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- 'I don't believe it will go through in its current form,' says party grandee

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

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ELECTION WATCH

Parties promise billions extra for education

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Labour and the Liberal Democrats put school funding at the centre of their general election campaigning this week with competing pledges to boost education spending.

Labour will pump £4.8 billion extra core funding into schools, with a promise to spend £21 billion on new buildings and maintenance over the next parliament.

In contrast, the Lib Dems say they will give £7 billion to education, using some of it to protect school funding in real terms with the rest going to additional projects.

Labour's spending plan forms part of its National Education Service, the umbrella term for a raft of reforms that include free adult education and the return of the education maintenance allowance for 16 to 19-year-olds.

Speaking at the launch of the service on Wednesday, the shadow education secretary, Angela Rayner, said the policies completed Tony Blair's 1997 vision for education. She accused the Conservatives of "dismantling the incredible legacy of the last Labour government".

The party's £21 billion capital spending plans include £8 billion to create new school places and £13 billion for maintenance.

This is less generous than the Conservative offer in 2015, when the party allocated £23 billion over the 2015 to 2020 parliament.

However, Rayner told *Schools Week* the £21 billion pledge was not exhaustive, and that more money could be found if needed.

"[In] a lot of my costings put out so far there is a significant buffer, there is quite a substantial amount of money more than what we've said.

Labour is considering the reintroduction of national pay bargaining powers for teachers for the first time in 26 years, *Schools Week* has learned.

The proposal, which also includes the reintroduction of a negotiating body for school support staff, is included in the schools policy section of a manifesto draft, which also sets out plans to give teachers "more direct involvement" in the curriculum.

Jeremy Corbyn, the Labour leader, has previously said he wants a return to national pay bargaining for civil servants, telling the national conference of the Public and Commercial Services Union last year that it was "absurd" to have hundreds of different wage negotiations.

A final version of the party's manifesto was expected to be signed off yesterday by senior Labour MPs, party executive



Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and Angela Rayner, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary

"You will see in the manifesto that it is all fully costed, and there is leeway in it, because some of these things are not an exact science."

Rayner also said the party considered spending on buildings differently to the annual per-pupil funding, claiming it was "a lot easier" to fund buildings and that it "can be good borrowing, as well, because you're investing in the system and that will give you more money in the long run".

The party released more detail on how it will fund its education plans, including a staggered 7 percentage point increase in corporation tax.

However, the Conservatives ridiculed the plans.

David Gauke, the chief secretary to the

Treasury, said: "Jeremy Corbyn can't deliver any of this – they're just made-up promises on the back of nonsensical spending plans. He's spent this damaging tax rise on businesses on 12 different things and he's already dropped numerous things he's said he'd do before."

The Lib Dems' spending plans include protection for per-pupil funding at a cost of £3.3 billion, with £1.26 billion to ensure no schools lose out from the national funding formula.

There will also be £415 million to protect the pupil premium in real terms, and £165 million for teacher development, as part of a package that totals £6.9 million.

The Conservatives are yet to announce their spending plans.

A return to national pay bargaining is on Labour's cards

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Exclusive

members and others before its official launch next week.

But a copy of the draft seen by *Schools Week* includes a proposal to return to national pay bargaining.

The draft also pledges £90 million to extend schools-based counselling services to all schools, £150 million to exempt schools from having to pay the apprenticeship levy and promises a consultation on teacher sabbaticals or temporary placements with industry.

National pay bargaining, which determined a fixed salary scale for teachers across the country and included union negotiations, was phased out in the late 1980s and came to an end with the establishment of the School Teachers Review Body (STRB) in 1991.

Under the present system, the STRB seeks input from a range of stakeholders and advises the education secretary on teacher pay. It is up to the minister to decide whether to implement a rise in pay

scales. Maintained schools must follow the scales; academies can choose.

Under a pay bargaining system, workers negotiate at a national level through their unions.

In the draft manifesto, Labour also pledges to deliver a strategy for special needs education "based on inclusivity" and pledges to embed SEND "more substantially" into initial teacher training.

And it promises to give teachers "more direct involvement in the curriculum" in a bid to tackle teacher shortages, although no further details are given.

The party will also consider scrapping the government's proposed new baseline tests for reception children, and review SATs.

It comes after Corbyn and shadow education secretary Angela Rayner on Wednesday launched Labour's new "National Education Service", which will include billions of pounds more funding for schools.

TORY AREAS FARE BADLY UNDER NEW FUNDING PLAN

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Exclusive

With less than four weeks until the general election, *Schools Week* exclusively reveals the constituencies that face having the worst-funded schools under the government's new national funding formula

Conservative safe seats, including several represented by senior party members, will be the worst-off under the government's proposed new national schools funding formula.

Exclusive analysis of government data, completed for *Schools Week* by the National Union of Teachers (NUT) shows that 24 of the 25 areas which will receive the lowest per-pupil funding are represented by Conservative MPs.

Speculation in the wider media, including a front page in the London Evening Standard, suggests the MPs are clamouring for a climbdown.

The new formula attempts to address historic anomalies that have led to wide regional variations in how much schools get for each pupil.

First mooted in 2010, schools in areas with the lowest levels of funding have been particularly agitated over continued delays.

But details of the formula have proved controversial since they were put out for consultation last year, with senior Conservatives speculating it will not go ahead in its current form.

Any u-turn would be in the face of years of lobbying by MPs, especially Conservatives who represent rural areas traditionally given less than their urban counterparts.

However, the NUT's analysis shows that if the current plan is fully implemented, many rural areas hoping for a funding boost will end up with the smallest per-pupil funding settlements.

One of the most high-profile MPs to express disappointment with the formula is Graham Brady, chair of the powerful 1922 committee of backbench Conservative MPs.

According to the NUT analysis, schools in his Altrincham and Sale West seat will go from being the 35th worst-funded constituency to the third.

Brady, who has campaigned "for decades" for a fairer approach, told *Schools Week* that although the government should be "commended" for working towards the new settlement, the draft formula would not correct many of the anomalies it had set out to address.

"Some badly funded areas like Trafford would actually lose rather than gain from it," he said. "It is obvious that the formula needs to be revisited. After several discussions with ministers, I am confident that a better way forward will be found."

Sutton Coldfield in the West Midlands, where Conservative Andrew Mitchell is the MP, will go from the 321st worst-funded constituency to the 15th.

Mitchell said he was "very aware" from discussions with headteachers in his constituency that the proposals were "not in

25 worst-funded constituencies under the national funding formula (NFF)

RANK OF WORST-FUNDED CONSTITUENCIES AFTER NFF (1 = WORST)	MP'S NAME AND PARTY (BLUE = CONSERVATIVE, ORANGE = LIBERAL DEMOCRAT)	CONSTITUENCY	RANK BEFORE NFF (1 = WORST)	CHANGE IN RANK AS A RESULT OF NFF (RED = WORSE POSITION, GREEN = BETTER)
1	Ranil Jayawardena	North East Hampshire	2	1
2	Julian Sturdy	York Outer	1	-1
3	Graham Brady	Altrincham and Sale West	35	32
4	Sir Peter Bottomley	Worthing West	5	1
5	Jeremy Quin	Horsham	8	3
6	Suella Fernandes	Fareham	11	5
7	David Davis (Brexit secretary)	Haltemprice and Howden	9	2
8	Greg Clark (Business secretary)	Tunbridge Wells	12	4
9	Jo Churchill	Bury St Edmunds	4	-5
10	Liam Fox (Trade secretary)	North Somerset	19	9
11	Sir Nicholas Soames	Mid Sussex	10	-1
12	Michael Fallon (Defence secretary)	Sevenoaks	3	-9
13	Dominic Raab	Esher and Walton	6	-7
14	Mims Davies	Eastleigh	27	13
15	Andrew Mitchell	Sutton Coldfield	321	306
16	Pauline Latham	Mid Derbyshire	7	-9
17	Nick Clegg	Sheffield, Hallam	13	-4
18	Ken Clarke	Rushcliffe	162	144
19	George Osborne (standing down)	Tatton	152	133
20	Peter Lilley (standing down)	Hitchin and Harpenden	91	71
21	Andrea Leadsom (Environment secretary)	South Northamptonshire	33	12
22	Alberto Costa	South Leicestershire	20	-2
23	Michael Tomlinson	Mid Dorset and North Poole	29	6
24	Steve Brine	Winchester	41	17
25	Ed Argar	Charnwood	21	-4

Source: National Union of Teachers/Connect

a satisfactory state", and said he had raised his concerns with the schools minister Nick Gibb.

