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SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

FRIDAY, OCT 14, 2016 | EDITION 80



Research embargo will gag us, say academics

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Academics and journalists are mobilising to fight a government diktat which means they must now send any research based on the national pupil database to civil servants two days before publication.

Several have joined forces with unions and teachers to campaign against the change – including writing to education secretary Justine Greening, Schools Week can reveal.

The Department for Education (DfE) has said that researchers failing to adhere to the request could be barred from accessing the database in future.

The government says this will ensure policy officials and press officers are not “caught off guard” when data is published, but critics say it will stop any rapid scrutiny of policies.

Academics and journalists fear that if the move is not challenged, it will stop them publishing critical research.

It follows the rapid release of publications from organisations such as Education Datalab and the Education Policy Institute following the government’s announcement that it planned to reintroduce grammar schools.

Their research, widely reported in the media and making use of the NPD, cast doubt on the government’s claims that new grammars would boost social mobility.

Dr Becky Allen, director of Education Datalab, said more than half of her organisation’s blog

posts were “quick turnaround responses” to either government announcements, news stories or questions from teachers.

She said the organisation aimed to provide a “valuable public service” that “helps the education community understand educational data” but said the conversation had often moved on after two days.

But she added: “Part of that public service is holding the executive to account, however uncomfortable that might be for them.”

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NEWS

DfE demand to see research first angers academics

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

CONTINUED
FROM FRONT

Professor Stephen Gorard, from the school of education at Durham University, also noted problems for academics who were not abreast of publication timeframes.

"The idea I can give 48 hours' notice is unworkable. It doesn't fit in with academic publishing, where we genuinely don't know 48 hours in advance if something is being published."

The NPD contains data from almost 20 million pupils and is accessible to businesses and researchers by request, though there are strict conditions on what is released to preserve anonymity.

In an email to researchers last week, the DfE said it was "not the DfE's role to check or approve the outcomes", but that "the right people have had time to digest it."

"This will reduce the risk that the DfE is caught off guard by being asked to provide statements about research the appropriate people have not seen."

Applicants will have to commit to following the new rules, or face not being able to access the data.

If they do not follow the new condition, they are unlikely to be approved to access data again or could be told to delete their post, *Schools Week* has been told.

Michael Tidd, deputy headteacher of Edgewood primary school, in Nottinghamshire and a prominent blogger, said it was unacceptable for the government to attempt to hamper the work of organisations such as Datalab because it "presents inconveniences for the politicians".

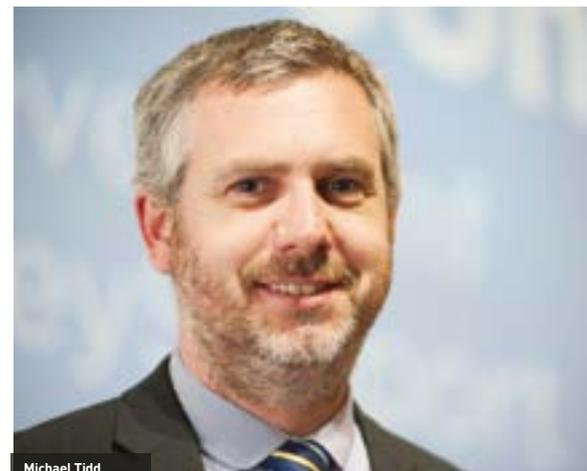
Journalists who regularly use the NPD and

work to daily deadlines have also expressed concern.

Chris Cook, a BBC journalist who first tweeted about the changes after receiving the DfE email, added: "The department has for six years made it harder and harder to get access to data. It wasn't that long ago that [the DfE] was promising to open up its data."

It's not clear what has prompted the change, but the department could use it to run a "rapid rebuttal unit", similar to one started by the Department of Health in 1999 after criticism of New Labour's private financial incentives (PFI).

A spokesperson for the department



Michael Tidd

claimed the changes were made to ensure "no breaches of protocol such as confidentiality have occurred".

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PUPIL DATABASE, AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

It is often not clear what happens to data after it has been collected by a school.

In some cases, such as termly school censuses, the data goes back to the Department for Education and ends up in the national pupil database, a catch-all term for a number of data sets held by the department.

As well as data from the termly censuses, the NPD holds details of children's attainment in national-level tests, from foundation stage profile through to key stage 5. Specific parts of the NPD also hold data on looked-after children, and

things such as school exclusions.

As well as being used by the DfE, researchers, journalists and others can ask permission to work with extracts of the data.

The NPD is used to investigate a range of issues in education – from whether government accountability measures are having unintended side-effects, to outcomes for children eligible for free school meals.

In recent years, the database has been used for to investigate the London Effect, the impressive performance of schools in the capital, and work out what other parts of the country can learn from it.

CEOs will lead academy trust health checks

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The new health checks for academy trusts wishing to expand will be led by the leaders of other chains, despite concerns over conflicts of interest.

The regional schools commissioner for East Midlands and the Humber, Jennifer Bexon-Smith, told an education committee inquiry that the panels conducting the checks – set to be rolled out nationally next year – would be led by trust chief executives and include a member of the chain under scrutiny.

The introduction of the checks for academies that want to grow follows the rapid expansion of some of the larger chains – most notably AET and E-ACT – giving rise to school improvement worries.

Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, launched a health check pilot in about 30 chains that will focus on standards and improvements.

But on Wednesday Bexon-Smith revealed more details about the proposed make-up of the panels.

She said: "In terms of the process, there will be an experienced CEO, a finance director, a board member and a member

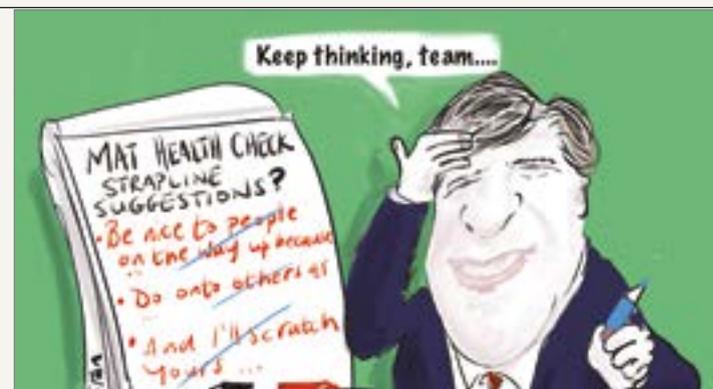
of the actual trust that's being inspected that will have a series of five areas they will focus on. There will be structured questions."

Dr Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, has questioned using trust leaders to regulate the expansion of competing chains.

She said Carter was "trying to do a good job and is playing the best hand with the cards he's got", but added that the reality of a self-regulating school system was that the job of scrutiny would always fall to those leading it.

"The system itself, the whole concept is wrong," she said. "There have to be questions about a conflict of interest if CEOs are judging whether other CEOs' trusts should expand. What this speaks to more than anything else is that we still have the Wild West out there, and we still have RSCs who are not known to parents and don't seem to be democratically accountable."

Bousted said there was a "systemic and



endemic problem with multi-academy trusts", and pointed to recent research by the Department for Education that showed that 54 per cent of multi-academy trusts were seriously underperforming at key stage 4.

"That's the critical problem, not how we can do health checks," she said. "There simply aren't enough good multi-academy trusts."

Commissioners have also admitted that not all of the so-called "system leaders" – England's largest trusts appointed by Carter to play a "broader role" – were providing the required leadership.

Bexon-Smith said some system leaders "aren't yet stepping up and delivering that wider system leadership".

NEWS

Our team is packed with the right experience, says Labour

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Labour's new education team is "rooted in the real world", says shadow education secretary Angela Rayner in an apparent swipe at the government education line-up.

Rayner, who stays on following a reshuffle of the Labour frontbench, said the party would be able to draw on the "really solid and direct experience" of new shadow ministers Mike Kane, Emma Lewell-Buck and Tulip Siddiq.

Kane, a former primary teacher, is the new shadow schools minister, while Lewell-Buck, who worked as a social worker, has taken on the children and families brief.

Siddiq, an ex-charity worker and political consultant, will work on early years, while further and higher education shadow Gordon Marsden and House of Lords representative Lord Watson remain in their roles.

Rayner said her team was a "stark contrast" to the government benches. Education secretary

Justine Greening is a former accountant, while Nick Gibb and Edward Timpson were lawyers before they entered parliament. Lord Nash and Caroline Dinenage both worked in business.

"We will be able to draw on really solid and direct experience of the classroom



ANGELA RAYNER
Shadow Education
Secretary

MIKE KANE
Shadow Schools
Minister

EMMA LEWELL-BUCK
Shadow Childrens
Minister

TULIP SIDDIQ
Shadow Early Years
Minister

GORDON MARSDEN
Shadow Skills Minister

and teaching, working with vulnerable children, and topnotch campaigning talent that will enable us to oppose government policy at every turn," Rayner said. "It shows we mean business in putting forward a positive Labour alternative which will make a real difference for the education of our children."

Kane, a former labourer who retrained to be a teacher as a mature student and taught at Springfield primary in Greater Manchester, has served as the MP for

Wythenshawe and Sale East since 2014.

"I know the difference a good teacher, with the right support and resources can make to a child's attainment and aspiration," he told *Schools Week*.

"I look forward to working with parents, teachers and schools across the UK to hold the government to account and to ensure we have a school system that is fit for purpose.

"At my first education questions this week I had the opportunity to tackle the minister on excessive workload as highlighted by the

Education Policy Institute and the ill health this is causing the profession."

Greening's Monday grilling was not the first she has faced as secretary of state, but the first since April with a full complement of shadow ministers on the Labour benches.

Rayner took over the education brief in July after a turbulent few weeks with the resignations of Lucy Powell and Pat Glass.

She has since risen to national prominence as the main voice of opposition to the government's plans for new grammar schools.

Government intends to axe Durand funding

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The government has announced it will proceed with the termination of a controversial academy trust's funding agreement after the chain refused to sever ties with its former executive headteacher.

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) has issued Durand academy trust with a notice of intention to terminate its funding agreement, claiming the trust has failed to comply with six of eight requirements set out in an earlier warning.

Lord Nash, academies minister, said the notice would "safeguard the future education of Durand's pupils and ensure public money and public assets intended for the education of children are managed effectively".

But the trust claims that the government is "waging a campaign" against the school that has been "characterised by misrepresentation, half-truths and inaccuracies".

It has vowed to fight the termination notice in court.

A statement read: "The academy feels the [EFA's] action is motivated not by a desire to see the best for the children in the academy's care, but by personal and political discomfort at an academy fulfilling



its remit – providing educational excellence at the same time as financial security."

In July, the trust – once championed by former education secretary Michael Gove – was told to address concerns over finances and potential conflicts of interest surrounding its association with several other organisations.

