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**SHOULD TOP
UNIVERSITIES
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2017 | EDITION 114



**"WE CANNOT
IGNORE EXCLUDED
CHILDREN"**

GREENING INTERVIEW

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Exclusive

Academy boss and Tory donor is new DfE minister



- Chair of Inspiration Trust will be made a Lord so he can oversee academies
- Government promises Agnew is 'stepping away' from all conflicting interests

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

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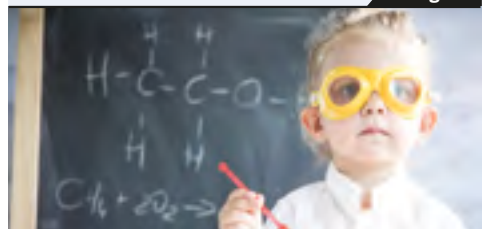
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Rural schools worry over trainee free-for-all

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NEWS: INTERVIEW

Greening: Teaching apprenticeships are 'parity of esteem'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

Teaching will cease to exist as a university graduate-only profession under Conservative plans for a new degree-equivalent apprenticeship route to QTS, Justine Greening has confirmed, in a major shift in ministerial thinking.

The education secretary wants higher apprenticeships to be seen as equivalent to university degrees, and envisages them working as a route into teaching, even for those who have never set foot in a higher education institution.

In an interview with Schools Week ahead of the Conservative Party conference in Manchester, Greening discussed the plans for the first time.

She claimed teaching would remain a "principally graduate profession", but that she wanted a technical route to exist too.

For her, this is as much about parity of esteem for vocational education as it is about teacher training. She wants a higher level of technical study to be available to learners in most careers, and teaching is no exception.

"A lot of people increasingly want to be able to combine going into the workplace and pursuing a career with also studying," she said.

"I think there are lots of reasons why technical education has not been at the level that we have wanted for our country. One of them is that people who want to see their education through to a high level haven't really seen that ladder in technical education, and that's why we're try to do is start to build it up, right to a degree apprenticeship level."

Greening's comments will likely set her at odds with teaching unions.

A recent poll of over 750 teachers by Teacher Tapp found 82 per cent of teachers believed the profession should remain "graduate only".

Questions hang over non-university routes

The jury is also still out on teaching apprenticeships, with outstanding questions about the quality of training, and pay and conditions. The minimum salary for apprentices in their first year of training is £3.50 per hour, which be a substantial cost-saving for cash-strapped schools and a serious undercut of current salaries. Will schools be able to keep staff on the minimum or unqualified teacher salaries for all their years of training, for example? Will the one day of off-the-job training every week that apprenticeships currently require be enough to create brilliant teachers?

There are also questions about how these apprenticeships will be accredited. If they are run by universities and have the same content as a BA in education, will teachers inundate the apprenticeship route to avoid exorbitant tuition fees, leaving university departments threadbare or facing closure?

These are not questions Greening can answer at this stage. She doesn't want to pre-empt a future announcement on reforms



to strengthen QTS by going into too much detail. But her position is clear: teaching will no longer be the sole preserve of university graduates.

"I think we've tried to make sure that teaching is a profession that actually can have a really broad group of people able to go into it, and that's why we've looked at how a teaching apprenticeship might work, bringing that sort of thinking to it," she said.

"I've been quite clear in my mind that I do think we need to make sure that the profession is highly regarded and is seen as a high-status profession."

Her views on teacher training, though important, are unlikely to be at the top of the agenda for her conference speech on Sunday. Reforms to QTS, first promised in the last government's now-defunct education white paper, are still a work in progress.

A focus on alternative provision

Greening's current preoccupation is with social mobility, not the technicalities of the school system.

One of her first priorities this year is finding a solution to the patchy quality of alternative provision, an issue Schools Week has highlighted in a recent series of hard-hitting investigations. She hints that more will be revealed on this at the Manchester conference over the weekend.

"Children who end up in alternative provision, in some cases get an amazing amount of attention and success in helping them get on track, but in other cases don't at all," she admits. "I don't think we can ignore

“
I think we've tried to make sure that teaching is a profession that actually can have a really broad group of people able to go into it

the varying outcomes for children who end up in alternative provision."

Greening says she wants to bring forward proposals to lift the standards of alternative provision. In designing these proposals, the government will learn from existing best practice.

She is not the first politician in her position to announce such a move, but given the mounting pressure to improve pupil referral units, her pledge is particularly timely. The education select committee, chaired by the former skills minister Robert Halfon, is to investigate the matter this term, so Greening needs to act fast.

She feels "very strongly" that alternative provision needs to improve: "Those children get one shot at their education, and it's got to be an outstanding one."

In the short term, though, her ambition is to see a good school place on offer for every child. She seems relatively unfazed by ongoing issues with the academies programme, but she is keen to ensure that

multi-academy trusts are not allowed to expand beyond their capacity in future.

Does Greening envisage a repeat of the situation with the Wakefield City Academy Trust, which has just had to hand back 21 of its schools? She is unmoved; schools face challenges "for a variety of reasons", she says, insisting that "as ever in life, there's never one single policy that solves every single issue".

"I think there can be a tendency perhaps for people to see school improvement as a single journey. So a school will go from being not good enough to suddenly better, and somehow then everything is fine.

"Actually, there's more that needs to be done to help schools sustain that, and all schools in the end need to be looking at school improvement. We need to look rigorously at the capacity of MATs to deliver the existing portfolio of schools that they look after, as well as their ability to expand."

But what if they don't have that capacity? "They certainly won't be expanding."

NEWS

Agnew appointed new academies minister

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The prominent Conservative donor who founded the Inspiration Trust academy chain has replaced Lord Nash as the government's academies minister.

Sir Theodore Agnew will be granted a lifelong place in the House of Lords in order to take over as the government's education lead, and preside over academies policy at the Department for Education.

The businessman, who made his money through the insurance and outsourcing, donated more than £130,000 to the Tories between 2006 and 2009, and served as a non-executive director at the DfE from 2010 to 2015.

The DfE said Agnew would be "stepping away" from "all relevant business interests" while he serves as a minister.

He is also in the process of agreeing arrangements to "prevent any conflict of interest between his ministerial role and his charitable interests".

A spokesperson for Inspiration Trust said he would now stand down as chair but praised his "massive contribution" to improving education in Norfolk and Suffolk, where its schools operate.

Justine Greening, the education secretary, thanked Nash for his "dedication and passion" as a minister, and said Agnew's government and

education experiences mean he is "ideally placed" to create a school system "that gives every child the chance to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background".

His appointment has not been universally welcomed, however. Kevin Courtney, from the National Education Union, warned that Agnew would be "dogged by the same issues as his predecessor", especially on academies – including financial scandals and the "collapse of a previously celebrated academy chain".

Courtney also pointed to the "unaccountable bureaucracy of regional schools commissioners erected under Nash".

When Agnew headed the DfE's academies board, between 2013 and 2015, he oversaw the work of the regional schools commissioners, including

Tim Coulson, who had at the same time oversight over Agnew's own academy chain.

Coulson, now chief executive of the Samuel Ward Academy Trust, has recently been appointed as chair of governors at the Great Yarmouth Charter Academy, which is now run by Inspiration Trust.

In 2014, Agnew also joined the Future Academies trust, founded and chaired by Lord Nash, as a non-executive director.

But the two-month appointment was short-lived. One week after it was revealed by Schools Week, Agnew resigned.



Who is Theo Agnew?

Born in Norfolk in 1961, Agnew worked on farms in Australia and Canada before returning to the UK in the late 1980s.

He founded Town & Country Assistance, an insurance claims management firm, in 1989. At the firm, he pioneered the outsourcing of jobs to India, and this inspired an interest in education reform.

He told the Eastern Daily Press in 2013 that he had been frustrated with the level of numeracy and literacy skills among his employees in England.

Selling his company in 2002, Agnew went on to cofound WNS Global Services, an outsourcing company.

Agnew set up the East Norfolk Academy Trust in August 2012. It became the Inspiration Trust the following year, and has since grown substantially, now running 14 schools in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Over the years, he has given large amounts of money to the trust and its schools.

In 2016, the Inspiration Trust received £137,500 from Publish Interest Foundation, a grant-making charity connected to Agnew. Agnew also donated £40,000 from his personal funds in 2015.

Agnew is well connected in Westminster, having served on the boards of several key think-tanks.

He was a trustee at Policy Exchange, a right-wing think-tank founded by former education secretary Michael Gove.

He also served on the board of the Centre Forum think-tank, and remains a trustee of its successor, the Education Policy Institute.

PEARSON MERGES TEXTBOOKS AND EXAMS DEPARTMENTS

Education firm Pearson has merged its schools publishing and UK exams arms, but insists it has "robust firewalls" to prevent staff developing tests from also writing textbooks. Pearson's UK schools learning team, which decides the content of its textbooks, has been merged with the Edexcel exam board.

However, it has insisted it will continue to comply with strict rules surrounding endorsements of textbooks by exam boards.

In 2011, the relationship between exam boards and textbook publishers came to light after an undercover investigation by the Daily Telegraph found evidence that representatives of some exam boards were directly involved in marketing books published by "partner" companies.

According to the investigation, Edexcel recommended Pearson's books to its customers as a source of support for its tests.

Ofqual, the exams regulator, toughened its stance on such endorsements in 2014, telling boards to ensure they did not undermine qualification standards or disadvantage pupils. However, the regulator stopped short of banning exam boards from endorsing textbooks altogether.

The Pearson merger means the same part of its business will be responsible for producing textbooks and writing exam questions, but its spokesperson said different personnel would work on each project, and would not have access to each other's work.

"We are doing this to enable more cost effective support for schools," he said. "But individuals developing question papers will not in any way be involved in writing textbooks and nor will our authors or publishing teams have any access to question paper development work, at any time."

Ofsted to inspect more 'outstanding' schools

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Ofsted is bringing back its "state-of-the-nation" reports and will inspect more outstanding rated schools, according to a new corporate strategy released on its 25th anniversary.

In its new five-year corporate strategy that will run until 2022, the inspectorate says it will publish more "national survey reports and research" that "aggregate the insights from inspections".

These will show "what 'good' providers are doing to lead to positive outcomes". Schools Week understands these could even focus on a particular subject or a sector such as special educational needs.

Geoff Barton (pictured), the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, welcomed the return of national subject reports, which he said had been "very helpful" when he was a head of English.

"The knowledge that inspection builds up will be fed back into the system," he said, rather than "wasted".

To generate these reports, Ofsted intends to inspect a greater proportion of 'outstanding' schools to bring best practice to light.

This will mean fewer inspections can be carried out elsewhere, so the interval between inspecting 'good' providers "may, within legislative limits, lengthen", the report concedes.

Barton said the change was "sensible" since many 'outstanding' providers were sometimes uninspected for years.

"It also shows a positive outlook from Ofsted," he added. "This is great practice, let's share it."

Ofsted will also be looking beyond published data to "explore how results have been achieved" in its inspections, building on warnings from its boss Amanda Spielman to schools trying to game league tables.

Parents will also be considered more carefully in reports, and inspectors will draw more on "digital expertise" to hear their views – hinting at a refresh of the Parent View system.

Back in March, Schools Week reported that Ofsted was also considering monitoring social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter to help uncover schools in need of a second visit.

At the time, unions warned against using "unsubstantiated gossip", a talking point Barton reiterated; a more detailed parent survey would instead be better, he said.

In November, Ofsted will also hold a seminar to consider how inspectors should best observe lessons.

The watchdog stopped grading lessons observers in 2014 after a furore over reliability. This new, international seminar would focus on "the validity of lesson observation" as a way of "informing future practice", the report said.

The document is a far cry from Ofsted's

first published strategy when it was founded in 1992, which was almost 20 pages shorter, at just two pages long.

In it, the brand new inspectorate announced five aims: to establish an effective system for inspecting schools; to advise the secretary of state; to report on "particular issues" within schools; to create a national debate on standards; and to ensure the commitment of all Ofsted staff.

The first chief inspector, Professor Stewart Sunderland, said at the time that he was "aware of the responsibilities" of trying to implement the new inspectorate.

Speaking about Ofsted's most recent strategy, the current chief inspector claimed the inspectorate's "bird's-eye view" was one of its greatest strengths, and that it would do "more to aggregate insights from individual inspections".



NEWS: What happened at Labour conference?

Rayner: Labour will pay teachers 'properly'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Labour will pay teachers "properly" if elected to power, according to the shadow education secretary.

Following the government's focus on traditional subjects, Angela Rayner also said she wanted all people to access a rich curriculum, insisting that knowledge "belongs to the many, not the few".

However, she did not outline any significant new schools policies or spending in an impassioned speech which was met with a standing ovation at the Labour Party conference this afternoon.

Instead Rayner reasserted pledges Labour had either made during the election or has since announced.

The only new proposal was a charter setting out the principles behind Labour's flagship National Education Service, in a speech that focused on school funding, further education and the early years.

The shadow education secretary barely touched on grammar schools, despite hinting on Sunday she would announce new reforms, when she told a fringe event that she wanted to "change" the way selective education systems worked, and that she hoped to set out in her speech how she could instead create a "system that works for everybody".

Instead, she promised the party would lift

the public sector pay cap, giving all teachers and support staff a pay rise. She also vowed to improve working conditions for teaching assistants and school support staff.

"Learning needs teaching," she said.

"Teachers would be at the heart of the National Education Service. And we will pay them properly to do it. That is why we will bring an end to the public sector pay cap, [for] teaching assistants and support staff too. Many have lost so much that they are on the minimum wage. We will bring back national standards for them too. They look after our children, we should look after them."

She also pledged to make schools safer in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Part of the £13 billion pledged by Labour to fund improvements to the existing school estate would help protect schools from similar incidents, she said.

"Instead of wasting millions of pounds on an inefficient free schools programme, we will provide funding to ensure our schools are safe – that flammable cladding can be removed, sprinklers installed and asbestos cleared," she declared.

Rayner also discussed "period poverty", which she said would be tackled with a £10 million transfer from the free schools budget to pay for free sanitary products for school pupils.

The speech received plaudits from school leaders despite the lack of major new



Angela Rayner

announcements, though a promise to spend £500 million reversing cuts to Sure Start children's centres was broadly welcomed.

The additional cash plans for schools mentioned in the speech hark back to the party's general election manifesto, while the period poverty policy and pay cap have both been promised before.

Kevin Courtney, the joint leader of the National Education Union, called

the speech "inspirational", while Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the NAHT, said Rayner had set out a "completely different proposition on education" to the Conservatives.

"The most acute problem facing schools is lack of money," he said. "The vision has to begin with full and fair funding for all schools, so it is welcome to hear this promise from Labour."