"I accept funding needs to be rejigged, but clearly the effect on schools in Sutton Coldfield will be severe, and that is why, in my opinion, it is necessary to rethink [the formula].

"I don't believe it will go through in its current form."

Tatton in Cheshire, the seat of the former chancellor George Osborne, will rise from 152nd worst-funded to 19th.

Esther McVey, the former employment minister who hopes to retain the seat for

the Conservatives, told *Schools Week* she would work with teachers, parents and other Cheshire MPs to "fight for what's right for our schools", although she did not directly criticise the government.

Ranil Jayawardena, whose North East Hampshire constituency will be the worst-funded under the proposals, also said there was "more to do before the formula is finalised".

Kevin Courtney, the general secretary of the NUT, says the data shows the government has no choice but to pump more money into the system.

"Even senior Conservatives are rejecting


this funding settlement once they realise that, despite the promises of their leaders, their constituencies will not be better off, but in many cases a good deal worse.

"Whichever party forms the next government, it is an inescapable fact that the solution to school cuts is not to rearrange the formula but to put more money in the system."

The Conservative party last week refused to comment on reports that it could scrap the long-awaited formula, instead telling *Schools Week* the only way to finance education properly was through "strong, stable leadership".


SENIOR TORIES AFFECTED BY CUTS

ALTRINCHAM AND SALE WEST, GREATER MANCHESTER
MP: Graham Brady




Chair of the 1922 committee.
3rd worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 35th

TATTON, CHESHIRE
MP: George Osborne




Former chancellor and now editor of the *Evening Standard* who recently urged the government to "think again" over the formula.
19th worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 152nd

ESHER AND WALTON, SURREY
MP: Dominic Raab




Tipped as a future education secretary.
13th worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 6th

RUSHCLIFFE, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
MP: Ken Clarke




Former cabinet minister who served as chancellor under John Major.
18th worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 162nd

SUTTON COLDFIELD, WEST MIDLANDS
MP: Andrew Mitchell




Former cabinet minister
15th worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 321st

FAREHAM, HAMPSHIRE
MP: Suella Fernandes



Former education committee member and chair of Michaela Community School.
6th worst-funded constituency under NFF, previously 11th

 **NERD NOTE:** Technically there are no MPs at the moment as they all lose the title in a pre-election period. We considered calling them the official term of 'candidate', but that seemed to imply they were new to the seat. And in the story above, they're not. So we stuck with MP because it seemed less misleading.

NEWS

SELECTION MAKES IT HARDER FOR PLYMOUTH UTC TO RECRUIT

BILLY CAMDEN @BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

A troubled university technical college will not take on any new year 10 pupils this September after suggestions that it finds it harder to recruit because it is in a selective area.

UTC Plymouth has halted recruitment of 14-year-olds for the 2017-18 academic year, although it hopes to start recruitment again next year.

Schools Week revealed last month that Plymouth is the emptiest established UTC in the country, operating at 24 per cent of its 650-pupil capacity. Numbers also dropped from 180 in 2015-16, to 153 this year.

Nick Buckland, Plymouth UTC's chair of governors, said the college was consulting staff on a proposed "restructure" that would "secure the UTC's future sustainability".

"As part of the plan for securing its future the college will not be admitting a year 10 intake for 2017," he said.

"This impacts on a relatively small number of pupils and the college is working with the council to ensure all pupils are placed in other suitable schools and the college is in full communication with those individual pupil's parents."

He added the college would continue to admit year 12 pupils for 2017-18 and it was "intended" that recruitment into year 10 would resume in September 2018.

Buckland also announced the resignation of principal Polly Lovell, but said she would continue to provide "guidance and support to the leadership team".

However, a spokesperson for the UTC said recruitment was "particularly challenging" in the region because of "low numbers in the general student population. UTCs admit students at the age of 14, two years before GCSEs; this is an additional challenge particularly in a city that supports a grammar school system."

The spokesperson would not comment further.

But the comment suggests other schools in the area – likely to be classed as secondary moderns – are more reluctant to allow bright pupils that may be best suited to vocational education to leave, having already seen the brightest pupils selected by grammars.

It comes after the Sunday Express reported last weekend that education secretary Justine Greening said she would build a system that gave "every child" a chance to attend a grammar school.

UTC recruitment is already stalling. Schools Week revealed last month that pupil numbers have dropped at about two-thirds of established UTCs this academic year.

Seven have closed, or announced plans for closure, since they launched in 2010.

Breakfast clubs 'more effective' than free meals

FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

Labour's plan to provide free school meals for all primary pupils "would come at a significant cost" and might not improve pupil outcomes, says the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS).

The think tank estimates that giving every 7 to 11-year-old a free lunch would cost upwards of £950 million a year. Other policies, such as free breakfast clubs "might be a cheaper and more effective way to improve both education and health outcomes".

However, shadow education secretary Angela Rayner defended the policy, telling Schools Week it would be a "real lifeline" for working families that did not meet the criteria for free school meals.

The IFS report, released on Tuesday, was based on a 2012 study it did of a pilot scheme for primary pupils in Newham, east London, and Durham.

It reported that about 40 per cent of the total cost was "deadweight loss", providing free meals to pupils whose parents "would otherwise have paid".

The institute says that since the pupils were consuming the same meal they would have otherwise have paid for, there "aren't likely to be very many benefits for their health or attainment".

But report authors Lorraine Dearden and Christine Farquharson did say the policy



represents "a significant giveaway" to families.

It would save families with one child £11.50 per week which is "about a sixth of the £70 that similar families spend on food each week".

Based on the number of primary pupils not currently eligible for free school meals, and a take-up of 90 per cent, the IFS estimates the extension of free meals to all pupils would cost about £800 million a year.

The government would also be forced to increase funding to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland by £150 million, bringing the total annual costs to £950 million.

However, Dearden and Farquharson predict that other one-off upfront expenses related to kitchen renovations would cost at least another £200 million.

Researchers say that while the pilot

in Newham and Durham found primary pupil assessment scores increased by an additional two months' progress over two years, it was "far from certain" that universal free school meals would be equally effective if rolled out nationally.

Newham and Durham, for example, had relatively high levels of disadvantage. "If pupils in better-off areas are more likely to pay for school meals or to have healthier packed lunches, the gains from making school lunches free to all students are likely to be smaller."

The researchers suggest that, rather than providing free school lunches for all children, policymakers could instead support school breakfasts.

The IFS found that a one-year breakfast programme in disadvantaged schools delivered "similar academic benefits" at about one-tenth of the cost of universal free school meals.

Schools Week understands that introducing breakfast clubs had been discussed for inclusion in the party's manifesto, but it was not in a leaked version of a draft seen by the publication.

The IFS report concluded the policy "would not directly benefit the poorest children, who are already entitled to free lunches".

But Rayner told Schools Week the proposal would give all primary pupils a hot meal during school, which "does help attainment and it does take away stigma".

Reform of summer-born lottery delayed

JOHN DICKENS @JOHNDICKENSSW

Schools minister Nick Gibb is under fire for "failing to act" nearly two years after promising to stop the "postcode lottery" of unfair admissions for summer-born children.

Gibb (pictured) launched a review in July 2015 to investigate the admission rules for summer-born children, which he said was an issue "repeatedly raised on the doorstep" during campaigning for the 2015 general election.

Currently, pupils born between April 1 and August 31 can start school when they have turned five, but are typically placed straight into year 1, rather than reception.

Gibb said it was "important children do not miss the vital teaching that takes place in the reception class". The schools minister then announced in September 2015 the government would amend the admissions code so schools had to admit summer-born five-year-olds into reception classes.

However, a consultation over the plans has still not been launched, with the snap general election expected to delay the changes further. Any changes to the ministerial line-up at the Department for Education (DfE) could also threaten the policy proposal.