They included Durand education trust, which owns land occupied by Durand academy in Lambeth, south London, and which has been under investigation by the Charity Commission, and London

Horizons, which runs the school's leisure facilities on a commercial basis.

One of the conditions was for the academy trust to sever ties with its chair of governors and former executive head, Sir Greg Martin (pictured).

Martin, who resigned as head last year, faced criticism from MPs after it emerged he was paid more than £400,000 in salary from the school and management fees from London Horizons.

He also ran a dating agency registered at the school's address.

In a letter to the trust, Peter Lauener, chief executive of the EFA, claimed the demands were aimed at "untangling" the overlap in roles between staff involved with the trust and its associated companies.

He said there had been "repeated and significant" breaches of the funding agreement, including a refusal by the Durand education trust to transfer back £1.8 million to the academy trust.

The termination letter gives the trust a year's notice, after which the government can either find a new sponsor or close the school.

Schools Week understands the 12-month notice was offered in the hope it would give Durand time to walk away from its schools, allowing the government to bring in new sponsors.

The trust runs a primary school at two sites in south London and a secondary boarding school in West Sussex.

But the academy trust added: "The academy stands by its ex-head, Sir Greg Martin (who was knighted for his services to education) and will fight the EFA decision, and any slur on Martin's character or good name, as well as the character and good name of the academy and any of the staff involved who are dedicated to the education of their pupils, as a matter of principle."

NEWS

VIRTUAL LESSONS 'DIFFICULT TO MAKE WORK'

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Academy trusts that want to set up "virtual centres of excellence" should be "cautious" about expected results, warns a technology director at a chain that already delivers online lessons.

The education green paper published last month encourages trusts to educate their high-attaining pupils in "centres of excellence", which can be "virtual" to get around potential geography issues.

The David Ross Education Trust (DRET) has this week launched a new ICT package across its 33 schools, which could be used to deliver virtual lessons in the future.

Other virtual schools, such as for-profit online school InterHigh, have become more popular in recent years.

But Dominic Norrish, the group director of technology at United Learning Trust (ULT), which rolled out its own online technology programme in September last year, said virtual learning was "no way a panacea for geographical problems" at academy chains.

"It is really very difficult to make virtual lessons work," he told *Schools Week*.

"Students who need direct support from adults find it quite hard to learn at a distance because all of the traditional things that keep students on track in a face-to-face environment, such as eye contact, are taken away.

"I would be cautious about expecting immediate results. The technology is not the problem, it is the model of education."

ULT's sixth-formers access online A-level lessons in economics and physics if their local school cannot "justify the expense or manage to recruit an expert teacher".

Students sit in a classroom with a member of staff and take part in the lesson via video link with a specialist subject teacher within the trust.

But Norrish said this type of teaching only benefited students who could learn independently.

"As adults we expect young people to be switched on to this way of learning and we almost treat them as if they are at a university level of independence, which often just isn't there."

DRET's new ICT package includes professional development for teachers to help them to make the most of new technology in the classroom, as well as online resources for students with a virtual library and lesson planner.

Guy Shearer, head of ICT at DRET, said that over time the "end game" could be "full-on virtual teaching" but that would have to be developed "over several years".

"The lessons would need to be at least as good as having a teacher in the room with you, otherwise students won't have a good experience and results will not be good."

Academy trust Ark is also due to start its first "blended learning" school next September, which will include pupils using online videos as a partial substitute for teachers.

A spokesperson for Ark said: "We believe that, done well, blended learning could have a meaningful impact on teaching and learning."

Sixth-form colleges take up academisation

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Investigates

At least four sixth-form colleges have started consulting on becoming academies, with half eyeing up sponsorship of other schools in their own multi-academy trusts.

Priestley college, in Warrington, is the latest to announce formal proposals for academy conversion, following applications from Hereford sixth form college, Rochdale sixth form college, and New College Pontefract.

Priestley and Rochdale want to open their own trusts, with plans to take over local schools.

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said the plans would move sixth-form colleges "from the margins to the mainstream".

"It is a way of positioning sixth-form colleges to drive up standards in schools, to bring their business expertise."

The move follows George Osborne's announcement last year that becoming an academy would allow a sixth-form college to avoid paying VAT.

Priestley college hopes to launch The Challenge academy trust from next April, and currently has two secondaries and one primary signed up. It is also in talks with a further three secondaries and two primaries.

Principal Matthew Grant told *Schools Week*: "Money is tight and we don't think it is going to get any easier, therefore we want to work together with other schools to make efficiencies, share resources and expertise."

Colleges currently pay an average of £317,000 per year in VAT; conversion would

save Priestley about £250,000 a year.

But Grant said the move was "mainly about improving education across Warrington".

Rochdale sixth form college is proposing to set up Altus Education Partnership from next February.

The multi-academy trust would provide "high quality educational support, improvement and governance to schools within the area

local to Rochdale", according to a public consultation published on the college's website.

In June, *Schools Week's* sister paper *FE Week* reported that about 60 of the country's 93 sixth-form colleges were interested in converting.

New College Pontefract is set to become part of the New Collaborative Learning Trust, which will include New College Doncaster and New College Bradford when they open in 2017 and 2018, respectively.

Pauline Hagen, principal of New College Pontefract, said ensuring that all three institutions shared the same "legal rights and benefits" was a "tremendously important part of our plans for raising the quality of post-16 education across the region".

Meanwhile, Hereford sixth form college is planning on becoming a



Priestley College

single academy trust.

A consultation on its website said there would be "no change" in the character or ethos of the college and it would keep its name.

"As a single academy trust we would establish formal links with local 11 to 16 schools to develop shared approaches to quality assurance, shared staffing, professional development and resources," the consultation said.

"The ability to reclaim VAT payments will provide additional funding of between £200,000 to £300,000 annually, which will be used to improve provision for students."

The first conversion could be as soon as January, with applications for both Hereford and New College Pontefract being reviewed by the Department for Education and their relevant regional schools commissioner.

WATCH FOR HIDDEN COSTS WHEN REBROKERING, TRUST LEADERS WARN

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Trusts will face surprise costs unless they wise up to the need for extra due diligence when taking over a rebrokered academy, trust leaders warn.

Dean Ashton, chief executive of Reach South, says that trusts need added legal oversight to ensure that the transfer of a school from one trust to another (known as rebrokering) goes smoothly.

He said while a school transfer from a local authority to a trust was "well-trodden", rebrokering was more risky.

Other academy experts have also warned of the need for added due diligence, with some saying that smaller trusts might not have the adequate legal expertise and therefore get caught out with unwanted costs after a takeover.

Ashton told *Schools Week* that trusts must spend "considerable time rigorously testing all aspects of a trust-to-trust transfer, so they are absolutely clear about ... the academy that is transferring: educationally, financially and its governance structures".

When schools transfer from a local authority, *Schools Week* has been told the trust will be indemnified for any future liabilities that relate to the time when the school was maintained by the council (for

example, an historical tribunal case).

Councils also must write off any cash deficit when the school becomes a sponsored academy, which helps to keep expenditure under close control right up to transfer. The government also appoints a project lead to work with the school, council and trust.

However, the process is murkier when a school transfers from another trust. If the trust handing over the school is then wound up, for example, the commercial transfer agreement between both trusts ceases.

A trust that is winding up also has no incentive to keep to agreed expenditure, and the quality of information it provides about HR, commercial contracts and financial balances "cannot be assumed to be 100 per cent accurate", one academy trust leader said.

Allan Hickie, chair of the accountancy firm UHY's national academy schools working group, said

greater due diligence would ensure the "financial position of the sponsored school is clear to avoid any hidden nasties coming out of the woodwork at a later date".

Frank Norris (pictured), chief executive of the Co-operative academies trust, said there were usually "no obstacles" as long as both parties supported the transfer, had trust in the process and used a clear due diligence framework. He said, however, that his own trust was able to rely on senior staff from the estate management team of its sponsor, the Co-operative Group.

"Having this level of expertise at hand is very useful, especially as some colleagues in education may not have travelled down this path before."

The trust also shared its own framework with other chains.

Academy bosses have now been urged to make sure that they get commercial warranties from chain trustees about any information provided and put in place audit arrangements that monitor financial transactions until the date of transfer.



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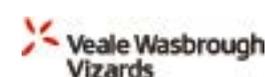
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NEWS

LET'S HAVE FEWER ASSISTANTS, MORE TEACHERS, SAYS RESEARCH

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

The diversity of ability within England's classrooms is contributing to high teacher workload and needs new strategies that may include streaming and fewer teaching assistants, a researcher has claimed.

Research into teacher workload published by the Education Policy Institute (EPI) on Monday found that secondary school teachers in England work 48.2 hours a week on average.

The analysis of the OECD's latest Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) found only two of the 36 developed countries surveyed reported longer hours.

The EPI report also found that teaching assistants (TAs) do not cut overall teacher workload, and that England has a higher range of academic ability and additional needs in its classrooms than other OECD countries, which may increase lesson planning time.

Peter Sellen, chief economist at the EPI, said teachers either needed better initial training in additional educational needs, or ministers should consider other schooling models.

"What you can't have is highly differentiated learning and not very much time to plan lessons. That combination can't work, but that's what we're at risk of having.

"It shows that diversity in the classroom and the need to spend more time planning does make it harder for workload, and that's partly why there's always been streaming in mainstream schools.

"And if your model is not to segregate children very much, that's fine, but then you need to realise that your teachers need more time to plan – and then you need more teachers."

Twenty-four per cent of teachers in OECD countries worked in schools with on average 10 per cent or more special educational needs (SEN) pupils, compared with 67 per cent of teachers in England.

Simon Knight, director of education at the National Education Trust and a former deputy head in a special school, said planning for different abilities "didn't come close" to the impact of written feedback on high teacher workloads.

"One of the things that would really support the workload issue is to have a little more flexibility in accountability. Diversity reflects the real world for children – and yet we want education to be delivered in a uniform way. It's not about low expectations, it is about flexibility."

Sellen said one solution would be to cut the number of TAs and employ more teachers.

"If there is a source of cash, it has to be our expenditure on teaching assistants. It's so unusual, internationally, that we spend so much. The number of teachers has not significantly gone up, while teaching assistants have rocketed."

But Jonathan Sharples, a senior researcher at the Education Endowment Foundation, said teachers reported lower stress levels when TAs were present.

FAST-TRACK ECDL SUCCESSES RISE 350%

JESS STAUFENBERG AND JOHN DICKENS

@SCHOOLSWEEK

Investigates

The number of pupils passing a controversial fast-track IT qualification has soared by nearly 350 per cent in just 12 months, prompting concerns that it is pushing "more rigorous" subjects out of the curriculum.