Labour will bring PFI contracts back in house

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Labour claims it would return existing PFI contracts to government control, though the complexity of school deals is a major barrier.

Speaking at the party's annual conference in Brighton on Monday, John McDonnell (pictured) said that, if elected, he would put an end to the "scandal" of public sector organisations paying out billions of pounds in PFI debt.

PFI, or private finance initiatives, were used to pay for significant redevelopment of the school estate in the late 1990s and 2000s. New schools were built and paid for by private companies and then leased back to the government, with interest, over long periods.

English schools currently owe private firms around £22 billion for 168 PFI projects.

But there are complex issues around who owns the debt which, in some cases were sold on to other firms, and whether Labour could actually implement its new policy.

A major investigation by *Schools Week* last year found that private firms had posted profits totalling tens of millions of pounds from selling on their stake in PFI contracts.

Building firms use a process known as "flipping" to sell the value of their equity in PFI projects to other companies.

Schools Week discovered that at least



PA/WIRE

70 school PFI projects have been flipped since July 2012. Of those projects, 40 were acquired by offshore infrastructure funds, including in tax havens such as Jersey, Guernsey and Luxembourg.

The investigation also revealed that every state school in England would have to pay more than £1 million each to clear the debt owed under school PFI contracts.

Under Labour's plan, the government would have to fully compensate the owners of the debt for revoking their contracts early or risk being taken to court.

Sources familiar with the process say this approach could also risk alienating investors, harming the ability of a future Labour government to borrow more money.

The estimated outstanding amount of £22 billion is equivalent to two thirds of the entire annual education budget.

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NEWS

TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP INNOVATION FUND - WHO WON?

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4 **Investigates**

The first six organisations to receive their share of a £75 million teaching fund have been named, almost two months after a leaked list of the winners appeared online.

Schools Week looks at what's in store for the first winners, and speaks to two organisations featured on the leaked list but missing from the Department for Education's new list.

The Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund was launched by Justine Greening in October 2016 in order to pay for the professional development of teachers and school leaders in areas identified as social mobility coldspots. These 12 regions, now labelled "opportunity areas", include Blackpool, Derby, Norwich and Oldham.

Before the government announced the first winners, a list of successful bidders was posted online by education blogger Graham Brown-Martin, who accused the government of favouring its policy supporters with cash rewards.

The six successful organisations now officially unveiled by the DfE are:

- **Ruth Miskin Training**
- **the Teacher Development Trust**
- **STEM Learning Ltd**
- **Teach First**
- **The Institute for Teaching**
- **The Institute for Physics**

The winners will receive a total of £17 million between them, though there are further announcements to come on the remaining funds. A second round of funding is expected to be held this autumn.

Two firms were named on the leaked list back in July, but have not been mentioned by the DfE. These are the education consultancy Edison Learning, and Anvil Education, a company owned by the former teacher and government behaviour tsar Tom Bennett. *Schools Week* understands that both bodies are still in negotiations with the DfE.

Greening said the funds are to help young people "reach their potential" by improving teacher professional development.

What will the groups do with the money?

Ruth Miskin Training

Ruth Miskin Training is offering a two-year cycle of professional development in phonics and early reading, with two-day training for headteachers and reading leaders in eligible schools.

The project will include whole-school training and 16 in-school support days.



Matt Hood



"We are using the funding to deliver our training (leadership, phonics and early reading) in Ofsted 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' schools in opportunity areas or other priority areas," said a spokesperson.

Miskin herself has advised the government numerous times on curriculum, and the schools minister Nick Gibb has namechecked her as an inspiration on many occasions.

Previously, Read, Write Inc, a series of resources produced by her, received over £4 million of government. Ruth Miskin Literacy Limited, of which she is director, also received over £500,000 from the DfE to provide teacher training.

Teacher Development Trust

The Teacher Development Trust will identify schools to act as excellence hubs for Continuing Professional Development in Blackpool, Northumberland, Sheffield, Stoke and West Sussex, to improve the way schools design, commission and implement training for teachers.

David Weston, TDT's chief executive, said: "There will be members of senior leadership who will be our CPD excellence insiders, who will work with around eight local schools in the most disadvantaged areas, which are currently given an Ofsted rating of 'requires



David Weston

improvement' or 'inadequate,'" he said.

"We'll be supporting those schools to change and improve the way that they are developing staff."

Initiatives will include personalised guidance and fortnightly coaching for senior leaders, as well as half-termly local forums for schools to come together and share good practice.

David Weston formerly advised the government on teacher development, and has led an expert group in the subject.

STEM Learning

STEM Learning will deliver a scheme called 'Aspire to STEM', which aims to provide support for science, technology, engineering and maths.

The project will support over 200 schools across primary and secondary level, and reach around 880 teachers over two years.

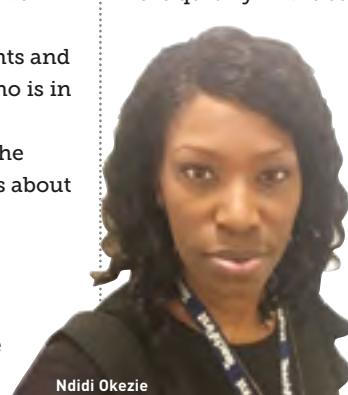
It wants to aid senior leaders' understanding of the STEM curriculum to ensure they can make the best decisions for the departments in their schools.

"It's about enthusing students to follow STEM pathways but also to educate teachers about the latest developments and opportunities," said Wayne Jarvis, who is in charge.

The project will also extend into the wider community to inform parents about local STEM careers.

Teach First

Education charity Teach First will be delivering a new



Ndidi Okezie

two-year programme with its share of the funding, called 'Leading Together'.

Launching in Spring 2018, the scheme will focus on the development of leadership teams, using a "research informed approach" and the organisation's "strong network of partners".

Ndidi Okezie, the body's executive director, said the programme would "be focused on supporting schools to build and sustain strong, empowered and effective leadership teams", with the aim of having "a positive impact on the achievement of teachers and their pupils".

Teach First already receives substantial funding for its initial teacher training programme. Its settlement in 2013 was worth £33 million.

The Institute for Teaching

The Institute for Teaching, a partnership involving the Ark, Dixons and Oasis academy trusts, wants to help teachers earn a master's qualification in expert teaching, in order to tackle the retention crisis which sees around a third leave the profession within five years of starting.

Its new 'Transforming Teaching Programme' will focus on supporting school leaders to improve their expertise in developing other teachers.

"We believe the best way to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their wealthier peers is by improving teaching through better teacher training," said Matt Hood, the IfT's director.

Hood is an active campaigner for the Labour Party and has flagged opposition to government policy in columns written for *Schools Week*.

The Institute for Physics

The Institute of Physics will provide extra physics subject knowledge for science teachers who specialise in biology or chemistry, as well as leadership training for physics specialists and mentoring for newly-qualified science teachers.

"There are schools in areas of England where the chance of pupils taking physics beyond the age of 16 is very low," said Charles Tracy, the institute's head of education.

"The hope is that we can encourage physics specialist teachers in these schools to stay in the regions, alongside recruiting and supporting new physics teachers."

The institute is developing a physics-only timetable, which would allow new teachers who want to focus on physics to develop more quickly in the subject.

Primary science tests show decline

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4 **Exclusive**

Less than one in four primary pupils reached the expected standard in science last year, according to figures buried in a data release at the end of the last academic year.

In July, the Standards and Testing Agency released the key stage 2 science sampling results for 2016, which showed that just 23 per cent of 11-year-olds were performing sufficiently well in science. This was down from 28 per cent in 2014.

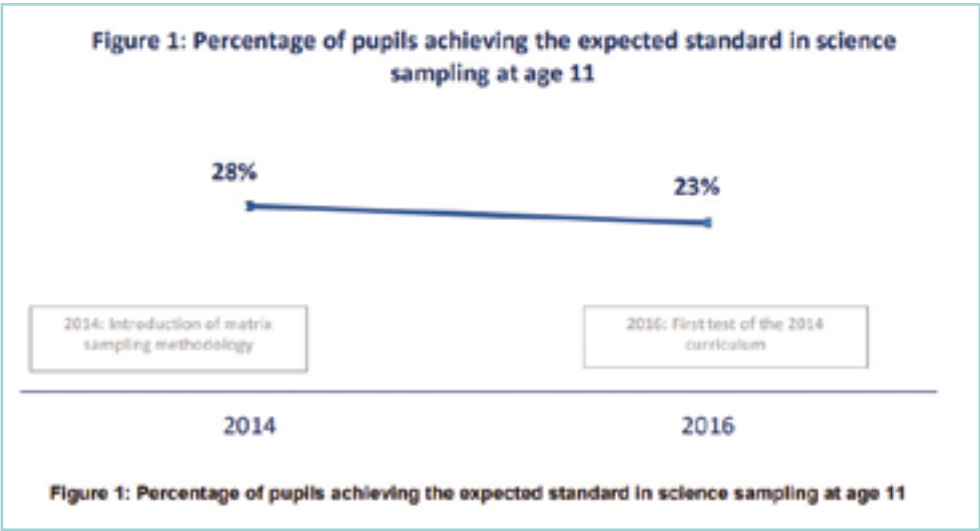
The test is taken by a small sample of key stage 2 pupils to monitor national performance in science.

Allana Gay, deputy headteacher of Lea Valley Primary School, said the results demonstrate that science is “the poor cousin to reading, writing and maths”.

“While the curriculum for science encourages an excellent foundation, as long as it is not a target-measure for schools, no improvement is expected,” she said.

The sampling method is simply “too random”, she claimed, and schools are “willing to hedge their bets that they will not be tested”.

The limited time given to science compared to English and maths can also mean it is hard to drive top results, according to Ian Goldsworthy, a year 6 teacher and science coordinator at Oakmere



primary school in Potters Bar.

“All the focus is driven through what has to be done in maths, reading and writing,” he said.

“While the assessment burden is always pointed in the direction away from science, science is never going to have the same focus, teaching time or scrutiny.”

The sampling showed a marked drop in chemistry performance for both boys and girls, which the STA put down to the fact that it is taught in years 3, 4 and 5, but not 6.

This could mean pupils did not receive “chemistry teaching in year 6, nor might they have experienced the new chemistry curriculum in full”, it said.

Biology results for boys and girls were similar to the prior round, while in physics boys outperformed girls and did better than in 2014, but girls did worse.

Pupils were also assessed on “working scientifically”, in which girls did better.

A random sample of approximately 9,500 pupils across 1,900 schools participated in the latest round of the biennial assessment, in which they took different combinations of test booklets.

Marianne Cutler of the Association of Science Education, said she was “not unduly worried” about the results and supported the methodology, which needed time to “embed”.

She pointed out that several factors could be influencing the results, including children realising the tests are “low stakes”, compared to maths and English SATs.

Jane Turner, the director of Primary Science Quality Mark, said the results “need to be looked at alongside the teacher assessment data”, which can cover “a much broader range of evidence” from the classroom.

“It’s clearly indicative of children not being prepared for a test, I don’t think it is indicative of children’s capacity in science,” she said.

The results contrast with the sharp increase in performance seen in English and maths at key stage 2, which has been touted by the government as an indicator of genuine progress in learning.

A DfE spokesperson told *Schools Week*: “These results represent a snapshot of national performance in science at key stage 2. They should not be used to judge individual pupil performance or for school accountability.

“We want all children to have the opportunity to enjoy science which is why it is a compulsory subject from key stage 1 to 4.”

The current sampling methodology was brought in 2014, after the introduction of the new national curriculum. The next round is expected to take place in June 2018.

Popular maths hubs forced to go private

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ **Exclusive**

A subject association has stopped maths hubs from sharing their resources, forcing one academy to open a private company in order to keep offering materials for free.

Maths hubs are no longer there to “produce or promote” resources for schools, according to the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM), which oversees the programme.

Instead, the NCETM will release its own “mastery professional development materials” created with other hubs next month.

Maths hubs were announced in 2014 by then-education minister Liz Truss. There are 35 across the country, intended as models for professional development and good teaching in schools.

One of these, the White Rose maths hub based in the Trinity multi-academy trust in Yorkshire, has produced particularly popular resources, which it claims are used by 90 per cent of primary schools and 30 per cent of secondary schools.

But now Trinity has been forced to create a private company to keep sharing the resources, after other hubs agreed with NCETM that they should only produce materials “collectively”.

An NCETM spokesperson said the Maths Hub Council, which has seven representatives from each region, decided



“individual hubs should not produce or promote off-the-shelf, finished-product resources aimed at a wide audience, outside their area of operation”.

Such products “should emerge from the collective work of the entire maths hub network”, so the expertise of all maths hubs could be drawn upon and any materials could be trialled.

“The first decision of substance that flowed from that meeting concerned White Rose,” he said.

At the meeting, NCETM and Trinity agreed it “would be best” to “separate” White Rose’s resource production from the work of “leading the maths hub”.

NCETM has meanwhile been working with “a number of maths hubs” to pilot professional development materials for primary teachers, which are due to be published in late October.

Companies House reveals that the White Rose Maths Hub Company was incorporated on June 22, and changed its name to the White Rose Education Services, so as to separate it more clearly from the hub, in July. Trinity MAT has also given its maths hub a new name: the West Yorkshire Maths Hub.

The MAT meets the cost of creating the resources by running maths teacher training



for up to £178 a day, the trust confirmed to *Schools Week*.

But a source familiar with maths resources claimed that White Rose Maths is unfairly “benefiting” from the “goodwill of being a maths hub” by incorporating as a company.

The hub’s Facebook page has now become a page for White Rose Maths, transferring its 37,000 followers, they pointed out, and the same is true for its Twitter account.

When hubs were first set up, their initial remit was “very clear” that any funding was to support professional learning and not produce resources, added the source.

But NCETM pointed out that other maths hubs had used their government money to publish free resources in the first year or so of the programme, before switching to fund them from MAT budgets.

The CEO of Trinity MAT told *Schools Week* the decision to create a company was “taken centrally” after discussion with the Maths Hub Council and NCETM.

“We are now happy that we can get on with these important areas of work, both of which have children’s maths education at their heart,” he said.

PUPIL ARRESTED FOLLOWING WELFARE OFFICER STABBING

A woman has been treated in hospital after she was stabbed at a school in Scunthorpe last week.

The 61-year-old welfare officer at Winterton Community Academy on Humberside sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries after the incident which happened just after 9am on Monday 25 September.

A 16-year-old pupil at the school has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder.

The school’s head, Gareth Morris, sought to reassure parents and the community after what he described as an “isolated incident”. All other pupils were safe and the school remained open.

According to Humberside Police, pupils at the school were not “directly affected” by the incident.