Pauline Hull, co-founder of the Summer Born Campaign group, said children were "being forced to start school early or miss a



whole year of school".

"Two years after Nick Gibb's promise to stop the postcode lottery and unfair admissions process for summer-born children, the Department for Education has again failed to act."

Hull said summer-borns left to miss a whole year of school also contradicted Gibbs' views on pupil absence through term-time holidays.

Gibb had previously said parents shouldn't be able to take their children on holiday during term time because "abundant academic evidence" showed time spent in school was "one of the single strongest determinants of academic success".

The government funded the Isle of Wight council to fight a legal challenge over a fine issued to Jon Platt, who took his daughter out of school to go to Florida in April 2015.

Platt argued his daughter still had a 90 per cent attendance record, but judges ruled that regular attendance had to follow the

rules set by schools. The delay in summer-born changes was also raised by Helen Hayes, Labour MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, in April. She submitted a parliamentary question on when the proposed consultation over admissions changes would be launched. But Gibb said it was not possible to respond "in the time available" before prorogation (the end of parliament) after Theresa May announced the snap general election.

The DfE could not respond to a request for comment because of purdah rules.

But Gibb told parliament in October last year the government needed "more information and data" before it could make a call on admissions.

Concerns over the financial impact on the policy, which could affect both early years and post-16 providers, appear to have delayed a final decision.

Gibb launched the review after DfE figures showed children born in August were far more likely to be labelled as having special educational needs (SEN) by the end of primary school.

Hull said savings in reduced SEN diagnosis alone could counter any cost concerns.

Gibb said in October he understood parents' "frustration" as they waited for the change, but said it was "important" to consider how to implement the policy.

NEWS

PREGNANT PUPILS SHIFTED TO PRUs AS CUTS BITE

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Investigates

Cuts to services that support pregnant pupils are leaving teachers having to act as "miracle workers", with many schools shifting mothers-to-be into pupil referral units (PRUs) while keeping them on roll at their old school.

An investigation by *Schools Week* has found at least three council services set up to support pupils parents have been cut or are set to close.

Unions say that teachers should not have to step in to support pupils without the family officers and tutors who used to provide extra help.

"Teachers can't be expected to have the knowledge and skills to give all the right support to a girl who's pregnant," said Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers. "Teachers work 50-hour weeks. They can't be miracle workers, too".

A pregnant school pupil needed "an awful lot of support" to continue into higher education after having a baby, but cuts to local authority services, as well as to other services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) and truancy officers, had left the responsibility with schools, she said.

Freedom of Information (FOI) requests by *Schools Week* show that of the 62 councils who responded out of the 120 approached, at least 89 pupils across 10 councils

accessed some kind of alternative provision outside their mainstream school when they became pregnant.

The other councils said either no pregnant pupils moved into alternative provision, or they did not hold the information.

The alternative provision included "hospital education services", as well as home tuition and PRUs.

Gloucestershire Hospital Education Service, a PRU, dual registers pregnant pupils with their main school. A pregnancy support worker gives the expectant mother a parenting course once a week at their school, and then a tutor gives one or two hours of face-to-face lessons a day in the PRU during the pupil's 18 weeks of maternity leave. Ofsted rated the service outstanding in 2012.

In 2013-14, 22 pregnant pupils used the hospital service. That dipped to nine a year later, rising to 11 in 2015-16.

But similar services have been cut, with schools having to commission or deliver the help themselves rather than through councils.

Swindon's centre for pregnant pupils was closed "some years ago", with girls now supported by their school, said a council spokesperson.

In Lancashire, a "number of girls were previously supported by the pregnancy and parenting service", but this had also been "disestablished", said Lancashire council.

Meanwhile Coventry county council's



hospital education service, which provides education for pupils "unable to attend their usual school temporarily due to accident or illness, or teenage pregnancy and young motherhood" according to the website, is set to close next term.

"We are ceasing to run the dedicated pregnancy support service at the end of this term," said a spokesperson, confirming "cuts" were behind the move.

Alison Hadley, director of Teenage Pregnancy Knowledge and a former national lead on the issue for the government, said the fall in the number of school-age pregnancies could explain why councils could no longer justify more support.

From 1998 to 2015, the conception rate among under-18s fell 55 per cent, with an "even steeper" drop in the number of pupils going ahead with their pregnancies, she said.

Councils were forced to ask if they could justify a particular service for that group.

She also said schools might be more

willing to retain studious pupils who fell pregnant, but refer those already disaffected.

At Newcastle Bridges School, a PRU in Newcastle, three or four pregnant pupils in year 11 or below are referred each academic year.

Mark Jones, the school's head, which was rated outstanding last year, said it was "down to the student and family if they wish to come".

Pupils are referred when they are 12 weeks pregnant and study their normal curriculum full-time. They have a family support officer, parenting lessons, and can later place their baby in an on-site nursery.

He said most young mothers chose not to return to mainstream schooling.

East Riding Yorkshire Home Tuition Service tutored five expectant mothers in 2015-16 and three the year before. Pupils with the service were supposed to continue their GCSE curriculum, but sometimes their "school had made a decision to withdraw them" from their GCSEs, said a council spokesperson.

Pupils could be withdrawn for many reasons, including their parents or the girl asking to be withdrawn, not completing a course unit, long periods of absence and medical reasons, they said.

A spokesperson for the DfE said pupils should never be excluded because of pregnancy, but it was up to individual schools and councils how they offered provision to pregnant pupils.

No-frills private schools wait to pounce on English market

JESS STAUFENBERG

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Exclusive

Companies that run for-profit private schools overseas are "waiting" for the right opportunity to set up in England as the market for low-fee schools becomes more promising, say investors.

The future of private schools overseas was at the centre of a conference in central London last week run by *Education Investor* magazine

Panellist Paul Vincent Cable, co-founder and chief executive of EnSo Impact, which runs two low-cost, for-profit schools in Kenya, told *Schools Week* the company was now "looking at" doing the same in England. It was waiting for the right location to come up.

Current private school fees average £13,500, but can rise to £30,000 a year.

Cable said fees could be reduced by between a third and a half by reducing staff costs and allowing technology "to deliver some aspects of the lesson" through pupil-centred learning and a tablet for every child.

An application for a low-cost private school was submitted to the Department for Education earlier this year. The Independent Grammar School Durham, which will cost parents about £2,900 a year, is waiting for approval to open in September with 100 pupils.



The school, which will offer a "traditional grammar school education", may need to open in January next year, however, if forced to wait for approval, says Chris Gray, a former head who submitted the application. So far it has garnered 58 expressions of interests from parents.

Mark Roelofsen, a co-founder of the International and Private Schools Education Forum, which holds conferences for education investors, said the free schools programme was also inspiring would-be

founders of low-cost private schools.

Free school applicants who had refurbished old offices and set up on brownfield sites, while maintaining "high quality education", had helped investors to "gain confidence" in the potential of low-cost private schools, he said.

But other investors said even at £6,000 a year, companies would struggle to deliver better educational outcomes for pupils than parents could get free in a local state school.

Henry Warren, a former director at

Pearson and former chief information officer at Mwabu, an education technology start-up focused on the African market, said it was "harder to make the case for private tuition" when the UK spent a lot on state education. Adam Nichols, founder and managing director of Schole, which also runs low-cost private schools in Africa, agreed, saying English state education was "pretty good".

The UK government spends about £4,800 a year on a primary pupil, and about £6,200 on a secondary pupil in England, according to research by Professor Francis Green of the UCL Institute of Education, previously reported in *Schools Week*.

Unions have not welcomed the prospect of low-cost, for-profit private schools expanding in the UK.

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said £6,000 a year was still too expensive for many families, while Chris Keates, the general secretary of the NASUWT, said the long-term sustainability of the low-cost, for-profit model was also "in doubt".

Jose Rodriguez Cesanas, director of Sovereign Capital, which specialises in investment in the education sector, said property, facilities and staff costs in the UK were still too high for the model to work.

The UK wanted to avoid international "horror stories" of private schools collapsing where fees had been set too low compared with costs, he said.

NEWS

TROUBLED TRUST APPOINTS NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

JOHN DICKENS @JOHNDICKENSSW

The Wakefield City Academies Trust (WCAT) has appointed a new chief executive to deliver a “renewed focus on teaching and learning” after a turbulent few months for the chain.