Ofqual data released last week revealed 117,200 level 2 European computer driving licence (ECDL) IT application skills certificates were issued from June 2015 to June 2016, up from 26,250 in the same period for the previous year.

It confirms a rapid rise in the number of schools teaching the qualification, which is the equivalent of a GCSE, and comes after claims that some schools entered pupils en masse to boost league table scores.

Peter Atherton, a college data manager and blogger, said the qualification's rise came at the expense of other GCSEs.

ECDL falls into bucket 3 of the new Attainment and Progress 8 accountability measures, meaning it has the same weight as GCSEs in subjects such as art and drama.

"The 'loser' qualifications come in the form of GCSEs that also are available for the open bucket, they cannot compete with the power of ECDL," Atherton said.

"The dilemmas schools face are thus: spend two years completing an approved GCSE in a non-Ebac subject or spend three days blitzing ECDL and achieving higher tariff results to boot."

The new Ofqual data shows ECDL was the vocational qualification last year with the most certificates and largest increase in pupil numbers. The document states this could be down to assurances the "qualification has recently been listed in performance tables for 2018".

Research by Education DataLab has previously revealed pupils taking the qualification score on average the equivalent of an A grade, despite achieving below a C on average across their other GCSEs.

In some cases, schools are double-entering pupils for the ECDL and GCSE ICT – both of which count towards their results.

Schools Week has seen evidence that one school entered 196 of its 228 cohort into both GCSE ICT and the ECDL last year. Each of the pupils that took the ECDL passed, while just 40 per cent passed in ICT.

The school only entered 110 pupils for the ECDL in 2015, and before that did not teach the qualification.

A spokesperson for the school, which *Schools Week* is not naming, said the academy had an "innovative and inclusive" curriculum. The ECDL was part of a "wide suite of qualifications, offered alongside statistics, computing, business studies and ICT".

But the ECDL's growing popularity could soon take a hit. Ofqual wrote to exam boards earlier this year to demand they justify the time – "guided learning hours" – needed to complete their qualifications. If the time was too short, the qualification would be cut



Peter Atherton

from performance league tables.

Education watchdog Ofsted also told inspectors in June to look out for schools entering pupils into qualifications to boost league-table standings, rather than in the pupils' best interest. A given example was "large numbers" of pupils entered for qualifications with overlapping subject content.

A Department for Education spokesperson said it would be "extremely disappointed to hear of any organisation encouraging schools to enter young people for courses just to 'game' the system.

"We have reformed the accountability system so only high-quality courses are counted. Our new Progress 8 measure must include core academic subjects such as English, maths, science and a foreign language."

Private schools spend three times more on each pupil

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Private schools are bumping up their fees while state school funding remains flat, widening the attainment gap between the state and independent sectors, academics have claimed.

Research published this week by the UCL Institute of Education, titled *The labour market benefits of private schooling*, has found that fees within the private sector have increased well above the rate of inflation (see graph).

Researchers said private schools had used some of the extra cash to modernise facilities – resulting in private school pupils having three times more spent on them than their state school counterparts.

Anna Vignoles, professor of education at the University of Cambridge and a co-author of the report, said: "We've been looking at adults whose private schooling happened two decades ago. But what we can see is that the resourcing levels within private schools have increased exponentially since then."

Her research found adults in their 40s who had been privately schooled on average earned 35 per cent more than those from the state sector.

"The advantage 20 years ago was big, and if resourcing is increasing we can expect that advantage to become greater too."

Previous research by Professor Francis Green of the UCL Institute of Education, who also contributed towards the new report, found private schools were investing more in their facilities.

According to his research, about £12,200 is spent annually on a privately schooled pupil in primary school, compared with £4,800 on a state primary school pupil.

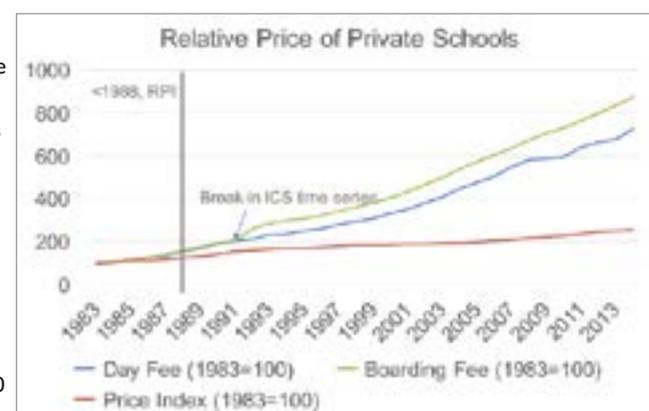
At secondary, £6,200 is spent on each state school pupil a year, while in a private school that figure is £15,000 for a day pupil, and £30,000 for a boarder.

Green said parental demand had led private schools to modernise their facilities to keep up with the competition, pushing up fees to a level that only the very wealthy could afford.

"Parents are prepared to pay these higher and higher fees. So schools compete with each other to provide better facilities – a state-of-the-art theatre or Olympic size pools."

Green also said the extra cash coming in to private schools allowed them to employ more teachers, meaning more time on developing pupils' "non-cognitive skills", such as confidence.

Vignoles said: "There is no evidence that



teachers in private schools are necessarily better. But the class sizes are two-thirds of what they are in a state school. Better teacher pupil-ratios are crucial."

A spokesperson for the Independent Schools Council, which represents more than 1,200 private schools, said citing money as the reason for higher educational outcomes was "over simplistic".

"Fees have increased but schools are very mindful of the struggles hard-working families can face in paying them.

"That said, pupil numbers continue to increase, both those paying full fees and those receiving fee assistance, often paying nothing at all. The more pupils who pay, including those from overseas, the more bursaries can be offered. This creates demonstrable social mobility."

NEWS

Capital funding delays force school to cut admissions

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

A school waiting for investment under the government's flagship building programme has been forced to reduce its pupil numbers after classrooms were deemed so unsafe they had to be demolished.

Great Barr School in Birmingham has been given permission by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) to reduce its published admission number from 422 to 350.

The school, which was built for a roll of 2,355, wrote to the regulator after nine of its classrooms were found to be in such poor condition they had to be knocked down.

Great Barr was one of 277 successful applicants under the second wave of the government's Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) in February last year. Two hundred and sixty schools were accepted in the first wave.

The school is suffering from serious budget constraints because of a lack of demand for pupil places and is also set to lose a deputy headteacher, the Schools Adjudicator's response showed.

"As a consequence of the declining roll, the school is experiencing financial difficulties which the governing body wishes to address by a number of means, including restructuring the staffing organisation, for example, by reducing the number of deputy headteachers from four to three."

Once building work is finished, the roll is expected to shoot up again to meet increasing local demand towards 2020, *Schools Week* has learned.



The OSA said the building repairs would not be completed until 2019.

Former education secretary Michael Gove (pictured) said the PSBP would allow school repairs to be completed more efficiently and faster than the old Building Schools for the Future programme, which he scrapped in 2010.

Hundreds of schools had been due for funding under the old programme.

But the £4.4 billion PSPB scheme is already heading for a £178.2 million overspend in its first phase, after a lack of interest from builders slowed progress.

A government report said issues within the construction industry had led to "delays against our internal delivery programmes, expenditure slipping backwards and an increase in the overall cost to deliver the [PSPB] programme".

Kaley Foran, a researcher specialising in school funding at education support company The Key, said: "Schools can find capital funding quite tight. Depending on the nature of the works that buildings require, the devolved formula capital

allocation may or may not cover the costs.

"Local authorities also have some capital funding available for their schools, but this is unlikely to extend to every capital project that needs attention. They will have to prioritise their spending in line with strategic priorities and need."

The OSA said much of Great Barr needed repair. Schools adjudicator Jill Pullen agreed with the Great Barr's assertion that, with the fall in pupil numbers, the factors constituted a "major change in circumstance" and agreed to reduce its pupil admission numbers for this year and 2017.

Pullen said the change for this year would allow the governing body to make savings by restructuring staff, without concern that a high number of in-year admissions would be needed. The change for 2017 would also allow the school to plan how to use its limited accommodation.

Emma Leaman, assistant director of education at Birmingham council, said after the new classrooms were built Great Barr planned to be back at full capacity with "pupil numbers set to rise".

A spokesperson at the Department for Education said: "The PSBP is transforming run-down buildings to state-of-the-art facilities, targeting funding at those school buildings in the worst condition.

"Under Building Schools for the Future, the most expensive schools cost in excess of £45 million and took three years for building work to begin. We have cut this to one year under PSBP and the average cost of rebuilding has dropped by a third, giving young people across the country the modern learning environment they need to unlock their potential."

PENSION REVIEW WILL LOOK AT FUNDING GAP

A review launched into academy pension deficits will recommend ways to address the enormous funding gap in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Schools Week revealed last week that poor investment returns on pensions for support staff have left many multi-academy trusts with deficits amounting to tens of millions of pounds.

Now accountancy company PricewaterhouseCoopers plans to speak to trust chiefs, teachers and unions before drawing up "five or six recommendations" that will be presented to the LGPS' advisory board members by March next year.

Jeff Houston, head of pensions at the Local Government Association, said the review would address questions over whether the government would underwrite pension liabilities if trusts collapsed or academies closed.

He said previous correspondence with Whitehall suggested any pledge was more of an "elastic guarantee" and that the review could push for ministers to offer a more "cast-iron" pledge.

Local authority-maintained schools were not included as councils had the capacity to raise taxes to meet shortfalls, while academies were reliant on central government cash.

The review was launched in August following government proposals announced in March to academise all schools.

CHANGE SUMMER-BORN RULES NOW, SAY CAMPAIGNERS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Campaigners want the government to decide now whether summer-born children should be allowed to enter reception at the age of five.

The Summer Born Children campaign says the debate over whether the dispensation should be allowed for pupils born between April and August "should have ended by now", but ministers say they need to gather extra information before changing the admissions code.

It has been more than a year since the government announced its plans to change the policy, but schools minister Nick Gibb told MPs on Monday that analysis of the potentially "high" cost of the change was based on limited information about why parents might defer a school place.

The campaigners, who claim the rules put summer-born pupils forced to start school shortly after their fourth birthday at a disadvantage, say the government's guidance creates a "postcode lottery" because some councils and schools

allows special dispensation.

Pauline Hull, the campaign's spokesperson, said: "The debate should have ended by now.

"The Department for Education has never been able to provide a single circumstance in which it would be in the best interests of a child to miss his or her essential reception year, and yet allows the postcode lottery to continue through its ambiguous and flawed code."

Gibb told parliament on Monday that he understood parents' "frustration" as they waited for the change, but said it was important to consider how to implement the policy and how such a change might affect the education system as a whole.