In a statement, Humberside Police chief superintendent Christine Wilson said: “Staff at the school and police officers responded to this isolated incident very quickly, and one person is currently in custody as a result.

“There was no disruption to any other children, none of whom witnessed the incident. Children at the school have not been directly affected by this.”

Stabbings in schools are rare although there have been two other high-profile cases in recent years.

In 2015, a 14-year-old boy was given an 11-year sentence for stabbing his supply teacher in a racially motivated attack at Dixon Kings Academy in Bradford.

The boy stabbed Vincent Uzomah in the stomach after a row about a mobile phone.

And in 2015, Leeds teacher Ann Maguire was stabbed to death by a pupil during a Spanish lesson at Corpus Christi Catholic College. She is the only secondary teacher ever murdered by a pupil in a classroom in the UK.

NEWS

ENGLAND'S LARGEST FREE SCHOOL BANS MIXED ABILITY

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

The biggest free school campus in the country has opened its doors for the first time and is cutting down on mixed-ability teaching.

The £45 million Riverside Campus in Barking, run by the Partnership Learning trust, has the capacity for 2,600 pupils between Riverside Secondary School, Riverside Primary School and special educational needs school Riverside Bridge.

Mixed-ability teaching is banned in the secondary school, which opened in 2012 before doubling in size and moving to the Riverside Campus for the start of this term. Year 7 pupils are placed in a supported, standard or accelerated band which applies for every lesson, and determines tutor groups.

The primary school currently only caters up to year 2, but there are plans to bring the same structured ability bands to pupils from year 3 onwards as the school grows.

"All the schools in our trust operate the same way. We find it works best in terms of stretching students, or giving them extra attention. There's lots of moving between the bands, no one is stuck in one place," said Partnership Learning's CEO Roger Leighton.

"From year 3 it's helpful, particularly to those who need more help. They are taught in smaller groups where they can be supported properly and given the extra focus they need."

He added: "If you go into any year 3 class and pick any child and ask them to arrange their class in order of ability, you will find that they know. Even at that age, they know who finishes work first and who needs extra help.

"The idea this is a mystery to children isn't correct. You aren't doing them a service by pretending it's a secret. By acting like that, you are doing them a disservice. Teaching them separately allows us to help them achieve the best they can."

Riverside Secondary School now accepts 1,800 pupils, with Riverside Primary taking 630 and Riverside Bridge 180. Special needs pupils can access mainstream lessons and resources when necessary while learning support for mainstream students is provided at Riverside Bridge, and interrelationships between the schools are encouraged with a shared governing body, staffroom and library.

Although Mr Leighton admitted the campus was currently "slightly isolated" in its position at the heart of the largest brownfield development in Europe, the Barking Riverside site is set to receive four more schools, 10,800 homes and a railway station once completed.

"Across the whole campus, people are growing closer organically," he said.

"This has been a long journey. The dream started eight years ago when we put in our first free school bid for Riverside Secondary School. It's going unbelievably well."

Nearly 5,000 prospective teachers failed basic tests 3 times

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Exclusive

Almost 5,000 prospective teachers failed the compulsory numeracy and literacy skills test three times in 2015-16, shutting them out of the profession for at least two years.

Any candidate who wishes to reach qualified teacher status must pass the computerised professional skills tests within three attempts, but those who fail two resits in either literacy or numeracy are forced into a formal 24-month lock-out.

A total of 4,844 candidates were locked out of the tests in 2015-16, a Freedom of Information request made by *Schools Week* to the Department for Education has shown.

An even higher number – 5,043 candidates – failed the tests in 2014-15.

In June *Schools Week* reported that the number of new teachers entering the profession in England had dropped to its lowest rate in five years.

School Workforce Census figures published by the DfE showed the number of full-time equivalent entrants to teaching had decreased from 45,120 (10.4 per cent) in 2015, to 43,830 (10.1 per cent) last year.

This is the lowest rate since the 9.3 per cent recorded in 2011.

Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said that in the context of the "ongoing crisis in teacher recruitment and retention", the government would be "well-advised to



consult with teacher training institutions, and take a hard look at whether the tests are assessing skills of a kind which it is absolutely essential for teachers to attain".

James Noble-Rogers, executive director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, told *Schools Week* that figures for potential teachers who don't make it through the skills tests are "even worse" than the FoI response suggests.

"A lot of people are not using their third attempt because they are afraid of failing and being locked out for two years," he said. "Others are so nervous when they come to their third attempt they fail for that reason alone."

Noble-Rogers said UCET had heard reports that many applicants failed by just one or two points and were still locked out for the full two years.

Skills test centres are sometimes unavailable due to a "lack of capacity" or can offer facilities that are "not conducive to

making accurate assessments", he added.

"It is time to rethink the need for these tests. Many initial teacher education providers do not place much faith in them and administer their own independent tests to ensure appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy," he said.

Data on the number of candidates to pass the QTS tests in 2016-17 will be published around March 2018.

A government spokesperson said: "The skills test was introduced to make sure that we recruit the best and brightest to the profession and the three attempt rule exists to ensure unsuccessful candidates have the appropriate time to develop the knowledge and skills they need."

Information on QTS tests is passed to the DfE from Learndirect, the country's largest private training company, which is the sole contractor to administer the tests in 55 locations across England.

Learndirect was hit with an 'inadequate' grade from Ofsted for its ESFA funded provision over the summer, but the DfE chose not to serve it with the three-month termination notice that would typically be expected after a grade four.

Instead it extended the company's wind-down period in part, it claimed, to reduce disruption for users of Learndirect's services, including "prospective teachers".

Learndirect holds a £2 million contract until 2019 to deliver the professional QTS skills tests, which are sat by over 30,000 prospective teachers each year.

Rural teacher training at risk when caps lift

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Rural teacher training providers will "suffer" when caps on teacher training places are lifted next year, experts have warned.

The government has removed recruitment controls on school-based and university-based initial teacher training (ITT) providers for 2018-19.

Limits on the number of trainees will remain only for secondary school PE and some primary school courses – the first total lifting of controls for decades.

But the move will hit rural areas already struggling to attract graduates, as popular urban courses will be permitted to recruit as many as they want, warned Professor Samantha Twiselton, the director of the Sheffield Institute of Education.

Recruitment controls on popular training centres had previously given smaller rural centres the "security blanket" of knowing applicants would be redistributed.

But it's "increasingly obvious" that not enough graduates are applying to teacher training courses, said Twiselton, leading the government simply to scrap all allocations.

"I think you will end up with skewed numbers across areas", she said, pointing particularly to regions where urban providers might grow and take on more



students. "In those areas especially, it will get worse for remote, rural providers."

Smaller SCITTS would also be at a disadvantage under the new system, because they would be competing for applicants against universities with bigger marketing budgets and reputations, she claimed.

"You can't expect a small SCITT to have anywhere near the same resource, so the removal of controls will very negatively impact on smaller, less-established SCITTS."

But James Noble-Rogers, the executive director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, which had been pressing for the controls to be removed, said he thought it was "unlikely" that certain providers would "hoover up" more than their fair share of candidates – but conceded the sector must "keep an eye out".

He said that allocations designed to ensure "proper geographical spread" had not worked in recent years, and that good applicants were turned away in some areas for popular courses.

In 2016, the government imposed caps too early in the year, leading to a seven-per-cent drop in trainees starting courses, as

many lost interest by the time they began training.

Following this debacle, the NCTL made the unprecedented decision to allow teacher training providers to recruit an extra 25 per cent of trainees on top of their original allocated amount, claiming this was to "maximise recruitment" in areas that were struggling.

This year, caps were lifted on subjects in which recruitment was low, but they remained in place for others.

Caps should just have been scrapped "a couple of years ago", according to Noble-Rogers, but weren't due to the government's "ideological" push for graduates to choose school-based teacher training.

In its Educational Excellence Everywhere white paper, the government said it "encouraged the shift towards a school-led ITT system, with schools taking greater responsibility".

"Michael Gove used allocations as a policy tool for the school-led agenda," said Noble-Rogers. "If they had scrapped the caps sooner, we would have a better situation in terms of teacher recruitment than we do now."

Governments were also reluctant to lift controls for fear of wasting public money by training too many teachers. Providers had been reluctant to over-train because Ofsted would be critical if they did, he added.

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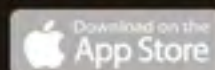
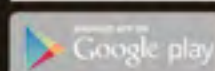
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NEWS:

ANTHONY SELDON: The next step for ‘happy’ teachers

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

Anthony Seldon recently failed to get the government to agree to a new leadership college he would run. Undeterred, he has bounced back with a new wellbeing conference. But why?

Anthony Seldon wants teachers and heads to get better at looking after themselves. As master of Wellington College he introduced happiness lessons. As vice-chancellor of the private University of Buckingham, he is trying to create “Europe’s first positive university” by adopting a “positive psychology” approach.

But is this all a marketing ploy and can it really help the state sector? After all, what sort of positive approach would he recommend to a headteacher dealing with budget cuts or staff shortages?

Don’t get “stressed about the things we cannot change” the 64-year-old advises, “we just have to learn to accept them”.

What, really? “Okay, no. I’m saying definitely fight. But, at the end of the day, a definition of madness is that you keep banging your head against a brick wall. I am saying, try to make the world as good as it can be for your kids, which is a very noble cause, but then when really nothing is going to get better, go with that and make the most of it, rather than screwing yourself up that things aren’t better. That’s what I think good leaders do and I think that’s a powerful lesson for staff and kids.”

His second piece of advice is to look after yourself: “Nobody wants to hear a head talking about how little they’ve slept. It’s not a badge of honour.”

I’m also expecting him to advocate positive thinking classes, teacher retreats, perhaps even job shares for new parents. But his suggestions remain so simple, it raises a niggling doubt about whether anyone really needs such advice: eat well, get enough sleep, and exercise.



He adds: “Holidays are holidays and weekends are weekends. Weekday evenings you may well be busy, some, most of those – all of them if you are a head – but you have to take weekends off. It’s imperative so that the body has a chance to reset.”

As a friend of several politicians (he wrote Blair’s biography) he has seen frontline politics at close quarters. Given his penchant for wellbeing, if he’d had chance, would he have reformed things differently to Michael Gove?

“I agree totally with his high aspirations for all, regardless of background and not writing young people off,” he affirms.

But delving a bit deeper, it’s clear the two men part ways over the definition of “an educated person”. For Gove, “it’s all about passing exams,” says Seldon “and I don’t agree with that. There are plenty of other ways of measuring intelligence. A lot of kids have great qualities but they are not particularly academic, and we need to bring their qualities fully out, and that’s not what is happening in many schools at the moment.”

Entrepreneurship is a big theme for the former headmaster. He believes “passionately” in a form of education that is not about “passive learning and then

passive regurgitation in exams,” but about encouraging young people to “come up with their own ideas”.

While he can’t predict the jobs of the future, he doesn’t want to produce compliant assembly-line workers. “We’ve had factory schools for a factory economy,” he explains, “now we need students who are able to think through their own solutions.”

“If it’s absolutely necessary to get the students respecting each other, not abusing each-other or staff,” but he believes they should be used as an emergency intervention, not a policy for life. “My worry is that it becomes an end in itself and then the kids learn nothing. We learn things not because we are afraid of punishment, but because we’ve made an internal choice ourselves not to behave in antisocial ways.”

It is difficult, however, to take his views seriously given that his entire career has been spent in private schools. The one attempt he made to aid a failing state school foundered.

Still, Seldon has never been one to let a slight bump throw off his self-belief. He believes schools and universities should become “therapeutic communities” as well as academic, and one theme of his



RUBY WAX



NICKY MORGAN

upcoming teacher wellbeing conference is about ways schools can build up their capacities for prevention. Rather than waiting for a child teetering on the edge to “fall off a waterfall and get smashed up”, “schools need to be working at the top of the waterfall – but also to have people on hand when people hit the bottom”.

Seldon likes a good analogy, such as when senior leaders “don’t remember to be civilised, it’s like having a bowl of water, and you put a spoon in it and you start really agitating that, and everything gets agitated, whereas a calm head will be able to calm the whole school”.

The “rebarbative” approach to education reform, likewise, “leeches” trust out of the system and brought “a lot of negative emotion, which is pouring away, it’s like pouring away money”. He lays the blame squarely with the Tory government for cutting school spending: “I wouldn’t have taken those decisions, I think schooling is more important than anything in the government’s spending priorities”.

You have to hand it to him: Anthony Seldon is adept at getting his opinions heard, and he’s certainly using that influence to try to change the system for the better.

The Next Steps For Wellbeing In Education Conference, featuring Ruby Wax and Nicky Morgan, is cohosted by the International Positive Education Network and the University of Buckingham on Friday, 6 October 2017 in London. Use the code SCHOOLSWEEK for 20% off your ticket

Plymouth CAST receives financial notice to improve

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

One of England’s largest academy chains has been issued with a financial notice to improve by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Plymouth CAST, an academy trust that runs 35 schools, has had its spending powers restricted and been ordered to address “weak

financial management and inadequate governance”.

The trust, which is one of the government’s “system leader” chains, must now put together an action plan to address the ESFA’s concerns and prepare a financial recovery plan.

It has experienced a turbulent year in which it also faced criticism over its performance.

Last November, it was criticised by Ofsted for leadership and safeguarding failings after nearly two thirds of its schools visited as part of a focused inspection were rated ‘inadequate’ or ‘requires improvement’.

Inspectors found senior trust staff did not have a “sufficient understanding” of school performance, some schools had seen a “significant decline” since joining the trust, and, until recently, there was no strategy to

monitor safeguarding procedures.

The trust was issued with a warning notice by Rebecca Clark, the regional schools commissioner for the south-west of England, in December.

Under the terms of the financial notice to improve, Plymouth CAST must now run most of its spending decisions past the ESFA, and will only get these spending powers back once it has met the agency’s requirements.

NEWS

Experts: New SEND pilot is 'too subjective'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

New rules covering the way special needs pupils are assessed will mean some schools "play it safe" by not teaching children English and maths while other schools do, experts have warned.

The government has responded to the Rochford Review, accepting its recommendations to replace the old P-levels, which are currently used to assess SEND pupils working below the national curriculum level. These will be replaced with "pre-key stage standards" in English reading, writing and maths, which rate a pupil's performance using "I can" sentences.

Pupils not able to engage in subject-specific learning – such as those with the most severe needs or degenerative conditions – will initially be assessed through seven areas of "engagement", including curiosity or persistence.

Data from this new scale will not be sent to the government, but the progress of those assessed on the pre-key stage standards will – and SEND experts are warning that decisions about which pupils will face which standards is "too subjective".