Chris Pickering will now head the 21-school trust, based in Yorkshire. He was chief executive of the Diverse Academies Trust, based in the east Midlands.

He takes over on a fixed-term contract from Mike Ramsay, who last week stepped down as interim chief executive, although he will still chair governing bodies within the trust for the time being.

Dr John Hargreaves, WCAT chair, said the trust had undergone a “transformation” in how it operated and was now in a “much sounder position”.

“The board felt the time was right to appoint somebody with considerable experience in education to oversee the final push into this summer’s exams and focus our teaching and learning efforts in the new academic year.”

WCAT was the subject of a government finance and governance review last year. A draft version of the report raised concerns over Ramsay’s pay, and forecast budget deficits.

A final report has not been published.

But annual accounts revealed the trust had breached rules over payments to Hi Tech Group, an IT firm run by Ramsay. Auditors stated some of those services were not provided “at cost” and did not follow appropriate approval procedures.

The trust said it has since tightened procedures.

However, WCAT has also pulled back on expansion plans. It was given £530,000 extra funding by the government to establish an academy hub in Bradford.

It has used the funding to take over three schools, but pulled out of sponsoring another two schools in the region – Hanson School and University Academy Keighley.

The trust has not said why it walked away, but said Ofsted documented that the improvement support it provided at both schools had a “significant impact”.

Schools Week reported in January that two of the trust’s schools had also been put into special measures.

A spokesperson at the time said the trust was serving some of the north’s “most challenged communities”, adding it “takes time to turn them around”.

Ramsay, in a statement issued last week, said the trust has now re-established “firm foundations, ethos and vision to build on”, adding Pickering would “steer the trust through our next chapter of development”.

He said he was proud of trust staff who had “embraced change and the challenges that we faced together to position the trust in a different and more positive place”.

Ramsay, previously chair of WCAT, was appointed interim chief executive after the resignation of Allan Yellup in early 2016.

Top earning primary head suspended

JOHN DICKENS @JOHNDICKENSSW

The country’s best-paid primary headteacher has been suspended from his post as executive head of the Gipsy Hill Federation of schools in Lambeth, south London.

Sir Craig Tunstall, awarded a knighthood for his services to education in 2014, was paid £330,394 last year – making him one of the country’s best-paid school leaders. The federation runs eight local authority-maintained schools.

Sarah Wintle, chair of governors at the federation, said Tunstall has been suspended pending an internal investigation undertaken with Lambeth Council.

The Sun newspaper said that the suspension related to allegations of fraud, but the council would not confirm this.

In a letter to parents on Tuesday, Wintle said: “Whilst I appreciate that you may be concerned about the content of this letter, I would like to reassure parents that there are no concerns relating to child protection.

“Further I would like to reassure the school community that the provision of education will not be disrupted in any way.”

She said arrangements had been put in place to ensure continuity across the federation. Executive headteachers Susan Holt and Laleh Laverick and the eight heads



would manage the day-to-day running of all schools, with support from the council.

It was reported last year that the federation had been given permission to convert all its schools into academies. Six are rated outstanding by Ofsted, with the other two rated good. It declined to comment on the conversion progress when approached by *Schools Week* last year.

The federation was also due to open a secondary free school this year, but that has been delayed.

Andy Prendergast, the GMB union’s senior organiser for south London, has now urged authorities to “halt any attempts” to grant academy status because it would “remove the ability of the council to oversee the finances”.

A spokesperson for Lambeth council confirmed the suspension, but would only add: “Lambeth council has been supporting the federation in this matter.

“It is important to note suspension is a neutral act and is used to protect all parties whilst an investigation continues.”

Schools Week reported in November last year that Tunstall was paid £330,394 – more than double the £143,000 paid to prime minister Theresa May.

The disclosure challenged arguments made by some critics who claim the government’s academies system is to blame for a rise in salaries paid to staff overseeing multiple schools – particularly executive heads and chief executives of academy trusts.

An investigation by *Schools Week* this year ranked academy chief executives by their salary per good or outstanding school.

Sir Dan Moynihan, chief executive of the Harris Federation who earns £420,000 a year, topped the tables, taking home £14,483 per good school.

But Tunstall’s pay per good school put him way in front, at £41,299 per school. The federation also runs two children’s centres.

A spokesperson for the trust said at the time that Tunstall was paid according to national financial regulations.

They added that the now suspended executive head and his leadership team had gone through “an amazing journey in each of our eight schools”.

“We do not do quick-fix remedies. The work they have done is substantial, and sustainable into the future.”

TRUSTS MISS EFA’S ACCOUNTS DEADLINE

BILLY CAMDEN @BILLYCAMDEN

Nearly 140 academy trusts failed to submit their accounts on time in the past financial year.

Trusts must submit audited accounts to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) by December 31 each year, under rules in the Academies Handbook.

However, a Freedom of Information (FOI) request by the Local Schools Network has revealed 137 trusts did not meet the deadline.

These include one of the largest chains, REAch2, which says it struggled because of its exceptional growth, as well as trusts in financial trouble and due to close. Ten university technical colleges were also on the list.

The Department for Education (DfE) said trusts that missed the deadline had “subsequently submitted and continue to submit” their accounts.

Trusts that do not comply with the requirement face intervention. The departments say this is “always proportionate and risk-based and preserves the effective education of children”.

The DfE would not confirm whether any action had been taken.

Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said the late filing of accounts was “another demonstration that academies are not being properly held to account for the use of public money”.

But REAch2, which now runs 55 schools, said its late filing followed an “exceptional year” in which it changed its model.

Originally developed as a network of standalone academy trusts – in an increasingly defunct arrangement known as an “umbrella trust” – the group had to move 11 individual academies into one set of accounts.

A spokesperson told *Schools Week*: “The process took much longer than usual and the trust sought an extension from EFA.” The trust submitted its accounts on January 16.

The Ridings’ Federation of Academies was delayed by ongoing financial troubles.

Its two schools – Winterbourne International and Yate International – are due to be transferred to another trust from September. Discussions are ongoing as to who will take over.

The trust’s interim chief executive, Dave Baker, said the deficit, coupled with the turbulence of three chief executives last year and an overhaul of the governing body, meant the accounts could not be submitted by December 31.

He told *Schools Week* the trust was confident it would submit the accounts by the end of May and the EFA was aware of the situation.

Chris Mitchell, principal of Elstree UTC, said the late filing of accounts at his school followed an “unexpected change in the staffing of our finance manager and a subsequent overrun with the auditors”.

He added: “All accounts have now been



appropriately audited and submitted.”

Another trust told *Schools Week* its accounts were delayed by the long-term sick leave of key staff during the accounts period.

The DfE has also had its own problems with filing accounts. The National Audit Office, the government’s spending watchdog, issued an “adverse opinion” on the DfE’s accounts for the second year running in December.

Last year the department also extended the deadline for presenting its own financial statements to parliament by three months due to the complications of consolidating thousands of accounts submitted by academy trusts.

Janet Downs, from the Local Schools Network campaign group, said the whole procedure of academy accounts was “a mess”.

The DfE could not comment due to purdah restrictions.

VIABILITY OF 16-19 FREE SCHOOLS UNDER THREAT

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Financial cracks are emerging in the government’s flagship 16-19 free schools as heads face stalling recruitment and “chronic” underfunding.

Analysis by *Schools Week* reveals that half of the 18 sixth-form free schools have fewer than 200 pupils, which the government says is the minimum roll for a viable school. Most have been open since 2014.

Another 28 are due to open in the next few years as part of the continued push to meet the government’s target of 500 free schools by 2020.

The figures coincide with a new campaign, Support our Sixth-formers (SOS), launched to urge ministers to introduce a £200 funding boost per student or face sixth forms scaling back on vital provision.

School leaders say a “sustained period of underinvestment” has led to 21 per cent less funding for sixth-formers than younger pupils.

James Kewin (pictured), deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said the “chronic” underfunding made it “very difficult for small sixth-form providers to survive, let alone, thrive”.

But there are heightened concerns over the viability of 16-19 free schools as their



rolls tend to be smaller than standalone sixth-form colleges.