He said he wanted parents to have the necessary information to make "informed decisions" about their children's education, but he was keen to avoid any "unfair advantage" in the admissions system that would allow parents to apply twice to their preferred primary school.

A study by the government, released in 2014, revealed that two thirds of summer-born children failed to meet



Pauline Hull

minimum standards in reading, writing, speaking, maths and other developmental skills at the end of their first year in school.

Stephen Hammond, the MP for Wimbledon, told colleagues during the debate: "Children who are the youngest in the year are disproportionately likely to report bullying and lower levels of self-confidence, and their overall

satisfaction at school is significantly reduced.

"There has also been a higher incidence of diagnoses of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism among summer-born children."

Gibb claimed the government had "already made improvements to support summer-born children" by amending the admissions code in December 2014 to make it clear that all decisions must be made in a child's best interests and take into account the wishes of parents.

But he admitted that this rule was not always followed, with some children still forced to join their school in year 1, and said the government had started collecting more information from parents ahead of its final decision.

Hull claimed the reasons behind parents' decisions to defer school places was "irrelevant".

"Compulsory school age is compulsory school age, and the government should be focusing on making sure that children are not disadvantaged purely for starting school at the correct legal age – or penalised because their parents don't want them to start school early," she said.

NEWS: SCHOOLS WEEK OUT AND ABOUT

DON'T THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK, ALL-MALE PANEL TOLD

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Male education leaders have been encouraged to stop worrying about "saying the wrong thing" and to join a growing number of men promoting gender equality in the sector.

WomenEd, a campaign group set up to tackle the disproportionate number of women headteachers, hosted its first all-male panel at its second annual conference on Saturday.

The group wants more men to take up its call for gender equality in education, and is urging male leaders to sign up to become a #HeforShe advocate, a UN campaign for the advancement of women.

The four male heads on the WomenEd panel included Vic Goddard, who appeared in the TV show *Educating Essex*, and Jarlath O'Brien, who regularly writes for national newspapers on special schools.

But the men all admitted to being slightly nervous about saying the "wrong things" under the spotlight of a room full of women.

Chris Hildrew, head at Churchill academy and sixth form in Bath, said: "A lot of male leaders feel vulnerable when they reach out to the WomenEd community. I still feel nervous coming to events, and risking patronising or stereotyping women."

Goddard, head at Passmores Academy, Essex, said: "I'm more aware that sensitivities might be heightened in this environment than it might be somewhere else. But it's our own sensitivities of desperately trying to make sure we get it [what we say] right that puts extra pressure on ourselves."

Angie Brown, a head attending the event, said: "People feel so worried about saying the wrong thing."

"The exciting part where we can change things is in the moment when we all say the wrong thing and offend each other... then we can address our insecurities."

Government figures show that 74 per cent of staff in all state schools are female, yet only 65 per cent of heads are women.

However, figures released by the Future Leaders Trust found while 62 per cent of the workforce in secondary schools is female, just 36 per cent of secondary heads are women.

Hannah Wilson, a WomenEd founder and a specialist leader of education at the Harris Federation, said the rise of academy trust chief executives further exposed the gap.

While figures for executive heads and academy chief executives are not collated, Wilson said she knew of only 20 female trust chief executives.

"While there are more female heads, if we scratch the surface we find they have a man above them, and another one above him."

But she praised the work of #HeforShe advocates who were "trailblazing gender equality in the education system".

Delegates also heard how heads needed to do more on flexible working opportunities. "It's not about creating female-friendly environments, but creating environments that are family-friendly," Goddard said.

Delegates also heard that co-headship would help to retain female staff.

Jon Chaloner's expert view, page 15

Chief of trust under investigation attacks EFA

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The leader of an academy trust under investigation by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) has launched a scathing attack on the government's financial management.

Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski, chief executive of Bright Futures Educational Trust, told a Westminster Education Forum event in London on Monday that there was "not enough money in the system" and accused the government of trying to cover up information about its own spending.

Her comments follow a decision by the EFA to issue her trust with a financial notice to improve, citing the "weak financial position and financial management" of its seven schools, a university technical college and sixth-form college in the north west.

Ross-Wawrzynski said there needed to be a dialogue between the Department for Education (DfE) and the profession about finance, and warned that schools had been waiting for the new national funding formula "for far too long".

She claimed she had been told by the government not to respond to a freedom of information request from a member of the public asking how much the trust received from the EFA.

"We know that the amount of money in the system is not enough to meet the needs of the system.

"In my own MAT I spend £300,000 per year to have a team of psychologists work within my organisation. We pay that out of our top-

slice of 4 per cent. We really struggle. In one of our schools we have more than 100 child protection cases every month and we have to meet the needs of those children with those traumas.

"Where can I go and discuss that with the politicians to actually ensure that there is proper funding? How does a MAT manage when it has a lag in funding of £2 million? And yet the government can find time and money to develop UTCs where they're not needed and not wanted?"

Ross-Wawrzynski's trust currently runs Wigan UTC, which has had recruitment problems and has been criticised for paying its principal the equivalent of £1,000 per pupil.

Her worries about finance were backed up by David Atkinson, the headteacher of Dr Challoner's grammar school in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, who claimed funding for schools was being squeezed as the apprenticeship levy and pension commitments increased pressure on budgets.

He said the situation was leading him to be "economical with the truth" when speaking with parents as he needed to create "a sense of trust in my parent body that the education we provide is not particularly hampered by the financial constraints.

"I actually run the second worst-funded secondary school in the country at a per-pupil level so the pressures are significant."

Ross-Wawrzynski also questioned the transparency of the regional schools



Dame Dana Ross-Wawrzynski

commissioner system, claiming their introduction had been "rushed through" before the last general election.

"I understand why it was rushed," she said, "but nevertheless... I would put a very big question mark [over their quality]. And who holds government and those who appointed the regional commissioners [to account]?"

"The rest of us have to work under those particular regional commissioners. The mistakes that were made and the stress in the system is unacceptable and yet there is nobody, no one, that we can hold to account."

TEACHERS 'NOT PREPARED' FOR PUPILS' POOR MENTAL HEALTH

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Professionals outside education are "horrified" by the paltry training that teachers receive about mental illnesses in young people, claims a mental health charity.

Hannah Kinsey, training and consultancy manager at YoungMinds, told delegates at a Westminster Education Forum event in London on Tuesday how the scarcity "shocked" people.

"I recently did some work with the air cadets, for example, who were horrified to know that teachers get such little training about mental health. They couldn't believe it."

A survey of more than 2,000 young people aged between 11 and 24 by youth charity YMCA, released on Monday to coincide with Mental Health Day, revealed almost two thirds felt stigmatised in school about mental health issues.

Most disapproval came from friends, but 29 per cent of respondents said it also came from teachers.

However, 81 per cent of young people also said school was the best place to combat the problem.

Professor Sam Twiselton, director of Sheffield Hallam's institute of education and an author on the Carter review of initial



Sue Bailey

teacher training (ITT), said while training providers did cover mental health "in some form", there was "variability in its extent".

She also said mental health was included in the new framework of core content for ITT, published by the government last July.

But Dame Sue Bailey, chair of the children and young people's mental health coalition, said better training would help teachers to spot the early signs of mental ill-health in young people.

"Teachers need to not only know about mental health in children but to be able to respond compassionately to the rising problem, which they are currently not prepared for."

Tony Fenwick, chief executive of lesbian,

gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) campaign group Schools OUT, called for initial teacher training to include a mandatory module on mental health.

"Every police officer in the land has to have equality and diversity training before he or she officially joins the force, teachers do not. This needs to change."

Last year, a report by the government's children and young people's mental health and wellbeing taskforce also recommended teachers receive appropriate training as one in ten schoolchildren had a diagnosable mental illness.

Sarah Hannafin, policy adviser at the National Association of Head Teachers, said that teachers were in an "ideal position to identify warning signs".

David Weston, chief executive of the Teacher Development Trust and co-ordinator of Outteacher.org, a website for LGBT teachers, said that much initial teacher training already "tries to squeeze in too much".

He said that a pilot that extended training to two or three years was needed, which would allow issues around mental health and LGBT to be included.

"We also need more time and resource allocated for continuing professional development so that teachers are able to continue updating themselves about such issues throughout their careers."

See story on page 3



COMMENT

[@cathmurray_news](https://twitter.com/cathmurray_news) | catherine.murray@Schoolsweek.co.uk

Is race the elephant in the staffroom?

This week, Jon Chaloner writes a column for us about last weekend's WomenEd "unconference" (page 15). One keynote event featured men: the HeforShe panel. There were eight men at the conference in total – all invited guests – none had bought a ticket. Which is not that surprising, for a conference called WomenEd, right?

So of course, in this week's edition of Schools Week, we cover the conference by having men write about it. Slightly ironic?

But that's the whole point, WomenEd co-founder, Hannah Wilson told me. Male leaders – and as the stats in our story on page 8 show, they hold a disproportionate number of leadership positions in education – need to be in the frontline advocating for women. One way they can do this is by creating flexible working environments that open the door for women in leadership positions, she said. Co-headships were posited as one solution.

Post-panel, it seems, Twitter went crazy, with many male tweeters pledging to attend next year – even national schools commissioner Sir David Carter.

Total success, then.

Then I got chatting to Wilson. What were the other themes of the conference, I asked? Surely it can't have all been about men.

Well, one thing that stood out, she said, were the two sessions that nobody wanted to go to. One was cancelled. The theme? How to be an ally to LGBT teachers and students.

The second was on diversity. I got in touch with panellist Ndidie Okezie, who told me how she arrived in the room to be told not a single person had signed up. Zero people. So the panellists took the debate into the foyer.

So why don't women in education want to talk about race?

Okezie said participants identified both politeness and fear as barriers. Both certainly contribute to my own reticence. I'm "white" – as far as skin colour goes, I am part of the privileged majority, so I don't feel qualified.

I do talk about gender, though.

In my job, the proportion of unsolicited submissions I receive from women for our opinion section is vastly inferior to those from men.

To maintain a balance, I'm constantly telling people: "We aim for diversity of representation and

welcome submissions from women".

But I stop there. The rest of the sentence gets swallowed: "and black or minority ethnic people". I'm aware of it every time, lurking on my tongue. (Not to mention that "and LGBT people" is even harder to articulate – who's going to ask a school's press office to find out their staff's sexual orientation? More on this in future.)

As Anita Kerwin Nye reminds us (page 14), language is crucial and perhaps "we welcome diversity in all its forms" would be a better mantra.

But the question remains: do we oh-so-polite British feel talking about race is vulgar? As if suggesting I'd welcome a submission automatically implies that I'll publish any piece of writing simply for the sake of diversity.