Simon Knight, the director of WHOLE School SEND, said the sector must prevent schools from making "conservative decisions" about which pupils do subject-



Stock image

specific learning "because they're fearful of entering data that does them a disadvantage in inspections".

The seven areas of engagement are responsiveness, curiosity, discovery, anticipation, persistence, initiation and investigation, and will be piloted in the 2017-18 academic year. If successful, they will be rolled out from September 2019.

The pre-key standards meanwhile have the go-ahead from September 2018 onwards.

According to Anna Trethewey of the LKMCo think-tank, Ofsted inspectors will need "very careful training" on why pupils had been entered into subject or non-subject specific learning, and how these decisions differed between schools. The inspectorate would also need to look at the curriculums designed by schools for each type of assessment.

But Knight believes the new system needs

a much longer pilot than is planned.

"I don't think 12 or even 18 months will be long enough," he said. "It's a massive job. We're talking about rates of progress for children who don't necessarily work through things in the rapid way kids in mainstream do. It will take a lot of time to work out whether we are capturing the right things in the right way."

There's another major challenge for schools, according to SEND consultant Barney Angliss: the extra resources and staff needed to run two parallel types of classes – one for subject-specific learning, and one for the engagement scale.

Such a significant extra cost could mean some schools "refuse" to take any pupils out of subject-specific learning "even if they should", he said.

As a result, schools which decide not to run two types of curriculum "will have even greater resource to focus on their results", and appear better in the data than schools which offer both.

The government anticipated some of these challenges in its response to the review, however. It warned that the "absence of a prescribed approach" in the engagement scale means schools would be "expected to provide evidence when required" to support their decisions, as well as "continue to meet their statutory duty to report to parents".

UTC LEASE MAKES TROUBLE FOR NEW TENANTS

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

An academy trust is negotiating with its local council after it discovered the lease it recently acquired for a former UTC building restricts its use for younger pupils.

The Parker E-Act Academy in Daventry, which teaches pupils aged 11 to 18, announced it would take over the £9.4 million premises of the now-defunct Daventry UTC at the end of June.

Older pupils this month moved into the state-of-the-art buildings, after one the academy's other buildings was demolished over the summer.

Planning reports show the trust applied for demolition because a "condition report from engineer states that building should be taken out of use ASAP", though it refused to confirm how long before the building's closure this recommendation was made.

The old site was used by the academy's students at every age, but a pre-existing lease attached to the new building explicitly states it must be used for 14- to 19-year-olds – a condition which could prove problematic if other UTCs want to expand their age range, as some are planning.

E-Act has known about this restriction since April but only began negotiations with Daventry District Council this month, after parents raised concerns The Daventry Express, the local newspaper.

According to E-Act, the old UTC building is mostly used by the Parker Academy's sixth formers, and younger pupils only use the facility "within the terms of the agreement".

The rest of the time, younger pupils are taught at other facilities on the school's campus.

Neither E-Act nor Daventry district council would comment on the negotiations, nor on any financial costs or when a resolution is expected.

"The Education and Skills Funding Agency informed the council it intended to assign the lease from the UTC Trust to E-Act for the purposes of the Parker Academy," said the council's chief executive, Ian Vincent.

"The lease includes a requirement that the site is used primarily for students aged 14 to 19, and following discussion about options, the council received assurances from E-Act and the ESFA that these terms would be complied with."

E-Act said it had no choice but to demolish its former building, because its age and condition "made repair "uneconomical". The trust is now in "close discussion" with the council over the facility.

Several other sites that belonged to closed UTCs have been repurposed for secondary schools this month.

Oasis Academy Oldham is using the former Greater Manchester UTC site for year 7 pupils, but it will eventually also be used by Oldham College for older pupils.

After spending £13 million on renovations, the London borough of Greenwich now uses the site of the former Royal Greenwich UTC as an 11-to-18 school.

A Schools Week investigation earlier this year found five UTCs were consulting on admitting 13-year-olds.

Cross-party move to revive forgotten law

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Investigates

Politicians from across the political spectrum have called on the government to "implement in full" a piece of legislation concerning private alternative provision that was passed nearly a decade ago and totally ignored.

In 2008, the Labour government passed tighter rules about part-time providers counting as "independent educational institutions" that must be regulated and inspected by Ofsted, within its Education and Skills Act.

Under current government guidance, if five or more pupils attend an institution for 18 hours a week, it must be registered as a "school" and subject to inspection.

But Labour's legislation said institutions should be inspected even if they offer fewer hours: 12.5 hours a week for pupils younger than 12, and 15 hours a week for those older than 12, for at least 28 weeks a year. What's more, the act does not stipulate that a certain number of pupils must attend, meaning that just one pupil could theoretically be enough to require registration.

But the legislation was never actioned, according to John Fowler (pictured), a policy advisor at the Local Government Information Unit, who consulted on the 2008 Act.

Today's civil servants are concerned about the costs of registering the suspected 2,000

unregistered alternative providers, and schools minister Nick Gibb is "lacking" the political will to implement the policy, he said.

A Schools Week investigation showed last week that many private alternative providers used by academies for excluded or vulnerable pupils are not inspected by Ofsted because they do not count as "schools".

Half of the private providers used by 16 multi-academy trusts did not have individual Ofsted reports – despite the £3 million spent on them over the past three years.

Schools Week could not confirm how many pupils attended the schools on a part-time basis.

The education select committee announced last week that it would investigate alternative provision after concerns emerged that pupils, many of whom have behavioural difficulties, are not getting the proper support.

"This government can't use the excuse that we can't legislate about this issue, because the legislation is already there," Fowler added.

Angela Rayner, Labour's shadow education secretary, told Schools Week the government had "questions to answer" about "why this legislation had been left on the shelf".

According to parliamentary records, Gibb challenged the new definition of "independent educational institutions" in a public bill committee in February 2008 when in opposition. He said it would "drag in" thousands of home educators.

Rayner has now called on ministers to



look again at whether the 2008 Act "needs to be used" to force the registration of more providers and ensure appropriate checks are taking place. Baroness Walmsley, a Liberal Democrat peer and former spokesperson for education, echoed her with a call of her own.

She said the government must implement the relevant section "to ensure independent providers are subject to proper scrutiny of the quality of service, and the value for money, they are providing".

Pupils are at "significant risk" of poor outcomes if private providers are not registered or inspected.

A spokesperson for the DfE said local authorities and schools must commission alternative provision that was "registered, where appropriate".

An alternative provision provider must be registered "if it provides full-time education to five or more pupils of compulsory school age, or one looked-after pupil, or one with a special educational needs plan". They defined "full-time" as 18 hours a week.

NEWS

MOST MATS ‘TOO SMALL TO BE VIABLE’

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

New research has suggested two thirds of multi-academy trusts are too small to be sustainable.

Analysis of government data on open academies and projects in development has found 180 MATs with five or more schools “which do not on the face of it appear to be currently viable”.

The estimate, made by education blogger Mike Cameron, is based on comments from the National Schools Commissioner Sir David Carter, who said that a fully academised school system would need around 1,800 MATs to function. If he’s correct, each trust would average around 4,500 pupils.

Cameron, assuming that a secondary school holds around 1,000 pupils and a primary around 325, discovered 240 of the 362 trusts with five or more schools fell short of the threshold.

Just over a third of large MATs (36 per cent) only include primary schools, meaning their pupil figures are smaller.

“This should concern the DfE,” wrote Cameron.

Speaking at an ASCL conference in March 2016, Sir David Carter said 1,000 new MATs would be created by 2020, which would bring the total across the system to around 1,800.

He also declared that trusts in charge of three to six schools would “struggle to be sustainable”.

“We need them to grow, to 10, to 15, to 20,” he said.

The pressure to grow has fallen particularly hard on primary-only trusts, whose schools hold significantly fewer pupils.

“The best MATs will flourish, taking over and turning around weaker schools,” it said.

Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said this drive to expand the programme had neglected “structures to really support schools”.

Phillip Reynolds, an academies analyst at the accountancy firm Kreston Reeves, said trusts should look carefully at the combination of schools they manage.

“Sir David Carter never really said what the mix of schools should be in an academy trust – secondary or primary, how many of each,” he said.

“The question is, for the trusts that are looking at primary-only, are they going to be financially viable in the future and do they need to consider joining others, or joining up with a secondary school?”

He accepted that “every primary school is different” and some may have facilities that allow them to bring in extra income.

“But if you take it in the cold light of day, it does appear that some of them potentially might not be viable,” he said.

In June, Jon Coles, the chief executive of United Learning, which runs over 40 academies, insisted that even 20 schools was too small a number for financial stability.

FSM pupils falling away in phonics

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The achievement gap in phonics has grown between pupils qualifying for free school meals and their wealthier peers, government data has revealed.

In this summer’s exams, 68 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals met the expected standard in phonics, compared with 84 per cent of all other pupils.

This marked a one-percentage-point increase in the attainment gap this year* compared with 2016, reversing prior trends.

Between 2015 and 2016, the gap between FSM pupils and all others narrowed by one percentage point, and a similar decrease was recorded in 2014 and 2015.

But the government’s release on the phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments in England for 2017 showed the performance of FSM-eligible pupils decreased from 69 per cent in 2016 to 68 per cent this year, while the performance of all other pupils increased from 83 per cent last year to 84 per cent this year.

“It is very worrying that the statutory assessment system appears to be entrenching disadvantage for pupils entitled to free school meals, SEND or who happen to be boys,” said Nansi Ellis, a policy expert at the ATL union.

“As school budgets are slashed and vital support is removed from our most vulnerable learners, it is only getting harder for schools to challenge these stubborn achievement gaps and deliver social justice

for all pupils.”

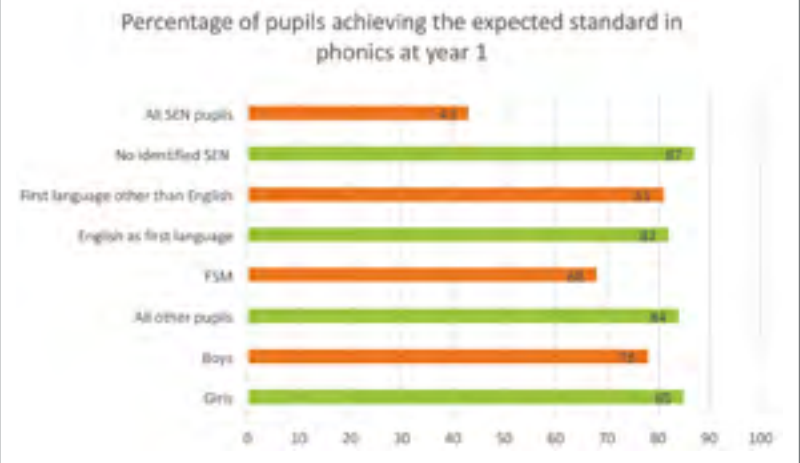
Overall, the proportion of year 1 pupils meeting the “expected standard” in phonics remained static at 81 per cent this year. The rate of pupils passing in year 2 rose slightly, from 91 to 92 per cent.

But the Education Endowment Foundation said the reversal is “worrying”.

“We know that a good grasp of phonics is crucial for supporting younger readers to master the basics of reading,” said a spokesperson. “Educational prospects for pupils who don’t achieve good literacy skills by the end of primary school are bleak. The best way to close the gap and improve literacy levels for all is through better use of evidence: looking at what has – and has not – worked in the past.”

Schools minister Nick Gibb praised “the hard work of teachers across the country”, but added “there is more to do for the youngest children”.

“As we said in our manifesto, we will strengthen the teaching of literacy and



numeracy in the early years,” he said.

In the key stage 1 tests, pupil performance rose across reading, writing, maths and science, according to teacher assessment data, with a bump of two percentage points in both reading and maths.

Reading results rose to 76 per cent, while maths rose to 75 per cent.

Writing results trailed other subjects. Only 68 per cent met the expected standard, though this was an increase of three percentage points on last year.

Free schools again demonstrated the strongest performance of all types of school across reading, writing, maths and science. They were followed by converter academies, then local authority maintained schools and sponsored academies.



*Nerd box: The gap this year is between 84% and 68% (16 points) compared with 83% and 69% (14 points) last year. The eagle-eyed may note this a two-percentage-point difference. But the DfE has stated it is a one-percentage-point difference. What is going on? The DfE said this confusion is down to the rounding. For example, a pass rate of 83.5% and 69.4% would give a gap of 15.1 percentage points, which is only one point different to last year but, rounded, it looks like two. So there you go!

Costs exclude poorer pupils from school trips

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Exclusive

Teachers in the most disadvantaged areas do not believe their pupils can afford the residential trips offered by their schools, exclusive research for Schools Week has found.

Analysis by the education think-tank LKMco showed pupils in deprived areas face a double disadvantage: they attend schools that are less likely to organise residential trips in the first place, and struggle to afford the few outings that are on offer.

Fewer than half of teachers in disadvantaged schools believed pupils can afford residential trips, but two thirds of teachers in schools with affluent intakes believe their trips are affordable to everyone.

What’s more, pupil premium funding provided to schools to help support children from low-income families does not appear to be solving the problem.

“While some schools are using the pupil premium to ensure no pupils miss out, this research has revealed that this is not the norm,” said Loic Menzies, the think-tank’s director.

“Our report therefore recommends that schools should be willing to use pupil premium funds to provide genuine equality of opportunity, not just to close attainment gaps.”



The findings are based on analysis of a school’s pupil deprivation levels, using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index – a measure of the proportion of children (aged 0 to 15) living in income-deprived families.

They have been excerpted from of a wider study published by LKMco and led by Menzies, on ‘The state of school residentials in England’.

Just one in five children who participated in the study went on a residential every year, and those in disadvantaged areas had the “fewest opportunities to participate”.

“On average, educational establishments organise 2.5 residentials per year. We therefore estimate that approximately 1.8 million children and young people are involved in residentials each year.

“This is equivalent to 21 per cent of the school pupil population,” the report said.

It found that “schools are attempting to address the problem of poorer pupils being excluded from residentials, often by using the pupil premium”, but added that “even where teachers try to make residentials affordable, they still consider cost to be a barrier to

participation”.

“As funding is squeezed, this will become an increasing problem,” it said.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the school leaders’ union NAHT, described the benefits of residential experiences and outdoor education as “indisputable” and said it was “distressing to learn that they are not available to all students”.

“At our annual conference this year, delegates voted in favour of campaigning for protected funding to enable all children to have access to high quality outdoor education and residential experiences,” he said.

The researchers used the Evolve database, a system used by 25,000 establishments to organise trips, to gauge the availability and purpose of residentials.

A school survey was then distributed three times throughout 2016-17 and a total of 1,185 schools responded to the survey, nearly three quarters of which were primary level.