Nor can they rely on subsidies available for school sixth forms, which can be supported from the school’s “more generous” 11-16 funding.

Despite the subsidies, government guidance says that new school sixth forms still need at least 200 students to be financially viable.

With half of the 16-19 free schools not hitting this number, Kewin said it was “difficult to see” how many of these institutions would be financially viable in the medium term unless they had some sort of “mother-ship, such as an existing sixth-form college or multi-academy trust”.

Some are already in trouble. As reported by *Schools Week*, low numbers have forced

Bolton Wanderers Free School to close later this year. It opened in 2014.

Connell Sixth Form College in Manchester also ran into financial difficulties. Bright Futures, the trust that runs the college, borrowed from the Education Funding Agency after Connell did not hit student number targets.

The trust was also issued with a financial notice to improve in February last year.

Ali Jaffer, interim head of Chapeltown Academy, a 16-19 free school in Yorkshire, told *Schools Week* its planned pupil number of 300 may have to rise in light of increased costs.

At present it is below target with fewer than 200 students. Jaffer said it

was “ambitious to provide a truly fantastic experience” but given the pressures and challenges of A-levels, this could only be offered if funding increased.

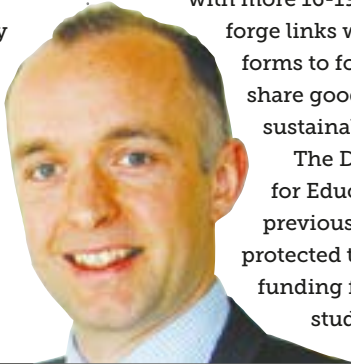
Latest accounts for King’s College London Maths School, much vaunted by the government as an example of a successful 16-19 free school, shows it has to make a “concerted effort” to fundraise to boost its cash reserves after governors raised concerns.

This will ensure that should core funding fall, the school could still “attract and reward high quality staff in a competitive field”.

Angela Rayner, Labour’s shadow education secretary, said continuing to “plough money” into undersubscribed schools at a time when school budgets were “reaching crisis point”, was a “deeply irresponsible and wasteful approach”.

Kewin said that he was now working with more 16-19 free schools to forge links with other sixth forms to form a network and share good practice around sustainability.

The Department for Education has previously said it has protected the base rate of funding for all post-16 students until 2020.



School silent on governor who claimed £820 a meeting

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

A cash-strapped free school due to close later this year does not seem to know which of its governors racked up a bill of more than £3,250 for attending four meetings.

Schools Week revealed in March that Bolton Wanderers Free School (BWFS), opened by the former premier league football team Bolton Wanderers in 2014, had reimbursed a board member £3,287 for travel, subsistence and accommodation costs.

School accounts did not name the governor, but they showed the governing body met a maximum of four times throughout that year, which works out about £820 a meeting.

At that time the school had 12 governors, including wealthy baker and former Bolton Wanderers vice-chairman Brett Warburton, who resigned as a governor in January this year, and the former Bolton Wanderers chair Phil Gartside, who died last year.

Other governors were mostly staff or parents of pupils.

Schools Week submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request for the name of the governor paid £3,287 and a breakdown of expenses.

However, BWFS refused to release the

details under section 12 of the act – which allows public bodies to refuse requests that would exceed an “appropriate limit” of time to complete.

The school said it would take more than 18 hours to find the relevant information, suggesting it did not have the name or costs on hand.

Mary Bousted (pictured), the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said it “beggars belief” that it would take a school more than 18 hours to discover the identity of someone who received thousands of pounds in expenses.

“How can it possibly take that time to find out who got the money?” she said. “What kind of control was there over public money that you can’t find out who you paid over £3,000 to?”

BWFS was repeatedly asked to provide further information about the 18-hour estimation, but it refused to comment.

Schools Week revealed in March how Bolton Wanderers charged the school almost £600,000 in rent and utility bills in the first two years it was open. The costs for this year’s rent is still unknown.

The school announced earlier this year it will close in August because of financial concerns.

In September last year Ofsted deemed it “inadequate”.



Crescent Purchasing Consortium Acquire Tenet Services

National education purchasing consortium Crescent Purchasing Ltd are delighted to announce they have acquired procurement services provider company Tenet Education Services Ltd. The two companies will continue to run independently but this new collaboration means members can now receive an end to end procurement solution.

Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) is owned by the FE sector and is the only national purchasing consortium dedicated to supporting FE Colleges, Schools and Academies. CPC promotes a member-driven ethos, while Tenet Services provide procurement solutions to drive value for money.

CPC Chairman David Pullein said: “We are delighted to secure the acquisition of Tenet to complement the services currently provided by CPC. This will enable Crescent to provide a complete service to the education sector and continue the excellent work of Tenet Education Services.”

Currently CPC has over 4000 members and a portfolio of approximately 60 frameworks covering a wide variety of products and services, two specialised websites and purchasing training programs. Tenet specialise in service contract consultancy offering tailored services which suit individual requirements and budgets from one off tendering to onsite procurement services. Both are now available offering members a unique one-stop procurement solution.

Outgoing Tenet Chairman, David Thoms said: “I and my fellow directors are excited by the sale of Tenet to CPC, as this will enable us to achieve our ultimate aim of being able to offer and provide the widest possible range of procurement solutions to both our existing clients and the education sector

NEWS

BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL ‘ENCOURAGES RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS’

BILLY CAMDEN @BILLYCAMDEN

Birmingham City Council has published a curriculum statement pledging that its schools will focus on encouraging the human rights of all cultures.

The statement promises that children in Birmingham will learn in an environment without prejudice or inequality, and promises to not allow “any attempts to narrow the curriculum”.

Razia Butt, a schools resilience adviser for Birmingham City Council, this week told delegates at a Westminster Education Forum event on Prevent that the move was to support heads in the “very challenging” circumstances that followed the Trojan Horse affair.

The city has been subject to intense scrutiny since 2014 after allegations of a plot by hard-line Islamists to introduce their ideology into several Birmingham schools.

A government investigation later found changes to the curriculum in some schools, including teachers told not to use images in any subject that showed even slight intimacy between sexes.

Butt also highlighted incidents from 2013 where schools were sent letters from parents supporting the far-right group, the English Defence League (EDL), demanding that their children were not taught “anything about Islam”.

The curriculum statement, which was published in March and applies to Birmingham’s 500 local authority-maintained schools, says education must “encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment”.

Colin Diamond, Birmingham’s executive director of education, later told *Schools Week* the statement “tends to talk about fundamental Birmingham values, which are very inclusive” rather than the “British” values used by the government.

The council also has trained more than 600 safeguarding leads in schools to deliver Prevent training, which became a legal duty for schools in July 2015.

It requires staff to identify and monitor pupils at risk of radicalisation and to report incidents they believe are linked to extremism or terrorism.

And 170 schools have also signed up to the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award, which encouraged schools to place the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at “the heart of its ethos”.

The award ties in with the curriculum statement, which is based on article 29 of the convention – that a child has a right to education that develops respect for others.

Diamond added: “Birmingham has very diverse communities and sometimes we will get things that are maybe EDL-flavoured, or maybe fundamentalist-Muslim flavoured.

“We need to create a safe space for children and young people to be able to debate these issues and hopefully come to a really strong form of social synthesis.

“We’re interested in the long haul within our community and that is why we push so hard the Unicef retrospective agenda.”

Unions join forces to fight job cuts

JOHN DICKENS & FREDDIE WHITTAKER @SCHOOLSWEEK

Several unions have joined together to rally against job cuts at two of the country’s largest academy chains.

Eight unions issued a “final warning” to the David Ross Education Trust (DRET) last week over proposals to cut up to 40 support roles across its schools under a £1 million cost-saving drive.

Unions sent the plea directly to the trust’s sponsor, the Conservative party donor and businessman David Ross, after talks between the two sides broke down.

It is the first time all eight unions – the NUT, ATL, NASUWT, NAHT, ASCL, GMB, Unite and Unison – have threatened action on this scale against a single multi-academy trust in England.

They came together again this week to call on Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), the country’s largest chain, to reconsider a planned restructure of maintenance services in which 34 estates staff could lose their jobs.

The unions said the move, part of a £2.6 million savings drive, would “put pupils at risk”.