And who wants to risk insinuating that someone's opinion has value because of the colour of their skin? Yet somehow, I manage to put aside my qualms when it comes to gender.

Funny thing is, men don't. The men on the HeforShe panel admitted something similar: they're scared to talk about women's issues in front of women, in case they say something wrong.

And perhaps white people are scared to talk about race in front of non-white people. Here's why I am: first, I don't want to pretend to own the debate. Second, I don't want to say the wrong thing. And third, I'm worried people will think I'm implying the colour of their skin is the most noteworthy thing about them.

So, safest to just keep quiet and wait for the BME person in the room to mention the R word, right?

Okezie laughed when I told her of my qualms. If I were to mention gender bias but fail to mention race, she told me, she would come away thinking the issue wasn't even on my radar.

WomenEd asked its members to make pledges to be "10 per cent braver". So my pledge is this: to mention the elephant in the room. Chances are, someone will be relieved that I did it first.



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- Supporting the day-to-day running and development of the organisation.

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The successful candidate will report directly to the Education Policy Institute's Chief Economist, Peter Sellen. To apply, please send a covering letter (no more than a side of A4) and CV to: **info@epi.org - by 28th October 2016.**

We aim to hold interviews in the week commencing the 7th November. For further information, contact Peter on 020 7340 1160 or 07870 46872

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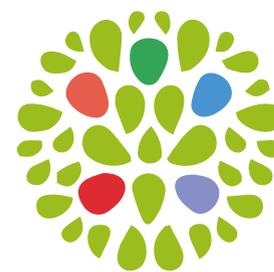
Visits to the academy are warmly welcomed; please contact Natasha Buswell, PA to the Principal on **0116 2858518** or email **admin@queensmeadacademy.org** to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

For application forms and further information, please visit our website: **http://www.greenwoodacademies.org/vacancy/11669/**
Alternatively, please call our Recruitment Line on **0115 748 3344**

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All applicants should have sound business acumen, problem solving abilities and strong passion and resilience.

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For further information and details of how to apply, please visit:

www.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

and return completed application forms with a covering letter to:

Kevin Martin, Human Resources Manager,

The Shared Learning Trust,

Wilbury Drive,

Dunstable,

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E-Mail: **academyrecruitment@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk**

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Academy CEOs could face local council 'scrutiny boards'

John Howson, Oxford

Oxfordshire education scrutiny committee has had two sessions with the regional school commissioner about his role. It has invited chief executives of multi-academy trusts to discuss issues such as recruitment challenges, and has had one session with the regional Ofsted inspector, but is finding it difficult to secure a return this year. The committee has now extended an invitation to the CEO of the Education Funding Agency. However, with local government funding cuts it would be difficult to fully handle the role suggested, especially with the cut of the education services grant funds for a local authority's role in school improvement.

Kent private schools ignore 11-plus tutoring ban

Janet Downs, Bourne

The 11-plus is not curriculum-based. The tests can comprise verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning, maths or English. Sample test papers are easily available on the web and tutors thrive on providing test preparation. Kent may be able to stop private schools preparing pupils by acting on their promise to deny 11-plus papers to schools who coach pupils, but it won't stop the practice because parents pay for private tuition. The only way to stop this is to phase out selection. That's unlikely to happen now we have a prime minister who's keen on extending segregation at 11.

Mark, address supplied

How can a council ban private schools preparing for the 11-plus? Much is curriculum-based so are schools supposed to stop teaching? What nonsense. Children can prepare themselves without tutors.

Chris Paterson, Durham

It's slightly ironic that private schools are talking down their own sector by promoting state schools as what parents should be aiming for.

Phonics check needs rethink after data shows 'something dodgy'

Debbie Hepplewhite, address supplied

There is another perspective for viewing the results of the year 1 phonics screening check in a much more positive and professional light than a picture of hard-edged "accountability".

It is that the results can inform teachers of the relative effectiveness of their phonics teaching, which gives them a steer in whether they need to look more closely at how they are teaching phonics.

Any teacher should surely want to know if all his or her phonics provision, which includes the children's phonics practice, is as effective as other teachers in like circumstances who perhaps might be doing something significantly "different".

Even if the borderline marks are looking somewhat suspicious, the national mark of 81 per cent indicates that there are still 19 per cent of children who may not be getting the right kind of phonics provision or even enough practice. There are more than 1,000 schools where nearly all the children are reaching or exceeding the 32 out of 40 benchmark and this number is growing year on year.

The greatest "diagnostic" benefit to be gained from the advent of the screening check is the look it provides us all in a responsible professional capacity. Foundational literacy is SO important, that it is a shame the check is not put forward in more positive terms.

The check is only a snapshot of children's technical decoding ability but it is simple and straightforward and invaluable for moving the country forwards.

Cadet club growth slow in schools one year after £50m grant

Emma Sangster, Forces Watch

Presumably the reason they are putting so much money and effort into this, and other schemes to promote "military ethos" in schools, is that school students are a captive audience, whereas those who choose to join a community-based cadet group are self-selecting. They are trying to influence a far wider constituency.

The mystery of the disappearing education secretary

REPLY OF THE WEEK

David Marriott, Wiltshire

Thanks for reporting this from the Conservative party conference – it's the kind of detail that never finds its way into mainstream newspapers. For me what it shows is that Greening is education secretary in name only. Nick Timothy is the actual driver of education policy. She must be fizzing with frustration.

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REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES
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PROFILE

LAURA MCINERNEY

@MISS_McINERNEY

Charlie Stripp, director, National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics

It isn't supposed to be like this. The plan had been to meet in a glorious Victorian hotel and have afternoon tea. Instead we are quaffing from paper cups in the corner of a Pret. Victorian hotels, it turns out, have a habit of closing for renovation.

Charlie Stripp seems unperturbed. He talks about maths for nearly two hours, stops for photos in the park, and then asks if I will join him – recording device still on – in the walk to the tube station so that he can tell me more about maths hubs, a national network of hubs led by an outstanding school or college to spread good practice.

If you hadn't guessed: he really, really likes maths.

As director of the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM), an organisation that hyperactively co-ordinates maths activities – such as implementation of the new maths mastery model in primary schools – it's a good thing that the 51-year-old likes the subject so much.

Stripp has taught the subject in secondaries, primaries and further education. In the latter, he specialised in "maths for the terrified", helping mature students with low confidence to rebuild their skills before taking degrees.

"The proportion of people who really don't understand maths at all is minute," he says, "I never accept the idea that a person doesn't understand it. You've just got a negative view about it."

He believes many people often say that they can't do maths because their family or a teacher has told them that they can't, or they believe that it is always about getting the right answer. "They think that if you make a mistake or get something wrong, you're stupid."

Not only does he believe that maths is "profoundly beautiful, even at a very low level", but also that everyone can get better at it if they are taught well.

Like the schools minister Nick Gibb, Stripp has been inspired by the way maths is taught in Shanghai. Initially sceptical, he took part in an exchange visit and was impressed. The sequencing of lessons was particularly useful – teaching children elements such as subtraction and addition at the same time, rather than separately – which helps to build understanding. He also found the whole-class approach refreshing compared with the sort of differentiated activities in English classrooms that are based on pupils' prior abilities.

He's also enthusiastic about specialist maths teachers for primary schools.

"We can't just suddenly switch that on here. But if I could flick a switch and say that every primary child be taught by a primary maths specialist for their maths, I would."

A decades-long recruitment problem makes it difficult to find enough specialists to fill positions in English secondary schools. Finding enough to cover primaries would be even tougher.

NCETM is therefore working with "maths hub" schools to train primary teachers to become maths specialists, with a view that they go on to teach others. Stripp has also been involved in the development of better textbooks.

Several multi-academy trusts also now have "virtual" maths classrooms in which children use online adaptive software that is carefully sequenced to maximise learning.

What is the probability that by 2026 all maths teaching will be delivered this way?

He looks sceptical. "I'd say 30 per cent. Part of what's in my calculation is the deep conservatism of the education system. Partly it's access to the equipment."

Beyond primary maths, he also has concerns about the reformed GCSE, which is not only more rigorous in

"TEACHERS SHOULD NOT BE ASHAMED THAT THEY LIKE MATHS"

content, but the level at which pupils must perform to get a "good pass" is being increased – meaning proportionally more children will "fail" the qualification this summer (an analysis by *Schools Week* suggests that about one in four pupils who currently pass their GCSE maths will "fail" under the new system).

Stripp is concerned this will lead to more people believing they are bad at maths. He is also concerned about the 250,000 students each year who do pass GCSE maths and yet still don't take it for A-level.

"Now, compare that with each of our global competitors. That's a disaster!"

He is currently working with groups on alternative qualifications for those who don't pass their GCSE first time, and to encourage those who don't feel moved to study for a full A-level.

His passion for maths is palpable, so it's a surprise to find that he only took the subject to reduce his university timetable. Originally studying physics at the University of Nottingham, his schedule involved hours of laboratory practicals and lectures. Swapping to mathematical physics gave him an out.

He also didn't choose maths teaching as his first profession. When he left university he moved to Cornwall and started to train as an accountant.

"I thought, 'Become a chartered accountant? That's great! I can be an upper middle-class person.'"

Living in Cornwall allowed him to continue rock-climbing, a passion that began at university and continues today.

Shortly after his move, however, he was involved in a bad motorbike accident.

"It was a no-fault accident, it was raining, I met a lorry on a left-hand bend and we had a head-on collision. I was off the bike and quite badly injured."

After getting back to work, he then suffered a bout of glandular fever.

"At that point, I had a conversation with my dad, who was very supportive, and I said, 'This isn't what I want to do with my life' and he said 'Stop now, because if you qualify, you'll never leave it.' So I stopped."

On a hunch that he might be a good teacher, he took a PGCE at Exeter, which led to a job at Colyton grammar school in east Devon. He then springboarded into a variety of teaching roles and, eventually, to the Mechanical Engineers Institute in 2000 after it gained funding to "essentially to save further maths in the state sector".

He succeeded. As the chancellor said in his party

CHARLI

conference speech last week, maths is now the most popular A-level in England and the numbers taking further maths continues to grow.

Stripp has been involved in changes to the curriculum throughout the period and is excited by some of the most recent innovations.

"In the new A-level, we have one unit that is examined on computer. That's new. There's things like working with large datasets that we really pushed for. We're also very keen on the idea of applications of maths, and trying to link with industry, and make sure that people see the relevance of the maths that they're learning."

Having worked with the government for much of the past 15 years, however, he doesn't believe it always holds the solutions. Instead he wants more on-the-ground solutions to come out of the maths hubs schools.