Its main recommendation was for more funding to improve fair access, though it also asked schools to consider “lower-cost options”, “targeted and universal subsidies” and “flexible payments”.

The report was funded by campaigning group ‘Learning Away’, which is running two national campaigns called #BrilliantResidentials and #WinterResidentials to help schools make trips more inclusive.

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

Rayner is a breath of fresh air as Greening struggles

This was another unusual week in education politics. Both the education secretary, Justine Greening, and her shadow, Labour's Angela Rayner, made speeches to home-turf audiences within 24 hours of each other – and I was there as a witness to both.

The pair are unusually matched. Both started in their role at the same time; both went to comprehensive school. Greening has a decade on Rayner, but given the latter became a mum at 16, she's more than adequately matched in terms of life experience.

It was therefore surreal to watch as Greening sucked the oxygen out of the room at the Parents and Teachers Excellence conference in London on Saturday, with one of the most ill-considered speeches I've seen in some time. Whereas Rayner, whom I have spent the past six months rolling my eyes at and waiting to get past the whiny "everyone thinks I'm thick" angle, utterly stormed it at Labour conference on Sunday.

What did Greening get so wrong? First, she made a song and dance about talent being "spread equally" around the country and claimed this meant children didn't need to be educated in different types of schools. Not only did this look bizarre after spending the past 12 months pushing the benefits of grammar schools, it was a snub to the Harris Westminster Academy where

the event took place. This sixth form is Harris' "elite" post-16 venture, taking in its brightest pupils and aiming them at top universities.

Second, she made a well-intentioned remark on how school improvement is about more than multi-academy trusts and free schools. It is positive that her thinking is going beyond academies, and that she wants to pilot other improvement techniques. But saying it in front of your biggest supporters, many of whom carried the flag for the academy policy during its darkest hours, is a faux pas.

Third, the speech just didn't make much sense. Greening clearly wants to make "social mobility" her thing. She believes in it, and says it over and over again. But, as Rayner said this week, the problem is that the phrase sounds a bit like Father Christmas – you tell kids it's real but you can't actually find it.

Threads of an idea are there in Greening's thinking, as we see in this week's interview. She wants to do something about children who are excluded from schools. She seems to have ideas about technical education. But, so far, she is incoherent, and that speech didn't help convince otherwise.

Opinion on the ground about Greening is different. People on the social opportunity area boards, which are looking at projects to improve education in those towns, rate what

is going on highly. Union leaders also convey a sense of optimism about her.

Yet this isn't translating into speeches or headline policies, or even a consistent plan.

On the other hand, Angela Rayner practically took the roof off a fringe event on Sunday at the Labour conference. Her National Education Service idea is not sophisticated. But it is clear: free education for all, from cradle to grave, encompassing early years, school, university, technical, adult and lifelong learning.

How will it be funded? Who knows! Rayner simply promises the money will appear. Does free education for those who can afford to pay amount to a huge kickback for the middle classes? Sure, but who cares! As Rayner said on the stand on Sunday, to a rapturous crowd, this policy is what she believes in and it's what she'll die in the mud for. Pragmatic it ain't. But inspiring and coherent? In buckets. And that's what wins people over. (Even if my cold, sceptical heart preferred that it didn't).

As fun as all this commentary is for a politics nerd like me, however, I did stop to wonder if it mattered. Greening is well liked and, by most accounts, getting on with the day-to-day job

with great competence. So does it really matter if she can't give a roof-raising speech?

The answer depends on how you feel about headteachers. Do you think it matters if a head can't run an assembly? Is it a problem if a school leader says something offensive to parents when they come in for open day?

Those who say "no", and who think symbolic leadership doesn't matter, will likely forgive Greening her difficulties.

But my suspicion is that many of you will disagree, believing that being the front woman is about creating a vision of a promised land that's so compelling it makes people jump into the stormy waters of reform.

The problem for leaders who can't create such a vision is that even if they have the best policies, they are in danger of losing traction. All it takes is for someone else to come along with an attractive strapline and a semi-competent policy, and that person will capture the profession's hearts and minds. And, crucially, their votes.

Greening has a week now, at Conservative conference, to pull the game back into her favour. It's time to put some oxygen back in the room. Or otherwise her flame may well get snuffed out.



Vacancies



Tauheedul
Education Trust

Head of Finance (West Midlands Cluster)

Tauheedul Education Trust (Coventry based)

Salary: £48,603 - £53,646

Contract Type: Full Time

Contract Term: Permanent

We are delighted to be recruiting for a Head of Finance to provide financial leadership and management across a cluster of three Midlands based academies (initially based at Eden Girls' School, Coventry). The purpose of the role is to lead the development of financial operations and take responsibility for financial matters in all of the designated academies. This will include but not be limited to budget preparation, financial reporting and the academies financial accounts.

You will:

- Be a qualified accountant;
- Have a sound understanding of the budgeting process in a large organisation;
- Be confident at communicating at all levels.

You will find an organisation that:

- Is passionate about its vision of 'Nurturing Today's Young People, Inspiring Tomorrow's Leaders'
- Has a supportive ethos and concern for the well-being of all members of our learning community
- Has high ambitions for all and provides excellent opportunities for professional development
- Is well-ordered with high standards of commitment from students, staff and parents.

Closing date: Monday 9th October

Shortlisting date: Tuesday 10th October

Interview date: Thursday 19th October

Start date: ASAP, ideally no longer than 8 weeks notice



Eden Girls

Business Manager

Eden Girls' School, Coventry

Salary: £37,306 - £41,967

Contract Type: Full Time

Contract Term: Permanent

We are pleased to offer this exciting opportunity for an organised and driven School Business Manager to take a lead on our support services. The successful candidate will become a key member of our growing school and focused team. You will have proven experience of operational management of all aspects of business services, including finance, personnel, facilities and estates management, school administration, catering, ICT services and health and safety.

Eden Girls' School, Coventry is a new 11-18 Academy, which opened in September 2014 and will grow, over the coming years, to school roll of 800 pupils and is based in a state of the art new build which boasts outstanding facilities for all faculties. Following our recent Ofsted inspection in July, we have been awarded "Outstanding" in all areas, which shows the levels of commitment and dedication from our students and staff. We are part of a successful family of schools, run by the Tauheedul Education Trust, and as such are an inclusive and progressive school that encourages personal development and a professional ethos. Our mission is to maintain an outstanding organisation that inspires learners with excellence in academic achievement, character development and community service.

We can offer you:

- Excellent opportunities for professional development, with high ambitions for all
- A culture of educational excellence
- Focused students with high standards of commitment and supportive parents

If you have what it takes to work with a determined leadership team and staff, who promote excellence, and consistently challenge you to improve, then we welcome you to join our team at Eden Girls School

Closing date: 8am on Monday 9th October 2017

Interviews to be held Monday 16th October 2017

Start date: ASAP



Laisterdyke
Leadership Academy

Director of Science

Laisterdyke Leadership Academy, Bradford

Salary: Leadership Pay Scale 7 -11

Contract Type: Full Time

Contract Term: Permanent

Laisterdyke Leadership Academy is a partnership between pupils, staff, parents and our wider stakeholder community. We recognise the contributions of every member of our academy community and, through our vision of nurturing today's young people and inspiring tomorrow's leaders, we aim to create an environment where the strengths and potential of all are realised, the needs of individuals are respected, and high expectations are achieved.

We are looking to appoint a Director of Science at this exciting time in the school's life.

You will:

- Be an outstanding teacher and an inspirational leader
- Be able to deliver teaching up to KS5 level
- Have a proven track record of success, and raising pupil attainment
- Be a committed team player with experience of having led and managed successful teams as an experienced subject leader or second in subject
- Understand changes in the curriculum and have the vision required to deliver an outstanding department
- Have experience of developing an exciting curriculum that suits every type of learner
- Be organised, energetic and dedicated to making a difference
- Be committed to the Tauheedul ethos of high expectations
- Wholly support an inclusive culture with a strong focus on safeguarding

You will find a school that:

- is passionate about its mission of 'promoting a culture of educational excellence within a caring and secure environment'
- has a supportive ethos and concern for the well-being of all members of our learning community
- has high ambitions for all and provides excellent opportunities for professional development
- is well-ordered with high standards of commitment from students, staff and parents
- An excellent CPD programme

For an informal and confidential discussion, or to arrange a visit, please contact Sajdah Salani at the school

Closing date: 12noon on Monday 9th October 2017

Interviews: Tuesday 10th October 2017 onwards

Start Date: Required from January 2018

Principal at Greengate Lane Primary Academy

Salary: Competitive Salary plus Benefits

Date Required: Asap



“This is a school aiming high and looking to the future”

Astrea is a national family of academies, unswerving in our ambition to raise attainment and achieve excellence for all pupils. The Trust includes schools at all stages of development. We are committed to enabling individual schools to flourish with a high degree of autonomy whilst benefiting from a strong culture of support and collaboration.

The Astrea Academy Trust has the highest expectations of pupil attainment in national assessments, but aspires to go beyond the concept of “schooling” and to educate instead, through valuing an all-round development of the individual through arts, sports, leadership opportunities, enrichment and community.

In order to deliver our mission statement we need exceptional staff across the organisation, and we believe that the quality of our staff sets us apart.

Do you want to be part of our leadership team which is passionate about making a difference to the lives of pupils?

Do you have the passion and motivation to inspire others, and the ability to lead change and deliver excellence?

If so, we are looking for a forward-thinking, inspirational leader who has a demonstrable track record of inspirational leadership and the proven ability to deliver the highest quality of teaching and learning across the school. You will have experience of supporting schools through periods of change; specifically driving improvement through the modelling of outstanding teaching.

The successful applicant will need the drive and enthusiasm to lead this school into the future and create a learning environment that inspires our students and helps them to achieve their full potential.

This is a challenging and exciting role and a fabulous opportunity to become part of our journey to excellence. In return we would offer a competitive salary plus pension, great career progression and development opportunities with many other benefits.

Application Process: Please send all completed applications to ingrid.chambers@astreaacademytrust.org

Closing date for applications: October 9, 2017

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Posts are subject to enhanced DBS checks.



Transformational Leadership Opportunities

Executive Principal **Norfolk Academies**

Salary: Circa £110k **Closing Date:** Friday 6th October

Transforming Education in Norfolk (the TEN Group) is looking for an Executive Principal to lead its multi-academy trust, Norfolk Academies and our University Technical College Norfolk. This is a new role and will have Group-wide academy responsibilities, for one junior academy, three secondary academies, and a university technical college.

An experienced school leader, preferably with experience of leading more than one school/academy, you will have demonstrated your abilities to improve the performance of schools under your care with evidence of sustained improvements in outcomes over time. You will also be an excellent people motivator and have the right skills to lead and develop your senior team of academic colleagues.

Principal **Fakenham Academy Norfolk**

Salary: Circa £80k **Closing Date:** Friday 6th October

The TEN Group is looking to appoint an experienced school leader who will relish the challenge of moving Fakenham Academy Norfolk from Good to Outstanding. A dynamic individual with experience as an existing head, you will be a great people motivator, with a real desire to make the difference in young peoples' lives. You will have a track record of success in school leadership, experience in improving student outcomes and able to evidence school-level performance improvements you have led.

Fakenham Academy Norfolk is an improving school with over 750 students, rated Good by Ofsted, with improvements in results over the last 4 years delivered through its membership of the Norfolk Academies multi-academy trust (MAT).

See www.tengroup.org.uk/senior-vacancies for full details and online application.

Wellspring Academy Trust

Head of Estates

£42,000 – £50,000

Permanent/Full Time



WELLSPRING
ACADEMY TRUST

We Make A Difference



Wellspring Academy Trust is a growing Multi-Academy Trust, currently supporting fifteen Academies. We are committed to making a difference to the lives and life chances of the young people and the communities we serve. We are an education charity with Academies in the Primary, Secondary, Special and Alternative Education sectors.

We require a dedicated and passionate Head of Estates to join our talented and hard-working team. The post holder will take technical and managerial responsibility for Trust's estate, currently comprised of 33 sites and facilities of varying size, condition and construction. The Head of Estates will act as a key stakeholder in shaping and coordinating the Trust's investment of available capital resources.

Wellspring places great emphasis on the quality of its physical environments, actively seeking opportunities for continuous improvement and regeneration. In Leeds, the Trust is building three state of the art Special Schools, with a combined development budget of £45million. Also in Leeds, Wellspring is at initial design phase to construct a 420 place mainstream Primary School.

Across Lincolnshire, we are at the advanced feasibility stage in building four Alternative Provision Academies. These are exciting, innovative projects in which the Head of Estates will play a key role.

The continuing growth of the Trust offers exciting pathways for ambitious and dynamic individuals who are determined to make a difference. We value our people. Collegial working at all levels is central to our culture.

High quality induction training and ongoing professional development support are guaranteed.

We are interested in hearing from people who:

- Are self-motivated, customer-focused and organised.
- Enjoy working as part of an inclusive team.
- Have a commitment to supporting the work of education leaders and who are passionate about learning.

To download an application pack please visit

www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk/aboutus/careers

or contact Chloe Wormleighton via phone

01226 720747 or email [c.wormleighton@](mailto:c.wormleighton@wellspringacademies.org.uk)

wellspringacademies.org.uk

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 18th October at 12pm. Interviews will be taking place on Monday 23rd October.

www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk



The Wellspring Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils. All posts are offered subject to DBS checks.

Memberships Manager

Salary: £25,000 - £35,000 p.a. dependent on experience.
This is a full-time, office-based role with some travel nationally.
Location: Lambeth, London

Role Description

The successful candidate will work closely with headteachers and other senior leaders as well as the Challenge Partners central staff team to ensure that all members of Challenge Partners are engaged locally and nationally with all aspects that Challenge Partners offers. The Memberships Manager works closely with the Senior Partners (executive headteachers, headteachers and Multi-Academy Trust CEOs) and local area Hub Managers (usually deputy headteachers and/or Teaching School Directors) to ensure they are clear on and deliver on their roles and responsibilities.

The Memberships Manager will work with the local area Hub Managers to make sure every member school is engaged in their local hub and takes advantage of what Challenge Partners has to offer. Through the Memberships Manager's efforts we will see a high membership renewal rate among our existing members, good engagement rates in local and national activity and also growth in our membership nationally.

The position requires a self-motivated, responsible and highly organised individual with outstanding written and oral communication skills. You will have excellent relationship

management skills and will work as part of a growing team. The successful candidate will have experience of communications, marketing, account management, business development and/or relationship management within the education sector or similar.