The interventions come despite the sector acknowledging that schools are cutting staff because of squeezed budgets.

The government has even published guidance on workforce planning – with case studies of how trusts have made redundancies – as schools face £3 billion



budget cuts by 2020.

Jon Richards, head of education at Unison, said the trusts “won’t be the last” to announce “huge cuts . . . as government funding cuts bite”.

But, in relation to AET, he said: “For schools to provide a safe environment for children, estates employees must be available on site around the clock.

“These cuts will mean lots of extra work for remaining staff, which will have a massive impact on what they are able to do. It will put pupils at risk.”

The trust plans to set up a “single support structure” for its estates and facilities across its academies.

The proposals will affect schools in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Bristol, Middlesbrough, Barnsley, Gloucester and Milton Keynes.

AET, which runs 66 academies, said it is making the changes to save costs and concentrate more resources on front-line

education “at a time of great financial pressures on schools”.

Andrew Redmond, director of estates and facilities management, said caretakers and facilities managers would still be the “life-blood of the school”.

“They will still have a very close alignment and loyalty with the school or schools they serve. But we are changing their line management arrangements, and we are introducing a greater degree of flexibility so that one team can work across several schools and relieve the pressure points more effectively.”

Meanwhile, talks over planned redundancies at DRET will now be overseen by the conciliation service Acas.

Although union leaders are hoping for a “swift resolution”, they say the matter could escalate to a ballot for potential industrial action.

DRET launched a consultation on the proposed redundancies in March, but has previously said it hopes to achieve most of the cuts through “natural movement of staff”.

David Harrison, DRET’s director of operations, said the plans would make “better use of the expertise of our administration staff to enhance classroom learning across our network” amid financial pressures.

It follows a difficult few months for the trust during which its chair, the former education secretary David Blunkett, and several other senior officials resigned.

Comment, see page 14

Ofsted ‘shows support’ for secondary moderns, say heads

JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

More secondary moderns have moved from the lowest Ofsted ratings to good, leading some headteachers to say inspectors are recognising the impact of selection on their school data.

Thirty times more secondary moderns were rated requires improvement or inadequate than grammar schools in 2013, a gap that has now narrowed to just ten times as many.

Secondary modern heads, who did not want to be named, told *Schools Week* they had made inspectors acknowledge the high number of low-attaining pupils in their schools compared with nearby grammars.

A shift towards progress data was also fairer on secondary moderns than attainment data, they said.

But some heads said the inspection framework still made it harder for secondary moderns to achieve an outstanding grade compared with grammars.

“The move to better Ofsted grades shows there’s been a recognition that progress is a better indicator than attainment,” said one.

Inspectors were “starting to show more

support” for secondary modern schools, said another.

While just over half of secondary moderns (56 per cent) were rated good in 2013, that rose to 64.7 per cent in 2017.

Fewer secondary moderns were also rated requires improvement, moving from a quarter in 2013, to 15 per cent this year.

But more grammar schools have also moved into the outstanding category, from 77 in 2013 to 83 per cent this year.

Meanwhile, the number of secondary moderns awarded outstanding has dropped slightly over the five years, from 12.8 per cent to 12.6 per cent.

The secondary modern heads said many inspectors still did not understand the low-attainment profile of many pupils in their schools.

Inspectors might be “sympathetic to the complications” of being in a selective area “but the framework itself is not”, said one head. Secondary moderns were often left with “little to feel positive about”.

One head in a selective authority said inspectors had wrongly assumed that about

10 per cent of a year group went to grammar schools, whereas in his area about a third of the cohort went each year.

As a result, his school had more low-attaining pupils than the local authority average. About 16 per cent of pupils in the county were low-attaining based on their key stage 2 scores, but that proportion was almost double (29 per cent) in his school.

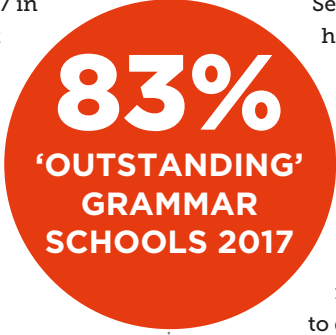
His school also had 11 per cent of high-attaining pupils, although 34 per cent of pupils in his area were considered in that group.

Secondary moderns “often have more families who do not value education”, said another head. But inspectors “bluntly refuse to acknowledge the context of the school”.

An Ofsted spokesperson said the number of schools in the sample was too low to draw conclusions about the change in the proportion receiving certain grades.

Sean Harford, director of education at Ofsted, said the common inspection framework had changed in 2015 to put more emphasis on pupil progress.

He added the context of a school was always considered when making judgments, but “all schools must meet the same high standards”.



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READERS' REPLY

REPLY OF THE WEEK
RECEIVES A
SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



Corbyn fails to dish up evidence on free meals

@KaisraK
It can be done for social cohesion, all children eating together! What a great idea!

@ajjolleya
If I offered you £15,000, would you spend it on food regardless of the child's need? As for social cohesion at lunch, one of the main issues with UIFSM is that the infrastructure can't cope, children eat in shifts and are rushed in and out again. It's a mess.

DfE refuses to release reports on two trusts

@terryfish
This isn't openness and democracy. The DfE can't pick and choose.

@MikeBathFCA
If they're going to publish some, need to publish all.

Pupils travel 40 miles to school

@VardyCharlotte
This is awful — but these commutes are standard for rural areas. Might explain something about achievement gap?

@pearson_cathy
Forty-mile school commute on capped benefits? No chance of affording that, or is that the intention?

The cost of protecting your school spending

Stephen Hickman
1p on basic rate of income tax to prevent school funding crises seems like money well spent. The failure to prevent these crises will be felt for generations.

@FairFundCheshE
We know it's going to be expensive but this is our children's futures — don't forget that they are the future of the country.

@SIL_statman
Good points, but the issue with money is how much of a priority education should be if you are truly committed to social mobility.

How to motivate your GCSE students

@settle4_nothing
One teacher can't teach ten subjects at GCSE... why do we still expect one child to learn ten subjects?

Kent 11-plus 'loaded dice' for poorer pupils

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Colin Richards, Cumbria

As a former 11-plus teacher who taught "intelligence" during the late Sixties, I was very aware of the effects of coaching on children's performance in the exam. It's clear from the Kent research that the problem still exists and may have worsened in the current performance-obsessed climate. Tutor-proof 11-plus tests cannot be devised, but nor for that matter can valid and reliable baseline assessment tests.

CLARIFICATION

In last week's edition, we ran a story on the appointment of GL Assessment as the 11-plus provider for Buckinghamshire grammar schools. To be clear, the 11-plus test was formerly "discredited" by local headteachers and not GL Assessment as a supplier.

DEBATE: HEADTEACHER BOARDS

THE EDITORIAL LAST WEEK LED TO MORE RESPONSES THAN ANY OTHER IN SCHOOLS WEEK'S HISTORY
HERE, ONE HEADTEACHER BOARD MEMBER RESPONDS TO THE CRITICISM - AND OUR EDITOR REPLIES



SIR STEVE LANCASHIRE

Founder and chief executive, REAch2

Want to find out how HTBs work? All you have to do is ask

As a member of one of the regional school commissioners' headteacher advisory boards, it's perhaps no surprise that claims they are shrouded in secrecy caught my eye.

The sense of injustice I felt on reading last week's *Schools Week* editorial was not for myself, however; this kind of stuff goes with the turf of being a chief executive of a large multi-academy trust. It was for the members of my regional HTB. To hear them described as corrupt, self-serving and secretive when I know them to be honourable, generous and passionate to the core about education was a step too far. It was also below the belt, given we are in purdah and the Department for Education must remain mute.

It is true the minutes are limited. But it's a considerable leap to claim this points to corrupt and self-serving behaviours.

First, minutes are a poor way to judge the work of most organisations. No matter how detailed they are, they never fully capture the debate and challenge behind a decision.

Second, when sensitive issues are discussed it's always a judgment call how much should be put in the public domain. I am not saying schools and communities should not be made fully aware of decisions that are taken about their futures, they just shouldn't read about it in a set of minutes. The dialogue and communication should be with them directly.

