prince) to celebrate JK Rowling's series.

Teachers read passages from their favourite Potter books, performed magic and joined in a butter beer tasting session – non-alcoholic, of course.

It was the latest in a series of library activities at the school that aim to inspire children to read more. Other events include visits from authors Sarah Mussi, Jonathan Stroud and Cathy Cassidy.

More than 200 young people attended author Cathy Cassidy's talk, including pupils



from the neighbouring junior school, The Elms, and a number of local high schools.

Claire Scothern, head of library services at Trent, said: "Author events are great opportunities to promote reading for pleasure. Pupils are often introduced to new authors and we always find that as a result they want to borrow their books and give them a go."

PE staff train teens for Dartmoor trek

A team of four from a Plymouth secondary school have begun intensive training for the Ten Tors hill-walking challenge in May.

Plympton academy students Ellie Buxton, Malachi George, Christopher Mace and Kian Shepherd will compete in the annual challenge. Four hundred teams of teenagers will join them on Dartmoor.

The event – which is exclusively for young people – challenges students to undertake hikes of 35, 45 or 55 miles in under two days, while carrying their camping equipment for a night out in the elements.

The Plympton foursome has received support from the school's PE team in preparation for the event, and recently completed an 18-mile trek as part of the training regime.

The team combined their training with pupils from Coombe Dean school, Devonport high school for girls and Plymouth high school for girls, also entering teams in the challenge.

Bob Costin, a volunteer for the Ten Tors challenge who is managing the combined



Students Malachi George and Christopher Mace brave the rain during their practice trek

group's training, said: "The weather can be really diverse on Dartmoor. In the practice walk we saw all four seasons in one day. The students all put in tremendous effort."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

Cathy Trundle has been appointed headteacher of Chinthurst school in Surrey.

The school, a co-educational day school for pupils aged 2 to 11, has recently entered into a partnership with two local schools: Reigate St Mary's preparatory and choir school, and Reigate grammar school.

Trundle, who was deputy head at Reigate St Mary's, takes over from Tim Button and will oversee Chinthurst as it enters its new partnership, which she says is "a tremendous opportunity" for the three schools.

"I want to pay tribute to the leadership that Mr Button has provided to the school. It is clear that Chinthurst is a happy, caring school as soon as you walk through the door, and I'm looking forward to getting to know staff and parents as I settle into my new role."

Wendy Berliner has been appointed joint-chief executive of the Education Media Centre.

The EMC is an independent UK charity that provides expert quotes for the media in breaking education news stories, as well as improving the public's understanding of education research.



Cathy Trundle



Wendy Berliner



Dr John Stephens

Berliner was head of editorial at Guardian Professional Networks, where she oversaw an online community of nearly one million members.

She will share responsibilities in her new role with fellow chief executive Fran Abrams.

She says she will be "primarily looking for ways to grow us, develop our expertise further, to develop the financial side of the operation and to look to forge alliances with like-minded organisations".

She also hopes to raise awareness of

education research. "When you think of the environment, science, health and politics, education underpins everything. Not enough of the magnificent research that goes on in our universities is known about."

Dr John Stephens has been appointed chief executive of Bright Futures Education Trust (BFET), which has eight schools across the

north west of England.

Stephens joins the trust, which was set up in 2011, from the Department for Education where he was responsible for leading on teaching schools and system leaders in the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

He serves on the regional safeguarding team at St John Ambulance and is chair of trustees at the East Manchester Community Boat Project – a charity that provides free day drips for disabled people and those at socio-economic disadvantage. He was awarded a CBE in 2016 in recognition of his services to education and charity.

He says that he is "delighted to join BFET as it moves into a new era. The trust has built a good network of schools that are already working together to share learning and to bring about improvements.

"We face some important challenges but remain committed to working constructively to provide the very best for the children, young people, families and communities that we serve."

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

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a *Schools Week* mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins a mug. Tweet a picture of your completed spot the difference using @schoolsweek in the tweet. Last editions winner was @eLearnIt!