"The hubs are a vehicle for how school improvement can



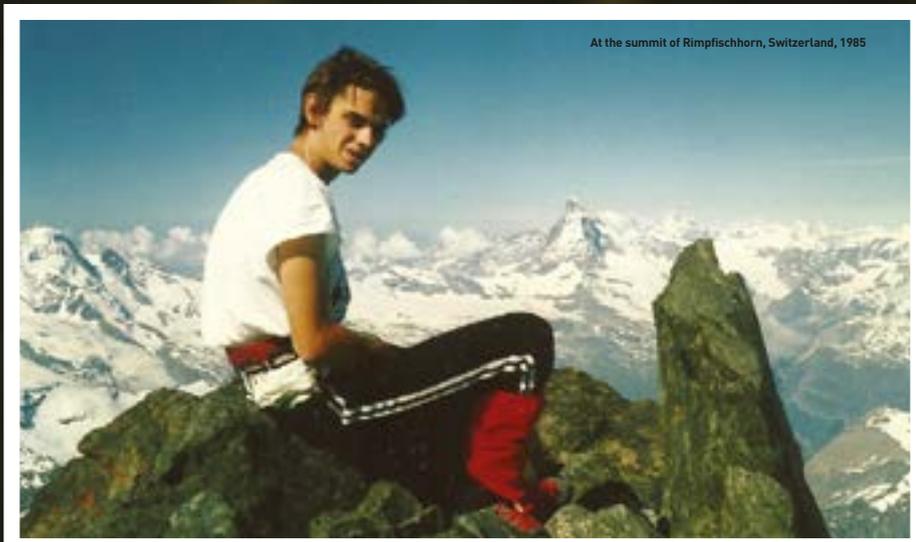
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happen. We don't have the same local authority system that we used to. We have to adapt to that now and use the hubs as a vehicle."

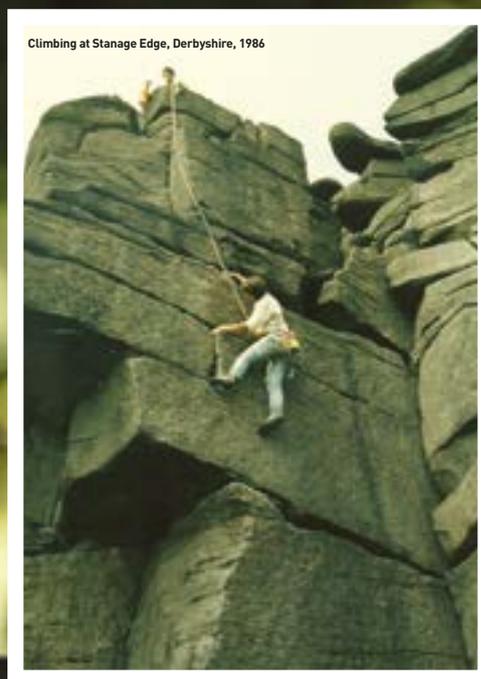
Most important, however, is a simple belief, by every teacher, that everyone can learn maths.

"It's wrong for maths teachers to be ashamed that they like maths. We're awfully shy about it. Don't be. Working at a grammar school meant that I had high expectations of pupils because they had been selected. I've retained that. I've always had this view that pupils can do well. I never look at someone, and say, 'Oh, that person's just no good at maths.'"

And, if you don't believe him, he will happily chase you all the way to a tube station to persuade you.



At the summit of Rimpfischhorn, Switzerland, 1985



Climbing at Stanage Edge, Derbyshire, 1986



The Grizzly race, Devon, 1999

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What's your favourite book?

Can I have more than one? For a mathsy book, I like *The Mathematical Experience* by Philip J. Davis and Reuben Hersh. It was recommended by my PGCE tutor who saw that I was more interested in maths than in teaching. I bought a copy, left it on the bus – and went straight out and bought another one. My other favourite is the *Master and Commander* series by Patrick O'Brian. They're about the swashbuckling adventures on sailing ships in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

If you could live in any historical period, when would you choose?

I'd like to say that it'd be great to live in the time of Galileo or Newton when all those fantastic mathematical discoveries were happening, but I'd have been a serf who wouldn't know where my next meal was coming from, so... I'm happy to live now.

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

I'd quite like to go to one of those big summit meetings, maybe some kind of cabinet meeting, to see how people really behave in those situations.

If you had to pick an animal to symbolise you, what would you pick?

What about an African hunting dog? They work well together, but they're also tenacious – and quite cute.

What did you have for breakfast?

I travel a lot between Devon and London, so this morning on the train I had one of those porridge things with cherry jam, a croissant and a cup of tea.

OPINION

ANNA VIGNOLES

Professor of education, University of Cambridge



FRANCIS GREEN

UCL Institute of Education



The social capital of a private education

Privately educated pupils earn more – but they also get better “quality” jobs. Why is that, ask Anna Vignoles and Francis Green

The role of private schooling has been controversial in England for many decades. Despite being a relatively small part of the school sector (about 7 per cent of pupils), private schools have an important symbolic role in UK society, with the perception that there is much social and economic advantage to be had from a private education.

Indeed, the Commission for Social Mobility in a report called *Elitist Britain*, puts forward some quite damning facts: 71 per cent of senior judges, 44 per cent of the *Sunday Times* Rich List, 43 per cent of newspaper columnists, 36 per cent of the cabinet and 33 per cent of MPs went to private schools.

We know that those who have attended a private school go on to have higher levels of qualifications and are more likely to go to one of the UK's more research-intensive universities (that is, those in the Russell group). Indeed, work with Claire Crawford and Lindsey Macmillan at Cambridge suggests that nearly 40 per cent of those who attended private school go on to study at Russell group universities, compared with only 10 per cent of the population as a whole. This in turn brings benefits in the job market and higher pay.

We need to consider the employers' role

In work with a colleague, Golo Henseke, we have investigated the real advantages associated with private schooling, not just in terms of pay but also better job quality. We also explored whether this advantage is purely because private schooling gives you a higher level of academic achievement or whether, in fact, private schooling provides advantages over and above any educational benefits it may bring.

We found that privately schooled adults have higher pay and do jobs that provide

greater levels of participation in decision-making and more leadership opportunities: better quality jobs in other words. Equally, they also do jobs that require more job effort, as measured by how hard someone says they work.

Much, but not all, of the private school advantage is of course due to the higher levels of education achieved by those in private schools. Nonetheless, those who went to a private school do earn more than those who went to a state school, even if both have very similar levels of educational achievement. The additional pay benefit from attending a private school is largely explained by the fact that those who went to private school get better jobs and work in higher paid sectors.

But what is it about private education that helps people to secure these high status jobs? There are many possible reasons: a better (resourced) education leading to higher academic achievement; stronger social networks; and more intangible things such as self-confidence, leadership skills and social skills. Certainly, educational achievement is a key driver and more thought needs to be given as to how we can improve access by poor students to high quality education, whether in the state or the private sector.

Successive governments have done much in the way of investment and policy to try to narrow the socio-economic gap in education achievement. We are still, however, a long way off ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds have similar educational opportunities. Although the private sector has different resourcing levels and admits very different kinds of students, we should not dismiss the notion that we can also learn from that sector in terms of improving the educational opportunities for those from less advantaged backgrounds.

The school system does not have all the answers, however. Labour market advantage comes from securing high quality jobs, and recruitment into those jobs is key. We need to consider the employers' role, their hiring practices and improve our understanding of the skills they seek, to ensure that the odds are not stacked against those who lack the “social capital” of those who attended private school.



ANITA KERWIN-NYE

Director, NotDeadFish

Inclusion supporters need a winning way with words

Choose the words you use in the battle against selection with care, says Anita Kerwin-Nye, as they can frame the entire debate

Lots of clever people are writing on inclusion.

Julian Astle of the RSA recently published a beautifully argued anti-grammars piece called *The RSA Enters the Grammar School Debate*. The argument is clear and has lots of lovely data. But take Peter Hitchens on the same subject, writing for Civitas in *The Ins and Outs of Selective Secondary Schools*. Just as clear. Just as clever. Both positions well described and ready to be torn down by their opponents.

This policy ping-pong dominates Twitter and education conferences.

But are those of us who stand for inclusion and against segregation winning the debate? Are we even debating with the right people? And while we are debating amongst ourselves, what is Theresa May offering the public?

Help.

Take some random 600-word segments of May's education speech and word-cloud them. “Help” is the word she says the most. Hope and support dominate.

The pro-grammar movement is winning with words. *Educational Excellence Everywhere* is so much stronger as a white paper title than *Schools that Enable All to Thrive and Flourish*, the Headteachers' Roundtable alternative (despite the latter's better ideas).

The *Schools that Work for Everyone* green paper sounds so much more positive than Labour's battle cry: Segregation Segregation Segregation. Don't get me wrong – the latter certainly resonates, but we don't need to convince the converted.

So how do we need to speak?

First, we need to stop suggesting this is binary. Grammars are an overt form of exclusion, but even if the legislation is defeated, a) they are still here and b) exclusion by other means is spreading across our schools. There is a political battle to win in parliament, but the battle for hearts and minds is what will stop exclusive practices on the ground.

And winning hearts and minds means adopting campaign tactics. So:

1. Keep it simple

There is a place for complex description and detailed figures – certainly necessary

in the world of policy and research. But this is not a fight that will be won speaking in a language that only a few can access.

2. Make it a broad debate

Be wary of a debate that is owned by the academic and the expert. Note this is not the same as Gove's (now infamous) quote that people have “had enough of experts”; rather that too many Twitter debates, discussions in the pub or debates at the school gates are shut down by “experts”. How do we reach the non “expert”? How do we listen to and understand those that don't share our views?

3. Open access

The Sun's famed reading age of 8 may be a myth (it's probably slightly higher) but there is a reason it is a paper of influence. It uses simple language and bold concepts to engage a wider audience.

The government's latest green paper – at a rough estimate – has a Gunning Fox-Index of 13-14. This is a readability measure – papers for wide access should be at an index of 12, papers for universal access at 8. So perhaps an early win would be to create accessible briefings to support non “expert” consultants.

4. Paint a strong positive picture

Polls tell us that many parents want grammars, that they value academic success.

So let's talk about academically excellent schools. Let's talk about Achievement High. A school where students go on to study at Russell group universities. And where there is no entrance exam. Anyone can go there. All the benefits Theresa May is offering, but no risk your child will be left at the gates. Achievement High has three times the average number of children with EHCP, 87 per cent of children receive pupil premium and they smash the progress that government expected of them. Aspiration and inclusion. Who wouldn't want to go there?

5. Bring in the buzzwords: alliterate, alliterate, alliterate

Let's challenge marketing firms to champion inclusive education. And if we need to use a bit of doublespeak – well, maybe we should take a leaf from the green paper. *Schools that Work for Everyone* signals an unarguable intent – even if it did fail to mention, even once, children with special needs and disabilities.