The next unjustified charge is that HTBs are somehow corrupt. The implication here is that we can somehow make money out of being on the board. Or our support for certain projects can be bought. Or that board members might have conflicting financial interests.

If you're on a board, your organisation either agrees for you to participate on a pro-bono basis or a flat rate is paid to your employer to cover costs. Our support for certain projects can be obtained? How? A back-hander, a "you scratch mine, I'll scratch yours"

arrangement? We wouldn't and don't. Every one of the HTB members signed up to the Nolan principles of public life and I've never, in three years, seen them breached. On "financial interests", I'm not aware of the RSC offices handing out contracts, so where's the conflict of interest? Even if they did, I doubt it would be to Isuzu trucks.

Self-serving. How? Because at some point I might have the chance to influence a discussion about a REAch2 school? If I want to try that, I'll arrange a meeting with an RSC and put my case. On average, each HTB member spends about 28 days a year either in board meetings or reading papers, precisely because we take the role seriously: hardly the definition of self-serving. Some may argue this time would be better spent focusing on our own schools, but we do it because we look to a greater good.

We use our positions to inform and challenge the decisions made by RSCs. Not one decision about a school in the region I represent has been nodded through. The knowledge we have about the communities in which these schools sit, gives us a much better chance to make sure the RSC makes the right decision. I accept that we will never have a perfect system, but with real-time local knowledge and expertise, in most cases the decisions taken are the right ones.

Finally, what many fail to recognise is the work HTB members do to develop and improve the system in general. I've worked with about 30 smaller multi-academy trusts and three large diocese on developing governance structures and improvement models. That wouldn't have happened without these boards. Replicate that across the country and that is a significant force for good.

Of course, this fact isn't in a set of minutes so a random FOI isn't going to discover it, but anyone who genuinely wanted to find out what we do would have asked. Interesting that in three years only one journalist has asked me about my work on the HTB.



LAURA MCINERNEY

Editor of *Schools Week*

That's good to hear, but the system just isn't good enough

In 2012, Michael Gove set about reforming GCSEs because he believed the exam system to be "corrupt". At the time, I balked. Was he saying all pupils who took the exams were corrupt? Was my hard work in getting pupils a top grade an example of corruption? How dare he!

On reflection, Gove was correct about GCSEs. Things had got out of hand. Not on purpose; no one who created the modular exam system did it out of spite. But grade inflation really was happening. Quality was not held even year-on-year. Examiners were selling information under the guise of "training" and undermining fairness. The system was, for want of a better word, corrupted.

I regret that Sir Steve Lancashire (opposite) believed my editorial last week was pointing at the members of the headteacher boards and calling those individuals "corrupt". I no more believe the board members are corrupt than I believe a child who sat a GCSE in 2011 was corrupt. But I do believe the system – with its weak rules and crossed incentives – is unreliable and broken.

And I am not alone. Last week's editorial was one of the most shared on social media in the time I've been editing this paper. A litany of emails and personal messages arrived, largely from heads, who said they were grateful for someone speaking up. One problem of the headteacher board system is that almost anyone who might be unhappy with it, also feels implicated in it.

So I'm grateful to Lancashire for stepping up and giving the HTB members a voice. His right to reply gives light to formerly hidden things. It's great to hear of the work done across academy chains to support those struggling. Tell us more! We always want to know.

But on the system itself being corrupt and self-serving, I stand by the point.

A message from a former senior leader makes the point well.

"In the headteacher board election system, if you're an elite member of the club you can stand for election. If you're a member of the club you can vote. And if you're not in the elite or the club,

then you can neither stand nor vote. Let's be honest – the electoral system of Zimbabwe holds itself to a higher standard."

My editorial wasn't intending to imply that people are scratching each other's backs. It was pointing out that if the system has been set up to allow it, and has incentives built in to encourage it, then, as with the old GCSE systems, you may be doing all the things you are supposed to on an individual level, but the outcome may still be worse overall.

Which brings us to minutes. Let me be clear: I don't give a stuff about minutes of HTB discussions. But until 2010 the public always had access to information about school decisions.

Yes, the complicated discussions about schools are delicate, and they shouldn't be compromised. But decisions – final decisions – come about for specific reasons and can be written up sensitively. Hence, I cannot see why these reasons should not be shared. We know from experiments in economics that people make fairer decisions when they have to explain them to the people who those decisions impact most.

And it was Margaret Thatcher, of all people, who in 1959 pushed for the Open Meetings Act on the grounds that transparency provides "the greatest and most effective check against arbitrary action". She also pointed out that people with powers handed to them from elected members should "safeguard civil liberties, rather than think that administrative convenience should take first place in law".

It is rare that I am in agreement with Margaret Thatcher. It is even rarer that I agree with her, and Michael Gove. But on this occasion, the lady was correct.

Sadly, it is no one's job in government to sort this mess. No minister is interested. That's why I appreciate Lancashire stepping up to speak. And I call on him, and the other members, to point out to the national schools commissioner, David Carter, that the system could work in better ways.

I believe you are a force for good. Please now also be a force for change.






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- “I think it just shifts your focus slightly, so as well as the subject that you’re getting across or the skill that you’re getting across, I’m just more aware of what language they are going to use” Teacher, History
- “...staff are starting to recognise ..(the need to be..) explicit about academic words and academic language... .. we’ve been able to intertwine the curriculum and teach grammar... it’s drip, drip, every day” Facilitator



Schools across England (including London) are invited to take part in this innovative CPD trial funded by the EEF, the Bell Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy, and developed in partnership with Challenge Partners, Hounslow Language Service and Lampton School.

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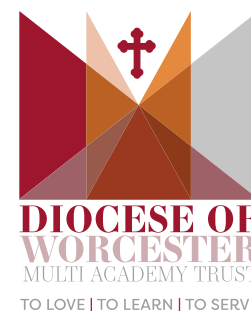
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The Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust

Chief Executive Officer

Salary: £70-80,000 (depending upon experience)

Location: Diocese of Worcester



The Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust is looking for a Chief Executive Officer to lead it through the next stage of its development. Our vision is to create and sustain a family of academies which provide children of all faiths and none with excellent educational provision within a distinctively caring and supportive Christian ethos.

This is an exciting opportunity to grow your role within an expanding and exciting, diverse Christian school family. We are currently eight schools with a growth strategy in place, which will build upon the current effective practice within the Diocese. Our collegiate approach is to develop excellent learning communities.

If you are looking to develop your career as an inspirational and passionate leader, then you can help to shape our strategic direction of this dynamic MAT. This is a fascinating opportunity to lead church schools and develop their influence across the region. You will work with the board of directors to deliver the Trust's vision of excellent learning and outcomes achieved through strong leadership, professional collaboration and innovation in teaching and learning.

This role requires an enhanced DBS check.

The start date for this role will be agreed with the successful candidate. If you would like to discuss this role and our work at the Diocese of Worcester MAT, then please contact **Karen Surrall** at: karen.surrall@dowmat.education

How to Apply

Please send a completed application form and covering letter, with a supporting CV if you wish, to recruitment@dowmat.education

Closing date for applications: 12 noon on 2nd June 2017

Interviews

Applicants will be contacted week commencing **12th June 2017** with the outcome of their application.

Interviews will take place at Worcester Old Palace on **Friday 30th June 2017**. Please ensure you are available on this date.

References and eligibility

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, eligibility to work in the UK and a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

Magna Academy

Assistant Principal (KS4 Raising Achievement)



Salary: L10 - 14 (salary scale negotiable, depending on experience) - £48,710 - £53, 712

Starting September 2017

'This is an outstanding school. Teachers have high expectations of their students, who respond by producing excellent work.' (OFSTED, June 2015)

Looking for an exciting new challenge?
Are you a Maths, History or Science teacher?

Our Academy was graded as outstanding in all areas by Ofsted in June 2015. As a rapidly growing academy, that will be at full capacity in 2018, and as a newly designated NCTL Teaching School and Support School, you would be joining us at a very exciting time.

In 2016, Magna achieved a Progress 8 score of 0.52, placing us well within the top 5% of highest performing schools nationally. We have a desire to be in the top 1%.