Key Responsibilities:

The duties and responsibilities of the Memberships Manager will include:

Recruitment and induction of members: you will support existing local hubs to grow their membership, and follow leads to bring on new local hubs. Once new members are on board, you will support their induction to the local and national membership offer

Relationship management: you will provide ongoing support to individual schools as well as a number of local area Hub Managers to ensure that every school within the hub is engaged in the local and national offer. You will undertake ad hoc and scheduled phone calls, hub visits, regular surveying and trouble-shooting at local and national level.

Communications and marketing: you will prepare regular and relevant high quality communications to our members e.g.



weekly newsletter, engagement emails, renewals, induction and engagement information. You will be involved in identifying, capturing and disseminating examples of practice, case studies, areas of excellence through various channels including supporting the organisation of events and conferences locally and nationally.

Data management: accurate and timely record-keeping on our CRM system is essential to this role. You will use the data to inform your strategy for each Hub you support and to flag up concerns, areas of good engagement and more.

Teamwork: you will work with colleagues across the Challenge Partners Central Team to ensure our members' quality of experience, and to aid schools' understanding and use of the support and programmes available to them.

If you would like to be part of our team, please send your CV and covering letter to **Penny Rabiger**, Head of Membership, at penny.rabiger@challengepartners.org describing your suitability for the role.

The deadline for applications is **13th October, 12pm**

Deputy Headteacher

Salary: L5-L7 (fringe)
Salary Type: Leadership
Hours of work: Full Time
Start Date: January 1st 2018



Weyfield Primary Academy
Expectation - Opportunity - Success
School Close, Woking Road, Guildford,
Surrey, GU1 1QJ

Phone: 01483 598956
Email: jayne.thorne@weyfield-tkat.org
Website: www.weyfield-tkat.org

Our vision is to provide every child with an outstanding education, so that they can develop in to confident young people with a sense of self-worth, who believe they can make a difference in the world.

Weyfield Primary Academy is a unique Surrey school with 46% Pupil Premium, significantly above the Surrey average of 13%. Our community is diverse with 25% of our pupils speaking English as an additional language and almost 20% with recognised special educational needs. We are looking for a Deputy Headteacher who wants to make a real difference to our families' lives and who is committed to making each school day count for our children.

The Deputy Headteacher will play a major role in delivering the school vision, establishing a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring excellent outcomes for all pupils. The successful candidate will have an integral role in driving forward the next phase of our transformation from good to outstanding, building on strong EYFS outcomes and in-year progress across the school to secure better attainment at KS2. This is a real opportunity to advance the quality of teaching and learning and further develop a rich curriculum offer, working with autonomy and creativity to achieve impact.

The Deputy Headteacher will mirror the role of the Headteacher, so this is an ideal post for anyone aspiring to headship in the next 2-3 years.

We invite you to visit and a warm welcome is guaranteed. For an application pack or to arrange a visit, please contact Miss Lim, Headteacher via the school office. Please forward completed application forms together with a letter of application to the school office marked for the attention of Jayne Thorne. Electronic applications are welcome.

Weyfield Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children and expects all staff to share this commitment. All appointments will be subject to full safeguarding checks as well as satisfactory references.

Closing Date: 6th October 2017
Interviews: 17th October 2016

READERS' REPLY



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TWEET



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Educating... TV series school faces 'unfair' debt problems



Mark Watson, Gloucestershire

Having watched the first three episodes of Educating Greater Manchester, I have to say I've been so impressed by the enthusiasm and emotional dedication of the head and his team. Although that's all I've got to go on, I can't imagine that his wish to convert to an academy is for any reason other than a genuinely held belief it would be in the best interests of his pupils and the local community.



Paul McGee // @TheSumoGuy

Full of admiration for this guy.

Miss Beddow // @MissBBeddow

Drew Povey seems like the nicest man ever, but also the type of guy you'd want to go for a pint with.

Top London sixth form 'excluding' kids with low grades



Adam Creen // @adamcreen

I'd have been happy for 8 students with a D grade and 1 an E at AS to carry on to full A-level. We're not like these "top London schools".

DfE recruiting staff to learn what it's doing wrong



Paul Hanks // @The_Data_Adonis

If they wanted a more dynamic title they could call them delivery drivers, no room for misunderstanding that

Victor M // @philallman1

Winner of possibly the most soul-destroying job in education.



Deb Tyler (Facebook)

Just when you think the world of education couldn't get any more ridiculous. The system is officially now eating itself.

Samantha Atkinson

Omg! Just ask governors and heads to fill in a questionnaire or write a letter! £70,000 x 3? More money than sense and this proves it!

Private school rebrands as 'grammar'



Monique // @GovTutor

So, are they going to kick out pupils who fail? Are they academically selecting at age two? So many questions...

Sandy Cameron // @SandyCameron59

Maybe unusual for a private school, but calling schools 'grammar' when they're not selective isn't uncommon.

Headteacher success study under fire



Richard Adams // @RichardA

Ah, the popular "just saying" defence of squiffy research

Too many summer-born pupils are labelled SEN



Robert Lilley // @rlilley99

Fascinating observations. We need to work with all pupils to close gap between attainment and potential without ascribing labels.



Tammy Judith

So can anyone point me in the direction of research or information regarding supporting summer born children? I feel at the moment that they are labelled (not as SEN but as summer born) as if it's an excuse or reason. We can also all identify the August born child who is very bright and therefore 'disproves the theory'. Is it just a case of extra interventions or should the expectations be different across a year group? I know a local grammar school that weights entry scores in favour of summer born children precisely for this reason. So why is the school system not doing the same?

Profile: Chris Jansen



Andy Buck // @Andy_Buck

I have had the privilege of hearing Chris when I contributed to their first international conference last year. An inspiring leader

New academy trust vows not to employ unqualified teachers



Stephen Foster // @MrSRFoster

Gosh you mean like in the old bad days when you had to be trained to do the job. Wonder if an educational background will spread to CEOs?

Costs mount for excluded pupils sent to private schools

REPLY OF THE WEEK



Mark Watson, Gloucestershire

The other thing it would be helpful to know is whether sending pupils to these 'uninspected' AP providers costs more or less to the referring schools. I was assuming that the whole premise of the story was that schools were saving money, at the expense and risk of the affected pupils, by using these providers.

However the figures (from The Collaborative Academies Trust and the Diocese of Coventry MAT) seem to show it is much more expensive to do it this way. Why on earth would they be spending far more money than they had to, and laying themselves open to stories like this, if they didn't think there was a significant benefit?

Should the headline actually be "Academy trusts forced to spend millions more than they should on uninspected private alternative provision because there is no longer a viable alternative"?

REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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PROFILE

LAURA MCINERNEY
@MISS_McINERNEY

Mark Lehair – Director of Parents and Teachers for Excellence

Standing in line at the Café Nero one street down from the Department for Education, a message pops onto my phone.

“I’ll have an Americano... a full on Trumpian alt-right coffee, sorry, patriotic coffee.”

It was sent by Mark Lehair, a former headteacher who now leads the Parents and Teachers for Excellence campaign, an unusual “grassroots” group which sprung up last year amid a storm of controversy.

The group was originally promoted via a press release naming a long list of teachers and academy chiefs as its key backers, but there were questions about who was really behind the group and its purpose. An investigation by Schools Week later revealed that one of the two founding directors was Jon Moynihan, a major Conservative and Vote Leave donor. (The other was Dame Rachel De Souza, the chief executive of Inspiration Trust).

At the time, Lehair was still in the head’s office at Bedford Free School, one of the first secondary free schools in the country, and which he helped found.

Called one day by De Souza, she asked if he would support an organisation aiming to get parents and teachers talking about overlooked issues such as the curriculum and behaviour.

Lehair jumped at the chance and since then has stepped down at Bedford (“it felt the right time”) and is now leading the PTE campaign.

Any reservations that people have about PTE being a “shadowy neoliberal organisation”, are brushed off with Lehair’s characteristic, often self-mocking, humour – hence the text.

“You guys are important, even though you write difficult stories about us,” he says, genuinely, drinking his Americano. “But what people really need to know about us is that we just want to be a voice in education. We want to encourage schools to take advantage of the freedoms they have now, in whatever type of school they are, to try and make their school great for kids.

“The way we want to operate is shining a spotlight on really great things that people are doing to make their school better. We want to inspire teachers, and particularly parents, to say ‘oh, I’d like it if my school did that’. That’s all we are trying to do.”

In particular, PTE wants to start a conversation around four topics: school culture and behaviour policies, a knowledge-based curriculum, how to use rigorous assessment, and the importance of extra-curricular activities.

An additional aim about promoting academies has since been dropped: “It doesn’t matter what type of school you are in, we all need to think about these things.”

In recent weeks, the behaviour policy at Great Yarmouth Charter School, now a part of Inspiration Trust, has hit headlines for its strict new rules. Will PTE be encouraging schools to follow its lead?

“No. There isn’t going to be a ‘PTE way,’” he says.

“I ran a school where in the last year we introduced silent corridors and a catch-up club for pupils who had low attendance and so had to stay back on a Friday. Some people will say that’s extreme and negative. We thought it was positive.

“I’m not saying every school should have silent corridors, or do the things we do, but I do think we should have a discussion about great behaviour culture or what we should ask kids to do. It’s a legitimate



"THE WAY WE WANT TO
OPERATE IS SHINING A
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ARE DOING TO MAKE THEIR
SCHOOL BETTER"

conversation for teachers and for parents too – because they have a view on these things.”

As a parent of four children, Lehair only allowed policies at Bedford Free School if it would be good enough for his own children.

His own educational experience also left its mark. Growing up in Woodley, just outside Reading, Lehair was the third of eight children. Naturally bright and conscientious, he “smashed” school and “loved it, totally loved it”.

After taking five A-levels, his place at Cambridge seemed a natural fit to everyone except him. He felt like an “outsider” when he got there.

“That’s why I believe in the knowledge-rich curriculum,” he says. “It is about ‘levelling up’ so you have the confidence and wherewithal in any situation.

“I will never forget my first night, rocking up at Cambridge, and watching people eat a banana with a fork. A knowledge-rich curriculum is not about teaching about knives and forks at a posh meal. But it is about the idea that if you give kids the right sort of education then they won’t feel out of place at a posh meal, or sitting with a journalist in a café in Westminster. I want them to feel they are as entitled to do that as anyone else.

“What I think independent schools are good at is not just pumping kids full of that stuff but also giving them the opportunity to practice leading. You know, those Eton lads didn’t think twice about getting Putin’s vicar to come to the school, did they?”

His belief that all children should be equally entitled to access power led him in 2009 to help his year 12 pupils put on a ‘Question Time’ event for the mayoral candidates in the local elections.

“That was the best thing I ever did in education,” he says.

But is that really a knowledge-rich curriculum? It sounds more like citizenship and a bit of gumption.

“It’s an outcome of a knowledge-rich curriculum,” he explains. “It is about equipping kids with the knowledge and tools to take part in that conversation.”

As one of the first founders of a free school, what lessons did he take away from the experience?

“I learned that a lot of people think free schools have a lot more money, when they don’t. I learned that if you put the words ‘free school’ in your name you will be associated with a programme for a long time. And I learned that parents are key, because I knocked on the doors of hundreds of them to find out what they want, and they know what they want.

“If you ask parents about schools, they have two

MARK L

questions. Will my child be safe? Or, will you be strict? Which is a way of asking about safety. And, will you have a smart uniform? You laugh, but that’s what they say.”

(I am laughing because it’s mostly true.)

What about communities where people don’t think smart uniform is that important?

“They don’t exist,” Lehair says. Really? “Okay, there’s a tipping point. I think once you have a large enough sample, the others come along with this view.”

A problem for any campaign group pushing the benefits of autonomy is that teachers increasingly feel their freedoms are constrained. Multi-academy trusts often have specific requirements on teaching style. Even headteachers say autonomy was greater when under local council management as they mostly kept their nose out.

Lehair disagrees: “The reason we are all arguing and debating so much is because we have so many different types of schools. It’s amazing that within walking distance in London, you can have School 21 [a project-based learning secondary], and East London Science School [special subject focus], and Mossbourne Secondary [strict behaviour code].



Mark LeHain at graduation with his dad and nan, who were both teachers



Mark as a child

LEHAIN

“The really frustrating thing about education also comes out of the thing that’s really great about education. Everyone has a view on it. Everyone cares about it. It’s so important, that’s why we argue about it. But we have to work out how to do that positively.”

If the focus of PTE is on ‘debate’ won’t that simply cause more division? Wouldn’t a teacher be better off joining the College of Teaching to improve their skills?

“No, because they aren’t including parents,” says LeHain, who worries that voice gets lost too often. “We want to give a voice to people who are overlooked, that’s what’s different. And whether we are happy about how we got here, we’ve got more autonomy and freedom to do what we want over those four things – behaviour, curriculum, assessment and extra-curricular activities – and that’s exciting.”

“Justine Greening and Amanda Spielman can say what they like. Teachers and headteachers have the power over what happens in their classroom. We’ve just got to use it.”

IT’S A PERSONAL THING

- What is your favourite book?**

Catch 22, because it’s crazy, and also because Art Garfunkel was in the film.
- Are you more like Art Garfunkel or Paul Simon?**

Paul Simon, because I am short.
- What is a band you regret not seeing in concert?**

Led Zeppelin, because they were a family unit.
- If you could go back to university now, what would you study?**

Maths, because I’m more in love with the subject than ever. I really wavered between becoming a maths teacher or an economics teacher. But I’m glad I did maths.
- What toy would you most like for Christmas?**

You know those toys that have a string you pull and it talks? I want a Michael Gove one of those. Pull the string – “you’re an enemy of promise” – that would be funny.

DEBATE: SHOULD TOP UNIVERSITIES SPONSOR SCHOOLS?



PROFESSOR JANICE KAY

Provost, the University of Exeter

Universities absolutely should sponsor schools

The success of students from schools sponsored by Exeter University are proof the system works, says Prof Janice Kay

The University of Exeter cosponsors five schools, including one of two specialist maths schools in the country. For the university academics who lecture and mentor at the sponsored schools, removing the mystique of university is a main aim.

Sponsoring a school does not detract from Exeter's outreach work or efforts to widen participation in the UK; in fact it enhances it and is, in many ways, a logical extension of that mission.

This week one graduate of the Exeter maths school – one of a small clutch of pupils from local authority care to gain a university place in the UK – will embark on a maths degree at Oxford. Our specialist sixth-form college sent 18 per cent of its graduates to Oxbridge last year and was placed among the top one per cent of schools in the country.

Universities are integral to the operation of maths schools. They provide intellectual challenge, stimulation and rigour and are not only accountable for their success, but provide financial stewardship of public funding, leadership and support to appoint the very best heads, teachers and administrative staff.