For the first time we have a woman prime minister, home secretary and education secretary in office at the same time. But that doesn't mean equality of opportunity for women in education is secure, says Jon Chaloner

Last year #WomenEd was created by a number of female leaders as a grassroots movement to connect existing and aspiring leaders in education. My awareness of the group has increased this year by working alongside a number of the group's founders through the Headteachers' Roundtable (HTRT).

Last Saturday I was invited to the second #WomenEd conference with three other male heads, as panellists for a Q&A session #HeforShe. This allowed me to look more deeply into the group's remit, as well as the international #HeforShe campaign. It is just over two years since actress Emma Watson addressed the United Nations at the launch of the campaign, which promotes "an innovative, inclusive approach that mobilises people of every gender identity and expression as advocates, and acknowledges the ways that we all benefit from this equality". Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau was last month appointed the campaign's champion for youth engagement.

Moving from the "outside" to the "inside" with the #WomedEd event last Saturday has enabled me to understand more clearly the group's desire for equality of opportunity.

I am not sure what I was expecting,



JON CHALONER

Chief executive, GLF Schools group

Making school leadership more accessible to women

but men were outnumbered 15 to 1. This reminded me a little of 2010 and my first week as executive headteacher of a local primary school. Male teachers are in a distinct minority in primary schools. Conversely, the number of male heads in the primary sector is significant. Why?

At #WomenEd I encountered no evidence of negativity towards men in leadership roles; just a desire for equality of opportunity. One question to the panel asked how male leaders can help to make change.

This is indeed the challenge. It is hard to put in words the tangible feeling of excitement and positivity in the building on Saturday. I left feeling energised, inspired and empowered to be a male voice championing women in education more visually and directly. My experience challenged me to examine what more I can do to help. But how

can we change the system from within? How can more male leaders lend their support?

How can every man be "10 per cent braver"?

Chris Hildrew led a session on his first year in headship and his approach to gender equality and women moving into leadership. He subsequently published a blog on the Staffrm website, in which he reflects on his privilege as a white, middle-class male: "My privilege gives me advantages," he writes. "When I speak, people listen. They always have. I expect them to. I've never known any different." He goes on to express concern that "voices like mine – confident, white, male – can unintentionally intimidate and silence others."

The question that follows is, as male leaders and heads, what we will do about it?

Job flexibility was a common theme at #WomenEd. For instance, is it right that

a part-time teacher with a teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) is expected to fulfil the whole role, yet is paid only a proportion of the TLR payment? Is it right that some heads – in the primary sector in particular – will not tolerate a class teacher job-share because "the parents won't like it"? Is it right that any part-time assistant head and deputy head roles are usually set up in this way in response to an existing colleague's request? Rarely is a senior post advertised externally to enable potential part-time applicants to apply. Historically, the education system is predicated upon full-time workers.

How can we change the system from within?

I am concerned that the #flatcash issues facing many schools will restrict the commitment of so many to provide more flexible approaches to women's ability to continue to contribute fully in schools whilst juggling other responsibilities.

To ensure our commitment to #HeforShe, together we must build a responsive system that enables talented women to remain in education and allows them to flourish as leaders.

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Our reviewer of the week is
Andrew Old, teacher and blogger
[@oldandrewuk](https://twitter.com/oldandrewuk)

Want to be a better teacher? Read something new every night

By Toby French

Toby French, aka Mr Histoire, writes that he has "just this moment realised that, due to my whack-a-mole reading habits, I read something new about history every night". He describes the effects this has on lessons – he used what he had read one evening about the failure of collectivisation in Ukraine in 1931 the next day, to help year 9 "see similarities in the autocratic rule of Stalin and Hitler". French analogises reading to expanding his palette: "with each new shade I can – apparently without realising it – paint a new detail that better illustrates the past". He tells teachers: "Read one thing new every night and share it the next day. Find an opportunity and actually say, 'So, I read last night that x, y, z – isn't that amazing?' It shows you're learning, but also that you care about your subject and the world. Colour in your subject."

Teaching for mastery, part 1

By Mark McCourt

Mark McCourt has written a fascinating discussion of mastery, which begins by looking at the work and findings of pioneers in the field, from Aristotle to Carleton Washburne, who took the only route out of penury he could find: "he reluctantly became a teacher". McCourt sets out the development of mastery learning, in theory and in practice, by unearthing such gems as Washburne's achievements in Winnetka, Illinois, and the less-well-known writing of Benjamin Bloom (of taxonomy fame). McCourt offers clear definitions of the key aspects of mastery learning: diagnostic pre-assessment and pre-teaching, high-quality group-based instruction, progress monitoring, corrective instruction, further formative assessment, and enrichment

and extension activities. He also explains how they fit together and even offers a diagrammatic summary. This is a long read, but McCourt promises another 14,000 words on the subject in future posts: it will be worth returning.

How proximity and trust are key factors in getting research to feed into policymaking

By Jo Maybin

Where do government departments get their evidence? Jo Maybin, who spent 18 months studying civil servants at the Department of Health, found that attempts to capture research knowledge and organisational memory "in a formal document-based knowledge management system seemed to have been largely ineffective: the civil servants wanted to talk to the person, and not to read the notes they had logged on the system intended to serve that purpose". They wanted to talk to researchers, but "time pressure, combined with the delicate process of alliance building that constitutes policymaking, meant that authority, proximity and trust were key implicit criteria when it came to selecting which individuals to speak to." The key feature individual researchers held was the knowledge of individual researchers (rather than research documents) "it was seen as up-to-date, candid, synthesised and editorialised. Conversations enabled the civil servants to 'drill down' into what they were most interested in, and to discover 'unknown unknowns'."

Practice doesn't make perfect

By Maria Konnikova

Anders Ericsson has a new book out: *Peak: Secrets from the new science of expertise*. Ericsson's work formed the basis of Malcolm Gladwell's claim of a "10,000-hour rule" to mastery; his main argument is that talent is overrated, and deliberate practice is the key to success. Maria Konnikova muddies the waters, beginning by discussing a wannabe golfer who practised every day, but was forced to confront an uncomfortable truth: "I just wasn't very good". Konnikova carefully sets out Ericsson's arguments, and the countervailing claims of Zach Hambrick, wannabe-golfer turned researcher. She establishes the limits of practice, and where it does make a difference. The zenith of blurring between nature and nurture comes with this quotation from Hambrick: "Practice is actually heritable. There have now been two reports of this – ours, and one using ten thousand twins. And practice is substantially heritable." Whatever you think about the relative value of practice and talent, I suspect this piece will offer something new.

Don't Send Him in Tomorrow

Author Jarlath O'Brien

Publisher Independent Thinking Press

ISBN-10 1781352534

ISBN-13 978-1781352533

Reviewer Jane Friswell, director of SEND consultancy, former chief executive Nasen



How resonant must be the title of Jarlath O'Brien's *Don't Send Him in Tomorrow* for the many parents of children and young people who gradually become invisible to our education system.

"Don't send him in tomorrow, or the next day and the day after that..." is probably closer to the experience of many parents whose children are excluded from accessing a high-quality education that meets their particular needs.

O'Brien's take is refreshingly personal and honest. *Don't Send Him in Tomorrow* presents a view of education determined by the confluence of national testing, increased accountability, diminishing resources and a lack of investment in teacher training and development. Bravo! for clearly articulating this.

The reader is introduced to many examples of the undermining of children's rights.

Sean's story highlights how seclusion permeates, leading to invisibility, which "suits society in the same way that we prefer the elderly, those with dementia, asylum-seekers or prisoners to be cared for, managed, kept away, locked up or just made to disappear".

O'Brien draws our attention to successful approaches within the special school sector in improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. He asks why we are not highlighting these impressive results and learning how we can replicate them to improve the quality of provision for all young people with SEND?

Education providers should focus on promoting and developing independence in children and young people to help them to access employment and training, to lead healthy and fulfilling lives and to enjoy friendships. O'Brien identifies that this is not the case for many mainstream schools. The stranglehold of policy that promotes academic competition as the only outcome for educational success is often the narrow response schools feel forced to offer. Mainstream schools actively encourage

children with SEND to look elsewhere, and parents report their children have been formally or informally excluded from school.

Being on the receiving end of an education system that fails to address the whole needs of your child can be a torment and a battle for many parents. O'Brien's reflective account of his early experience as a teacher and subsequent success as an enlightened headteacher and National Education Trust leading thinker does my heart good. I hear the voices of so many forgotten children clearly articulated, when he writes: "These children are in your classroom. They are in your school. Yet the way our education, and society more widely, is currently organised makes it very difficult for them to be seen, let alone thrive".

As a parent of a young man with additional needs and a former special school teacher, headteacher and chief executive of the National Association of Special Educational Needs, I found this book a depressingly honest litany of how little progress we have made in improving our educational system for the excluded and marginalised populations it is designed to serve. However, O'Brien does offer potential solutions.

Will this book succeed in stimulating change in the wake of the most significant legislative reforms to SEND which, two years down the line, are not delivering promised cultural and systemic change for families and young people with SEND? Perhaps, but I do believe it will stimulate the passion required about improving lives.

Don't Send Him in Tomorrow provides practical suggestions and solutions to address the many issues affecting those children who challenge us to think and educate differently. O'Brien invites us to come together to forge common perspectives, and consider carefully who is included or excluded, and the importance of our education system in significantly improving the life chances of the marginalised, disenfranchised and forgotten children who thankfully now have a louder voice. This is a must-read for every educator and especially special needs co-ordinators, heads, school governors, policymakers, civil servants and ministers.



Next week

The Art of Standing Out
By Andrew Morrish

Reviewed by Dawn Cox

Recent archival research at the school of education, University of Adelaide, and at UCL, Institute of Education, London reveals that the foundation of the UK College of Teachers (originally formed as the College of Preceptors 170 years ago) and its sister organisation in South Australia, set up in 1851, were both shrouded in controversy.

These controversies have a bearing on the present debate of the desirability of state financial aid for the planned Chartered College of Teaching and the role of government.

Both the London-based College of Preceptors and its Australian counterpart approached their respective politicians for material help. The South Australians were relentless in their demands for state support. The UK Preceptors, on the other hand, withdrew their pleas for funding in accordance with the wishes of their members.

Even if the English preceptors did want financial aid from the government, the only reward would have been partial sympathy and praise. The bottom line was that, irrespective of the preceptors' wishes, the state was unprepared to give any practical or financial help to the middle classes who were the consumers that the College of Preceptors served.

There are concerns the new College of Teaching is heading the same way as the failed General Teaching Council for England (GTCE). The latter became too reliant on financial support from

THE PAST WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER



LESSONS FROM OUR VICTORIAN MASTERS

RICHARD WILLIS

the government, which challenged its independence.