The involvement of universities with a maths school is more intense from the usual sort of sponsorship.

“
A sponsoring university will commit to ongoing, deep involvement

With maths schools, the university takes on the reputational risk. A sponsoring university will not just appoint governors but commit to ongoing, deep involvement in a variety of ways. Students can obtain a university certificate for projects mentored by university staff and can attend masterclasses at undergraduate level.

Students have access to university libraries, open lectures and events. The school has access to the support and expertise of the university, from press support to its

network of business and industry links. The university can then recommend professional staff to lead its finance committee and engages industry leaders to sit on the board and provide strategic advice.

The Maths school was set up by the university and Exeter College, a sixth-form and tertiary college, after the government invited bids, and draws students from throughout the south-west, including some of the most deprived areas.

It has 28 boarding places, along with a means-tested bursary scheme, and takes students from some of the poorest parts of the UK. Many students are the first in their families ever to go to university and a greater number than average, 27 per cent, have disabilities or special educational needs. Last year, 36 per cent were from deprived backgrounds.

Among the students already making his mark is Charles, who is about to begin a degree at Cambridge. Neither of his parents went to university, but Charles has already been published in a peer-reviewed academic journal, and, based on his research, made a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The university's dedication to the success of these sponsored schools does not detract from the wider work it does with local schools.

Academics and staff dedicate hundreds of hours to local schools, raising aspirations, offering advice to teachers and running innovative academic programmes for children. Classics staff teaching Latin at a Devon school in their spare time so inspired students that the school introduced Latin GCSE for the first time.

Exeter Maths school – if its results are the barometer of success – is an elite state school, but its success benefits the wider community. Since its involvement as cosponsor, Exeter College has also seen maths participation go significantly up.

The school's teachers are specialist maths and physics teachers who can teach to a high level, but are no different from those in neighbouring schools and share their passion for their subject.

They help some local state schools develop their maths curriculum, run workshops for students, and share advice on applying to university, so schools throughout the area can benefit from their expertise.

Sponsoring a school requires commitment, dedication, time and money, and it is not without risk for a university. But the rewards are well worth the investment.



DR SAMINA KHAN

Director of undergraduate admissions and outreach, the University of Oxford

A focus on local schools is restrictive and unfair

Leading universities can better help the underprivileged by widening access and outreach schemes, argues Oxford's Dr Samin Khan

In an interview on BBC Radio 4's Today programme last year, Oxford's vice-chancellor Louise Richardson was asked why her university had not yet sponsored or opened a school.

“We're very good at running a university,” she explained – Oxford had just been named the world's leading institution by Times Higher Education – “but the university has no experience of running schools.”

It would be a distraction, she said, from the university's core functions: degree-level teaching and world-class research, not to mention an insult to the headteachers and education leaders who have dedicated their lives to the very specific demands of running a school.

Instead, the university would continue to demonstrate its commitment to social mobility through education by working with schools and teachers across the country in a host of innovative ways, to make sure that the young people who come to study here represent the full breadth of British society.

The arguments in favour of universities sticking to what they know are well-worn but worth repeating. A new University of Oxford School in our small city would be fantastic for the pupils who went there, but would it be fair on Oxford's other secondary or primary schools, or the pupils who missed out on the opportunity to attend? Would it skew the local market?

We prefer to spread our resources so that we can reach as many young people as possible, spending our money on widening access and participation programmes that can benefit students up and down the country – as a truly national and global institution should.

So if not sponsoring schools, what should elite universities be doing instead? The following are just a few examples of how Oxford is engaging.

In 2015, with Christ Church College, the university entered a partnership with the charity IntoUniversity to set up an education centre in Blackbird Leys, an area of Oxford with low progression to higher education. Three full-time staff and a team of volunteers, many from the university, provide after-school primary and secondary academic support sessions and mentoring. Since the centre opened, 75 per cent of school leavers

who attended the centre have gone on to university – far higher than the national average.

“
It would be a distraction from the university's core functions

Sustained contact programmes from Pembroke, Wadham and Corpus Christi colleges, such as OxNet in the north-west, work with pupils, teachers, families and the local communities, bringing Oxford's research into the classroom. They focus both on regional mobility and on encouraging young people to make successful applications to competitive universities across the UK. The Office for Fair Access in its latest annual report has recognised these projects as good practice for the sector to follow.

Each of our colleges is linked to a number of local authority areas, meaning that every school in the country has a first point of contact at Oxford. For example, one of those colleges, St Peter's, has just launched a new access initiative involving nine state secondary schools across England, providing professional development for teachers.

As a former state-school teacher, my favourite programme is the Inspirational Teacher Awards, which recognise state school teachers who go above and beyond to support pupils to gain a place at the University – especially those who might not have initially believed they were Oxford material. There's also our UNIQ summer schools, which have given thousands of year 12 state pupils the chance to try a subject at Oxford. Next year we will spend over £7 million on access and outreach work to bring more underrepresented students not only to Oxford but to many other selective universities.

Disappointingly, the Sutton Trust in 2016 reported that 43 per cent of state school teachers would not recommend that their most able pupils apply to Oxford or Cambridge. As a former teacher, I want to change that. And we'll do it by working with schools, pupils and teachers right across the country – not just one Oxford-branded school in our own back yard.

EXPERT

We need bold new ideas to complement pay rises and beat the retention crisis, claims Russell Hobby

There is a truth at the heart of education success that is too often lost in the controversies that attract the headlines. We control the factor with the most impact on children's education: the quality of teaching they receive.

If we don't ensure a steady supply of skilled, qualified, equipped and motivated teachers – and if we don't look after them when they arrive – then we are limiting our greatest means to make a difference.

And this task is now very challenging, with powerful forces working against us. The government is correct to point out that there are more full-time teachers in England than ever before. The trouble is that there are more pupils too. And they have an inconvenient habit of growing older – the numbers that spiked in primary are about to move across into secondary school and need new classes and teachers. There will be 600,000 more across both phases by 2020.

Last year, 2,000 fewer new teachers entered the profession than three years earlier. Concerns about workload and public sector pay freezes have compounded a rebound in graduate vacancies in the private sector. There are some lucrative alternatives too: it is just about possible to earn more in your second year in the City than some long-serving primary heads, while many talented graduates can find a first job on double a teacher's starting pay. This is an astonishing



RUSSELL HOBBY

CEO, Teach First

Let's forgive teachers their student loans

gap for the profession that makes all other professions possible.

It is this situation that will prove the biggest concern to a government committed to social mobility, for it is also those schools serving the most disadvantaged communities who suffer the biggest problems with recruitment, and it is the most vulnerable children who most need a talented teacher; they don't have a backup.

The situation on the ground is probably worse than official statistics claim, as vacancies are increasingly filled with interim staff, long-term supply and non-specialists.

Improvements to working conditions would undoubtedly go a long way but we mustn't neglect pay. It is a cliché to say that people don't become teachers for the money – and the fact that many of those

who leave teaching move to jobs with lower salaries lends weight to this belief – but pay does matter. It is a symbol of the status and a simple matter of making ends meet.

“
Loan forgiveness based on tenure rewards people for teaching

It is therefore welcome that the government is looking again at restraints on public-sector pay. But our needs are urgent,

the pay review process is long and the gap is wide. We need radical ideas.

One option, given the growing concern over student debt, would be student loan forgiveness. This might also be kinder to the nation's finances. Teach First has suggested that the government offer to write off student debt based on the amount of time someone spends in the profession; a small amount after a few years, a significant amount – say 50 per cent – after five years.

It should also be targeted to teachers who work in schools serving low-income communities or in shortage subjects. This is a more focused use of resources than bursaries; loan forgiveness based on tenure rewards people for teaching rather than training.

Cash in the bank matters to young people trying to establish themselves, so to borrow a recent phrase, there would need to be “an open and generous offer” on debt to cut through into people's daily lives. Loan forgiveness should be a complement to, not a substitute for, an uplift in pay and should come alongside further efforts to reduce unnecessary workload.

Now is the time for bold proposals to attract people to the profession and encourage them to stay. There is evidence from the US that such schemes can act as incentives. And we know that graduates are increasingly worried about debt. Forgiveness seems a fair reward for people who commit themselves to public service in the most challenging circumstances and it sends a vital message about the importance of teaching.



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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

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



Our blog reviewer of the week is Harry Fletcher-Wood, associate dean at the Institute for Teaching @HFletcherWood

Spinning plates

@AndyLewis_RE

Andy Lewis likens teachers to plate-spinners: his challenge this year is to be more intentional about which plates we drop. He takes a series of common sources of work and asks us to consider what would happen if we just stopped doing it: who would notice? What would the consequences be? Could you justify your actions?

"Some plates will get dropped by colleagues this year, you will drop a plate or two!" he writes. "Which ones will they be? Ones that you picked to drop? Or ones that you had no control over dropping?"

How to reduce workload in primary schools

@solomon_teach

Solomon Kingsnorth takes a ruthless approach to workload, axing many traditional priorities: out go displays, marking and email, in come shared units, constant feedback to school leaders, and a "big red button" which staff "can press when they feel that everything has got the better of them". This is more than an idealistic wishlist, however, as Kingsnorth shows why each suggestion matters and how it can be realistically achieved.

Shiny New Term

@shadylady222

Becky Wood writes an honest, thoughtful review of everything she tried to improve last year, and how it went. She attempted strategies to help students recall key quotes, and elegantly shows how this may have influenced students' results; she shows how she built upon and adapted the changes

she made last year for this year. She is clear about her position: "I'm not an academic. I'm a teacher who reads and trials ideas and strategies within the context of my classroom, the place where I'm happiest to be." By sharing what she is doing, and how she is doing it, along with numerous examples, she offers a useful model of teacher enquiry.

'Which Edward was that again, Miss? Was he a Stark or a Lancastrian?' Helping year 8 to navigate the Wars of the Roses by focusing on change

@PaulaLoboWorth

Paula Lobo Worth models teacher enquiry too, in this case looking in meticulous detail at what she hopes students will learn about the Wars of the Roses from her unit. Through careful planning and design of activities, Lobo Worth is able to draw out the subtleties and nuances of the era, and avoid students reaching simple conclusions. "Messy and uneven – that, for me, characterises the wars of the Roses. Not a uniformly dark journey into a big, black, murderous hole from which Henry Tudor rescued England. The past is never a rabbit hole – it is a warren."

From Prison to Ph.D.: The Redemption and Rejection of Michelle Jones

Eli Hager

After two decades in prison for murdering her four-year old son, Michelle Jones stepped free. She had been released a few weeks early to take up her PhD, which began the next day at New York University. After imprisonment, Jones first certified as a paralegal; then, encouraged by a former history professor who volunteered at the prison, she led a team of inmates researching the prison's history: their discoveries were published, presented at conferences via videolink, and won the Indiana Historical Society annual prize.

Jones was accepted by Harvard - but her place was rescinded by administrators, concerned about the impression it gave. This is complex story of redemption and rehabilitation is well worth your time.

Boys Are Not Defective

@amandaripley

This superb long read by Amanda Ripley investigates why boys are outperforming girls at almost every level in schools across the Middle East. Ripley digs beyond superficial answers she receives focusing on girls' good behaviour and hard work. Her journey incorporates career prospects, teacher effectiveness and the differential effectiveness of bad schools on boys and girls.

BOOK REVIEW

The global education race: Taking the measure of PISA and international testing

By: Sam Sellar, Greg Thompson, David Rutkowski

Published by: Brush Education

Reviewed by: Cath Murray



To reduce the message of this book to its simplest form: PISA tests are carefully designed to be as reliable as possible within real-world constraints but journalists and politicians (yes, those equally despicable creatures) often use them to make invalid claims.

This deceptively small book sets out to explain what these constraints are, how the OECD attempts to account for them and, ultimately, what policy makers can and cannot reasonably infer from PISA results. The authors sum up the problem succinctly: "Accurate test data on its own cannot improve school systems; it is how it is interpreted and used that is crucial."

As someone who works in the business (and not always at such self-respecting publications as my present employer), the authors' claim about the media reads as a sad platitude, that while PISA is the state of the art in educational measurement, the media (they are justifiably careful in using this word rather than the more specific "journalists") in their quest for punchy headlines, focus on a tiny aspect of what PISA actually is.

You guessed it: the rankings.

But the rankings are not always accurate, we are told. OECD documentation makes a point of explaining that it's not possible to assign exact positions to countries based on their average scores in reading, maths and science. So for example, when the Netherlands ranked 10th for maths in 2012, their score was not significantly different from that of Vietnam, in 17th place. The rankings are "estimates" and they are not really accurate unless we also know "the size of the errors associated with the rank".

But here's the rub. In order to maintain their own significance in the public consciousness, the "pragmatic" OECD, posit the authors, recognises that the media will want league tables. They thus manage to convey the sense of an organisation balancing on a knife edge between distortion

and insignificance. But which is the greater evil?

Interestingly, media headlines tend to bear out the authors' framing of PISA as producing "catalyst data" – creating a sense of crisis that can engender change. But the question is, are politicians drawing the right conclusions and thus, making the right changes? How many people know,

for example, that PISA is not even designed to test how well students have learned what is taught in schools, but how well they can "apply knowledge and skills to solve problems based on real-life situations"?

After Finland bagged the top spot for literacy in 2000, its edu-tourism industry boomed. Shanghai's position at the top of the table in 2009 led to a flurry of UK government attention

to work out what it was doing that was so effective, even though comparing a single Chinese province to the whole of the UK is like comparing "apples and oranges", the authors remind us – which leads to a whole other discussion of political pressure and buy-in.


This book aims not to discredit PISA testing, but to sort the wheat from the chaff and tell us which data should actually form the basis for policy decisions.

For that handful of academics already familiar with the technical aspects of PISA testing, this is possibly not the book for you. For everyone else working in schools, education policy or research – and especially if your knowledge of PISA is limited to the stories you read in the mainstream press – then this is a must-read – and a quick, accessible one.

It by no means denigrates PISA testing, just encourages informed scepticism of the attention-grabbing front pages and policy decisions that flow from it. I cannot possibly communicate the book's subtleties here – so please, don't rely on the titbits, read the whole thing. If we all do, the country will be so much better prepared to challenge the next round of ridiculous policy suggestions based on flawed inferences.

By the end, the authors have given just enough for an intelligent debate on the subject. In fact, they even end with seven points for discussion, should you ever get stuck in a lift with Justine Greening.





Week in Westminster

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

SATURDAY:

Today was the first ever conference for Parents and Teachers for Excellence, the "grassroots" campaign started by Rachel De Souza and other people largely sympathetic to the Conservative Party's approach to education.

So it was pretty impressive that Justine Greening managed to make such a terrible speech that one otherwise sympathetic audience member described it as "snubbing us simply by turning up".

At one particularly awkward part Greening described how "talent was equally spread" through society and "one type of school" wasn't needed for pupils. The speech was given at the highly selective Harris Westminster Academy, which only takes the academy chain's brightest A-level pupils. Awkward! (See page 14 for more).

Rachel De Souza, chief of Inspiration Trust, showed her sense of humour when chairing a panel on behaviour issues. Having been hit with a scandal concerning strict behaviour guidelines at one of her

schools, she pointed out someone was having a lunch when they put her up as leader of the debate!

SUNDAY:

Opening day of the Labour conference and Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, means business and is wearing leopard print to prove it.

During a robust fringe event, she claimed to be chuffed that Lord Nash, the academies minister, was resigning this week.

"Off you pop and good riddance," she said with characteristic diplomacy and grace.

She also professed love to our very own Freddie Whittaker. Hinting at a policy announcement about grammar schools Rayner said she wanted to say more, but couldn't, because "Freddie over there will tweet it, and I love Freddie, but he'll get me into trouble".

You can't have him Angie – he's ours!

MONDAY:

Rayner was up at 8am for an interview with

the Times Red Box podcast, Rayner took a swipe at Greening's liking for banging on about social mobility.

"Social mobility is like Santa Clause for some people" she boomed, "they don't believe in it but they talk about it to children." Ouch!

TUESDAY:

Nothing to see here!

WEDNESDAY:

Week in Westminster heard today that for Ofsted's 25th birthday on Friday, inspectors and everyone else working in the central office are bringing in a funny picture of themselves from 1992.

Given how young some of the central staff are these days, we expect several of them to be handing over ultrasounds.

We'll give a *Schools Week* mug to anyone who leaks us a picture of a young Amanda Spielman!

THURSDAY:

Theodore Agnew is our new academies minister! Everyone who sends out a press release is "delighted" about the news.

Funny how none of them mention that he resigned after the very first edition of this newspaper revealed his cosy links to the academy trust run by the previous academies minister Lord John Nash.

Neither did they discuss the £400 Vera Wang tea set purchased by his trust for its central office, nor how his knighthood was awarded by a committee with a member from his own trust*. Then there are his extensive donations to the Conservative Party, the position he held as a non-executive director at the DfE, and the substantial grants and indemnities his trust has been granted over the years.

No, it would be rude to mention any of that. We are totally DELIGHTED he is our new overlord.

*She didn't take part in any of the discussions about it though, you cynics!

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name Ben Gibbs

Age 45

Occupation Director, Restart-Ed, and the Relational Schools Foundation

Location Cambridgeshire

Subscriber since September 2014



FLY ON THE WALL

Where do you read your copy of *Schools Week*?

I first flick through it online, wherever I find myself and my iPad. I will then read the paper copy more thoroughly at leisure over the weekend.

Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?

The first half, particularly the deeper analyses of policy impact on schools.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one education policy, which would it be?

There are many, but I think most issues would go away if exam results were private to the student and their family, and not considered the property or priority of schools.

Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?

Anthony Crosland, for his promotion of the concept of comprehensive schools. That's the closest we've come to an emancipatory education strategy.

What is your favourite story or investigation reported in *Schools Week*?

Your (hopefully ongoing) investigation of the vast sums paid by schools in some MATs to companies owned by conflicted trustees or their relatives is vitally important. I'm not averse to an academised system, but it can never be credible until these loopholes are eliminated, and those who take advantage of them are omitted.

What do you do with your copy of *Schools Week* once you've read it?

It gets recycled.

What would you do if you were editor of *Schools Week* for a day?

I'd try to include more features, opinions and profiles of actual teachers just doing their jobs. It's easy to forget the value of just being a teacher, so I'd like to ensure they have a place.

Favourite memory of your school years?

I have so many good memories of school. A highlight? Getting onto Finders Keepers with Richard Stilgoe aged 10. We were thrashed by a team from Porthcawl, but it was an awesome day.

If you weren't working in education, what would you be doing?

I like to think it would be something to do with sailing or flying or the outdoors, but I'd most likely be in marketing, communications or journalism.

Favourite book on education?

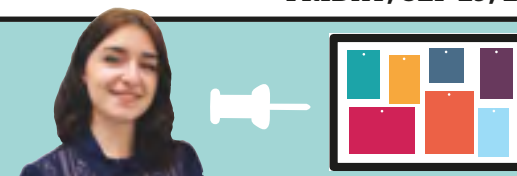
It's impossible to pick one as I love so many. I'd recommend Claxton and Lucas's *Educating Ruby* to anyone, and Barnard's *The Systems Thinking School* to all trainee Heads.

If you could be a fly on the wall in anyone's office, whose would it be?

Maybe Trump's, to see whether the chaos is intentional or not. Or Wilshaw's, just to see if he has any self-reflective moments of regret or repentance.

Fly on the Wall is a chance for you, the subscriber, to tell us what you love (and hate) about *Schools Week*, who you'd like to spy on and, of course, what the world of education would look like if you were in charge...

We'd love to hear from you – email samantha.king@schoolsweek.co.uk or submit an entry at surveymonkey.co.uk/r/flyonthewall



Teachers become the pupils in Oxford link-up

FEATURED

Teachers from nine secondary schools across the UK are linking up with Oxford academics to deepen their subject knowledge.

A new professional development programme will pair nine teachers with mentors from St Peter's College, who will share their knowledge over the course of a year.

The programme, launched last week, will be fully funded by the St Peter's College Foundation, including food, accommodation and transport for teachers, who will study with the academics outside school hours.

Schools participating in the project are King David High School in Liverpool, Sacred Heart Catholic College in Liverpool, Carmel College in St Helens, Upton Hall School in Wirral, Southgate School in Enfield, the John Warner School in Hertfordshire, St Mary Magalene Academy in Islington, King Edward VII Academy in Kings Lynn, and the Bourne Academy in Bournemouth, all of which were selected by the university.

"We picked areas of the country that we know particularly well, and then we picked some schools that I had been to," said Mark Damazer, the master of St Peter's College and a former controller of BBC Radio 4 and Radio 7.

"The idea is to use a world-class, professional, research-based academic who also teaches, to teach teachers



The teachers and their mentors

in the same way that they teach undergraduates."

It is the first time the university has run the link-up, and Damazer hopes the project's reach will extend to other areas if the pilot is successful.

"Quite a lot of teachers out there are probably very keen in some way to become adult students again, and go back to their subjects and generate or enlarge their passion for it," he added. "We have academics here full of excitement about the thought of teaching motivated school teachers."



Mark Damazer speaks to teachers at the launch

Daniel Schmidt, left, subject leader for history at The Bourne Academy with mentor Simon Unger

FREE RESOURCE WILL TACKLE FOMO

Public Health England has launched a series of free online PSHE resources tackling modern-day health issues pupils face, from online stress to FOMO, the fear of missing out.

'Rise Above for Schools' includes videos and lesson plans co-created with teachers, as well as activities suitable for KS3 and KS4 pupils.

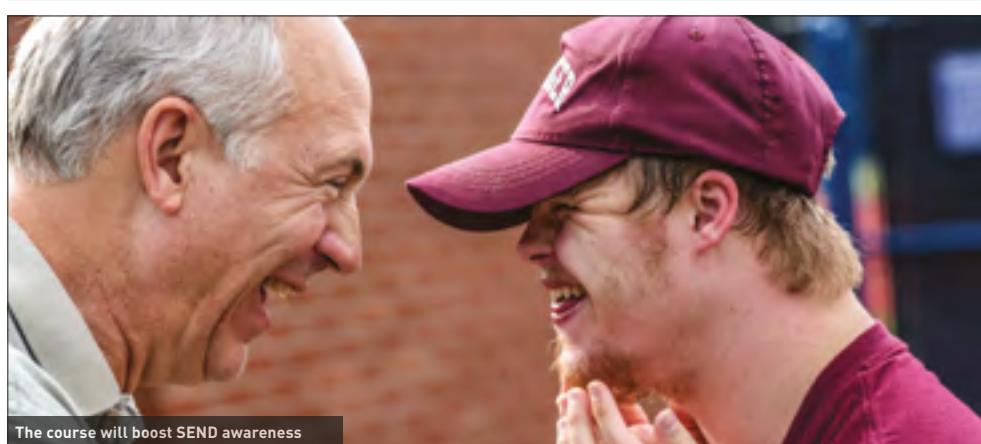
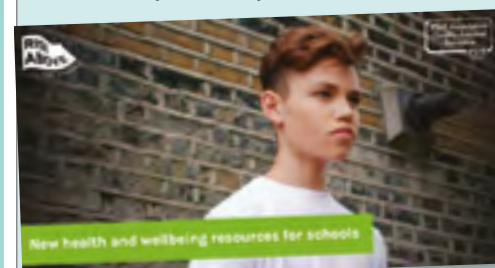
Topics include alcohol, exam stress, forming positive relationships, body image in a digital world, smoking, cyberbullying, online stress and FOMO – an anxiety that is caused by seeing social media posts about things happening elsewhere.

The films feature famous internet personalities and musicians, in an effort to encourage pupils to talk more openly.

"It is important young people are taught the knowledge they need to stay safe and healthy, and leave school prepared for life in modern Britain," said Nick Gibb, the schools minister.

"These new resources provide teachers with another tool to help develop engaging lessons about the issues that young people face today."

The resources are available to download at www.nhs.uk/riseabove/schools



The course will boost SEND awareness

SEND course for taxi drivers

Taxi drivers can now be trained in how to look after pupils with special educational needs and disabilities on their commutes to and from school.

This online programme will offer taxi drivers and pupil escorts a qualification that proves they are competent to work with pupils with a range of special needs.

Run by Spectrum Courses, the 'Transporting a Child with Special Educational Needs' course will cost £49, and covers everything from how to maintain a professional working relationship with a SEND child to the importance of maintaining routine.

"The idea for the course came from

me witnessing first-hand the numerous instances of lack of understanding between taxi drivers and SEND pupils," Jane Saggars, the founder of Spectrum Courses, explained.

"There are so many labels and diagnoses these days, and taxi drivers have a right to know what they need to know to keep both themselves and the children safe."

Presently, drivers on school contracts are not legally required to undertake SEND training – only to have DBS checks.

"This course will give them a professional, nationally recognised qualification, with an award that can be verified by the school or local authority," she added.



The project in action

UK project wins WISE award

An initiative helping young women in rural Tanzania access education and employment has won a top prize in the World Innovation Summit for Education Awards (WISE).

The 'Learner Guide Program' run by the charity Camfed sends young female African graduates into Tanzanian schools to support the next wave of pupils in their academic studies, as well as teaching them valuable life skills.

The annual WISE awards recognise projects that are addressing global education challenges, with projects judged according to strict criteria, and must already have demonstrated a transformative impact on individuals, communities and society.

There were a total of six winners in this year's awards, which were chosen from a shortlist of 15 projects from across nine different countries.

"When I heard that Camfed's Learner Guide Program was a WISE Award winner 2017, I shouted for joy," said Lydia Wilbard, the national director of Camfed Tanzania. "I shouted for more than 800 young African women Learner Guides, who are committed to changing the futures of marginalized girls at school."

"What an extraordinary opportunity to raise the voices and acknowledge the expertise of some of the most vulnerable girls in Africa, while contributing to the global knowledge of what works to transform young lives."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



LAURA WOODWARD

Head of school,
Haxby Road Primary
Academy

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS JOB: Deputy head at Haxby Road Primary Academy

INTERESTING FACT: Laura is a football fan and has twice watched a match from the royal box at Wembley.



WAYNE COOPER

Headteacher, Forest
Academy

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS JOB: Headteacher at Spring Meadow School

INTERESTING FACT: Growing up he always wanted to be a teacher, but was too embarrassed to admit it.



ELIZABETH SWAN

Headteacher,
the Everitt Academy

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS JOB: Deputy headteacher of Saxmundham Free School

INTERESTING FACT: When she was nine, Swan phoned up Roald Dahl to find out his address and chatted to the man himself, from his writing shed. She is forever grateful to the Yellow Pages.



SIMON CAMBY

Group director of
education, Cognita

START DATE: August 2017

PREVIOUS JOB: Director of education for Europe at Cognita

INTERESTING FACT: Simon spends as much time as possible walking with his dog on the hills in Yorkshire where he lives.



MARTIN COLLIER

Headmaster, Haileybury
and Imperial Service
College

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS ROLE: Headmaster of St John's School in Leatherhead

INTERESTING FACT: He is the author and editor of numerous history text books, including titles such as *Heinemann Advanced History: Germany 1919-45*.

Get in touch!

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

future



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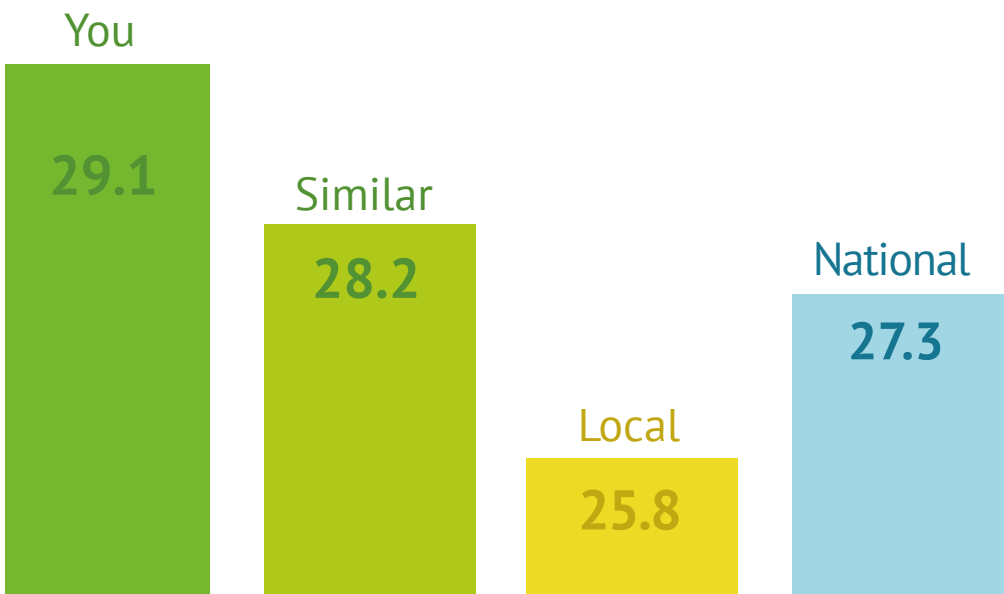
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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a **Schools Week** mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins a mug. Tweet a picture of your completed spot the difference using @schoolsweek in the tweet.