Yet considerable importance is now being placed on a Chartered College of Teaching. Some politicians, and particularly Charlotte Leslie, the Conservative MP initially charged with promoting the reform, are aware it must be a profession-led organisation and not controlled by government.

The GTCE was unsuccessful partly because it was regularly subsidised by

Labour and was often referred to as the government's "puppet". Membership of a new chartered college will be voluntary and many efforts are being made to promote teacher professionalism and higher standards. A chartered college would, many agree, therefore do well to stick to the principle of becoming autonomous and self-sufficient.

In defence of state aid, the argument is that any grant will only cover start-up costs. Such assurances may pacify the

fears of those who consider freedom from state superintendence essential for success. Had the early UK Preceptors successfully gained government help they would not have been free from state control and scrutiny. But, on the surface, it appears the new college can potentially make a distinct contribution to the teaching profession.

The leading concerns of teachers are less to do with professionalism and more tied to improvements in pay and conditions. The new college may do well to recognise a very significant lesson, first experienced by many private teachers in Victorian Britain and later by the GTCE, that funding from the state is not always the best way forward.

The South Australian preceptors were, by contrast, always in favour of government intervention. The overriding concern was to have a professional body of teachers warmly accepted and approved by teachers, irrespective of the role of government. Without the influence of members, the English preceptors' leaders would have taken the same line. Yet it has to be acknowledged that state control of teachers in England was expressly treated with much fear and derision.

It is interesting that this debate was rehearsed by our Victorian ancestors, only for teacher pressure groups to face similar issues again, as relevant today as they were in the mid-19th century.

Richard Williams is visiting research fellow at the school of education, University of Adelaide



A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

Who knows? Do you know?

FRIDAY:

While everyone's been busy shouting about parent governors, another element of the Educational Excellence Everywhere white paper quietly came into force today.

Guidance was updated explaining schools' new responsibility to upload information about their governors to EduBase, so the government can launch its new national governors' database.

Alongside the names and appointing bodies of all governors, the education department also plans to publish governors' appointment dates and when their office term is due to end.

But the information the government plans to collect and not publish is the stuff that will raise eyebrows. As well as governors' postcodes, dates of birth and previous names, schools also must provide a governor's nationality. Which isn't remotely controversial.

MONDAY:

The Tory education team may have been facing a full opposition team for the first time in a few months, but ministers were in good spirits as they took education questions in the Commons.

Emma Lewell-Buck, the new children and families shadow minister, became the butt of her opposite number Edward Timpson's joke as he poked fun at her decision to return to the frontbench following her resignation some months earlier when Jeremy Corbyn became leader.

"I know that she has had a number of epiphanies in the past few months, going from a remainer to a leaver to a returner, but I am pleased that she has taken up her present role, where I know she is a good fit," he said.

Meanwhile, opposition to the government's grammar schools plan continues to build in that famous bastion of radical insurgency: the Conservative party.

MP Heidi Allen is the latest Tory MP to express concerns about the proposals. She asked how grammar schools could "possibly

be a higher priority" than fixing the "flawed school funding model, and said she feared children might be "left behind" by the proposals

TUESDAY:

Sir Michael Wilshaw today highlighted seven of the country's "best" academy trusts, heaping praise on a rapidly expanding trust with a far from proven track record, despite past criticism of chains guilty of "empire building".

The chief inspector named REAch2 in a list of trusts that have avoided expanding too quickly. This is the REAch2 that will open more than a quarter of the 77 new free schools announced last month and that already runs more than 60 primaries.

Back in May, when *Schools Week* last checked, about two thirds of its schools were yet to be inspected.

The list also notably missed out chains commonly name-checked by ministers, such as the Harris Federation and the Outwood Grange trust. This seems surprising, given Harris has never had less than a good rating in its Ofsted, but we've

no further intel as to why this was the case. If you do: please call.

WEDNESDAY:

Regional schools commissioners are not "faceless", we learned. HURRAY.

MPs grilled three of the commissioners – who are really just very senior civil servants – during this week's multi-academy trust session at the education committee. The mischievous politicians couldn't resist repeating claims from Sir Michael Wilshaw that the commissioners were simply "faceless" government agents.

Reassuringly, the parliamentarians concluded that Wilshaw was wrong given that the RSCs in front of them did indeed have faces.

We also learned that academy CEOs will be leading the new academy trust health checks that will be used to decide whether or not trusts can expand. Bosses checking on bosses. Doesn't sound at all like there will be a ton of conflicts of interest, does it? Oh hang on...

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEETLIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS

School Bulletin *with Sam King*



Students practise at the new Saturday school



Students in front of Machu Picchu

Ormiston academy hits the right notes

Ormiston Bushfield academy in Peterborough is collaborating with the Guildhall School of Music and Drama to host a specialist Saturday music school.

The academy, part of the Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT), launched the collaboration as part of the organisation's aim to get all its 25,000 students involved in a range of cultural, outdoor and sporting opportunities.

The Peterborough Centre for Young Musicians aims to open up routes into music education, and will be available

to young people throughout the area. A bursary scheme will allow students from all backgrounds to attend.

Dennis Kirwan, principal at Ormiston Bushfield academy, said: "This is a wonderful way to help young people – whatever their background – use their curiosity and creativity to find new ways of achieving their potential and to have the confidence, drive and resilience to follow their dreams. We look forward to welcoming all the young musicians out there."

The Saturday school will run every week from 9am to 12.30pm.

Phone silence for a month in the Andes

Seven pupils from The Dukeries academy in Nottinghamshire recently spent a month in the Peruvian Andes.

Forming part of a team of 21 that included three teachers and a camp leader, the pupils aged between 16 and 17 worked to improve the local infrastructure to benefit disadvantaged residents.

The team – assisted by local professionals – installed clean water pipes, laid the foundations for a school dining hall and built stables to help protect animals from the harsh climate.

Students also embarked on one of

South America's toughest trails, the five-day Salkantay trek, which culminated in a climb up to ancient Incan citadel, Machu Picchu.

They stayed in tents and dormitories and ate a traditional Andean diet, which included alpaca. They also turned their mobile phones off during their stay to enhance their experience.

Dukeries pupil Jake Hall, said: "I thought the expedition was great. I made loads of new friends, visited some very interesting places and experienced a culture different to my own."

Crawlies creep into infant school playground

FEATURED

A Surrey primary school has had an outbreak of some rather unusual creepy crawlies in its playground.

The creatures, which include a caterpillar, dragonfly, bee and family of snails, are all intricate mosaics created by reception pupils at Folly Hill infant school, the smallest infant school in the Farnham area.

With the help of local artist Denise Jacques and a grant from the South Street Trust, which provides funding for educational arts activities, the creepy crawlies have now taken up residence around the school.

But more than creativity was involved, with maths playing a pivotal role in the mosaic-making.

The children were encouraged to count, estimate, make a sequence, use symmetry and sort colour, shape and size; as well as manage their time to complete their creatures.

Jacques, who is a mixed-media artist specialising in mosaics, has worked in art and education for more than 20 years and got involved with the school after being approached by teacher, Jane Norbury. "Jane had

visited my studio and previously attended one of my mosaic workshops. Together, we put in a bid for a grant from the South Street Trust."

The trust – run by Farnham town council – has an annual pot of £20,000 and awards about 25 grants a year. In the past it has helped to fund a clay exploration class for children aged 3 to 11 at the historic Farnham Pottery barn, and

has commissioned artists to work with children in local schools.

Jacques added: "Working with reception-aged children at Folly Hill was a wonderful experience. They were engaged and focused, while learning to work as part of a team and creating something

to be proud of."

The pieces are so impressive, that visitors to the school have asked whether they are up for sale.

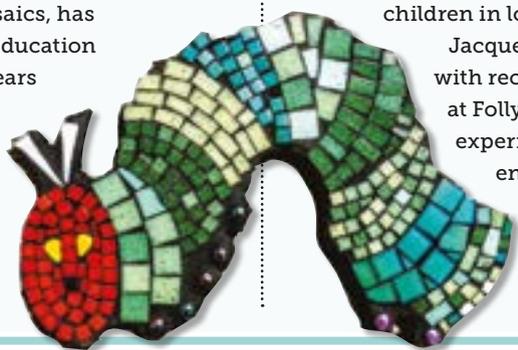
Headteacher Ali Stone, said: "The mosaics are in the playground, the nature area and at the entrance of the school, so you see them as you come in.

Parents have said that they're beautiful, and we've had visitors come in and say they'd like to have them for themselves.

"The children obviously had a lot of support. Denise was just amazing with the children."



Artist Denise Jacques with the mosaic-makers and their creations



MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Katie Scarnell has been appointed principal of Greensward academy in Essex, part of the Academies Enterprise Trust.

She takes over from Debbie Stokes, who retires after 32 years at the 11 to 18 school.

Scarnell plans to "tweak and sharpen up on processes" within the academy, and has already begun implementing strict uniform and good behaviour policies.

She says she intends to maintain a high profile to keep in contact with all stakeholders, and to ensure that everyone feels a sense of ownership.

"I want to take my time and do things in a proper, systematic way. There will be changes, but they will be at the right time and in the right way."

Despite her strict policies, Scarnell says she is keen for students to know that their views and opinions matter and so will spend break times in the playground talking to pupils, and discussing "what's going on in their world".

"The students here are great," she says. "I told them on day one I wanted their opinions on the school, on what they like and don't like, and what they would like to see improved."



Katie Scarnell

Thomas Lawson has been appointed headmaster of Eastbourne college, a co-educational independent school for 11 to 18-year-olds that has appeared the magazine *Tatler's* list of top public schools.

Lawson joins from Christ's Hospital in Sussex, where he has been deputy head since 2013.

He graduated from the University of Oxford in 1997 where he read philosophy, politics and economics.

He says that he plans to continue to



Thomas Lawson

"provide a broad and distinct education to pupils while maintaining Eastbourne's ethos and its commitment to serve the wider community".

He began his career as an economics and humanities teacher at Winchester College, a role he held for 15 years. He was also a housemaster and under master at the college.



Luke Baker

Luke Baker is the new principal of Pool Hayes academy in Willenhall, west Midlands.

The academy is part of the Academy Transformation Trust, which has 22 schools across the Midlands, east, and south east of England.

The former vice-principal at the academy, Baker replaces Matt Allman, who is stepping down from because of family commitments.

"Our results have significantly improved over the past two years, and with a continued drive for success

and the development of strong relationships across the academy, we aim to make even more progress towards our goal," Baker says.

Under his leadership, he has aspirations for the academy to achieve an "outstanding" Ofsted rating and has plans to maintain strong relationships across the academy to make the school an "outstanding local choice".

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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.