'The behaviour of students is outstanding. They are exceptionally keen to learn, and show real enthusiasm in lessons.' (OFSTED, June 2015)

We are looking for a passionate Assistant Principal, who would help strategically and operationally lead Raising Achievement strategies at KS4. English achieved top 1% progress in 2016, MFL top 6% progress and we wish to further raise achievement in Maths, Science and Humanities to at least match English and MFL. This role is critical to the continuing progress of the Academy. The post is part of the Senior Leadership Team and would be excellent preparation for a Vice Principal role. The Principal is a National Leader of Education

and would provide coaching to help your professional development.

The successful candidate will be an excellent teacher of Maths. Science or History. You will be a successful leader with a proven track record of school improvement either at middle leader or Assistant Principal level. You will have significant experience of raising achievement, leading change and have excellent communication skills and the ability to motivate staff and students. You will have the potential to move to Principalship.

'Students make exceptional progress.' (OFSTED, June 2015)

You would become part of a vibrant learning community that will offer you fantastic opportunities for CPD, career development and for you to be able to make your mark. We would be delighted to show you around our Academy in order to fully appreciate our excellent learning environment.

How to Apply

Application forms and further details on the role are available from: www.aatmagna.org/82/vacancies or **Zoe Challis**, zchallis@aatmagna.org or **01202 604222**
Closing date for applications: Friday 19th May 2017 9am

Learn more about Aspirations Academies at: www.aspirationsacademies.org

Deputy Headteacher

Location: High Lane, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 7AB

Required for September 2017



We are looking for a dynamic, inspirational, passionate and experienced leader to play a key role in the Academy's senior leadership team. The successful candidate needs to have the vision and drive to build on the Academy's considerable strengths and have the capacity to help us achieve world class outcomes.

This post has become available due to the promotion of colleagues to Principals of other Academy's within the City Learning Trust.

Haywood Academy is one of the highest performing schools in the West Midlands and a national top performing non-selective secondary school.

We pride ourselves on being at the forefront of educational developments. We are at an exciting time in our development having just submitted a bid to become a teaching school and created a nationally recognised work based learning programme for our sixth form. The Academy is the founder member of the successful City Learning Trust and is a registered DfE Academy sponsor of two schools (a large primary and a large secondary school).

The Academy is based on three unique sites; a £10 million revamped 11-16 site and two refurbished iconic Victorian buildings which house the 6th form Burslem Old Town Hall and School of Art. The facilities at all or our sites are state of the art.

We are looking for someone who:

- Is passionate about children's learning
- Has a strong commitment to partnership
- Has exceptional communication skills
- Has a strong leadership track record

In return we can offer you:

- A positive ethos created by talented, committed and enthusiastic staff and governors
- Engaged students who are happy, confident and courteous learners
- A firm commitment to your professional development
- •Extended opportunities in the City Learning Trust

Closing Date: 17th May 2017

An application form and further details are available from the Academy website, the Trust website or via email. Candidates wishing to tour and visit the school may contact **Marie Faichney**, HR Director to arrange on **01782 853535 ext 612**

Email: mfaichney@citylearningtrust.org

Web: www.haywoodacademy.coop

Head of Computer Science Teacher of Mathematics Teacher of Science

Location: High Lane, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 7AB

Required for September 2017



Haywood Academy is one of the highest performing schools in the West Midlands and a national top performing non-selective secondary school.

The Academy is based on three unique sites; a £10 million revamped 11-16 site and two refurbished iconic Victorian buildings which house our Sixth Form - Burslem Old Town Hall and School of Art. The facilities at all or our sites are state of the art.

Closing Date: Friday 19th May 2017

An application form and further details are available from the Academy website or via email.

Email: afox@haywoodacademy.coop

Web: www.haywoodacademy.coop

Email: mfaichney@citylearningtrust.org

Web: www.haywoodacademy.coop

PROFILE

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_NEWS

Sue Bailey, assistant head, Arthur Terry School, Sutton Coldfield

Sue Bailey is not your average assistant head. Her colleagues are in awe of her, and it’s not just for her (apparently legendary) baking skills. Over her 41-year career at Arthur Terry School, Bailey seems to have held almost every role there is. She’s now teaching grandchildren of former pupils, yet never seems to tire of rolling up her sleeves, managing complex situations and leading students on adventures around the globe.

Take last July. The 62-year-old had just touched down in Istanbul with a group of 42 students en route to South Africa, when she was greeted by a call from her daughter in Birmingham.

“Mum, are you all right?” she asked.

“Yes, I’ve just got off the plane.”

“You don’t know what’s happened, do you?”

“No, I don’t.”

“There’s a coup.”

It was a Friday evening; they were the last plane to land. “I look back now and can see the signs that something had happened,” Bailey says. “We landed, got off the plane, and there was nobody there – no officials.”

They eventually got out safely, but it was a hairy 27 hours, which included watching through the windows as two tanks drove along the runway and fighter jets flew low. There was a loud explosion of undiscovered origin. And a voice in English: “There’s a man with a gun, run!”, a shout that made everyone, predictably, flee.

Despite this, Bailey feels that she and her group of 16 to 18-year-old pupils were “a little bit cosseted in the airport. I know that sounds odd but there were no television screens. We didn’t know what was going on outside.”

Not long after they arrived, a group of protesters – “mainly men, although there were women and children” – appeared outside the terminal building, shouting and waving Turkish flags.

“It was really quite funny,” Bailey remembers, although I get the impression the humour has come with hindsight. “We watched our luggage come off on a conveyor belt, but because there was nobody there, it all piled up outside the plane. I could spot my bag, and one or two belonging to children. And so we watched . . . a little bit later protesters came to the airport, and there was a significant number of people out on the runway. It was our plane, but they thought the president was in it, so they climbed up on our luggage to peep in.”

The British Embassy was “fantastic”. They linked her with a diplomat who happened to be in transit and, once it was safe to fly, the group of 50 was on the first plane to leave.

“I’d never really realised – you’ve got your passport and it’s British, and it says in it [you’ll be protected] and we were”.

Bailey has been taking children to South Africa since 2005 (also Tanzania, the Azores and Slovakia) on Outward Bound and Duke of Edinburgh trips and has travelled with many of the staff before.

In this case, they all “adopted certain roles” says Bailey, who was trip leader and Arthur Terry’s main safeguarding lead. “There are lots of things we did, almost without discussing them. We have a critical incident plan in school that we rehearse as a leadership group, but actually we never even got it out of the envelope because we knew it.”

The experience – as you would expect – created



a strong bond between teachers and pupils. When they arrived in South Africa for their fortnight volunteering in a township school, the first two days were supposed to be “team bonding”, but Bailey told their hosts: “You can forget that, we don’t need any of that! You won’t get a stronger team than the one I’m bringing to you.”

Arthur Terry was Bailey’s first employer out of university (she grew up about five miles away and went to Fairfax, a local school). “Some people see that as a negative,” she says, “but the minute I’ve perhaps got itchy feet or got bored, I’ve always been given things to do.”

Such as the five children’s centres run by the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership, for which she is the school’s strategic lead – an “assistant headteacher with a community-facing brief”.

For the past five years a virtual children’s centre has been run from the school at the request of Birmingham City Council. The concept, which is alien to some (including Ofsted inspectors, she tells me), means the school hosts an admin team that organises early years activities in various “outreach venues” in the community, consulted on and promoted via social media.

Bailey loves this work. “As a secondary teacher, I never really understood the value of early years until now, and I worry that we’re cutting early years’ budgets.

“All the parenting courses we do now, postnatally and up to a child reaching 5, will benefit that family forever.”

Bailey is bothered that budget cuts are limiting subject

choice. Despite Arthur Terry having the largest school-based sixth form in the West Midlands (about 450-500 students), it will reduce the number of A-level subjects on offer next year. “The funding cuts will hit us hard.”

The disbanded subjects will be those that attract smaller numbers. “If you’ve only got nine or ten . . . the government’s asking for a much bigger class size.” She cites media studies as an example. Her own subject, PE, has also been replaced with a sport BTEC. This will have a knock-on effect, she predicts: “if you can’t offer it at A-level, why offer it at GCSE?”

She worries too that “relentless focus” on league tables and core subjects” will mean that the “creative subjects – your performing arts, your drama, your dance” will fall by the wayside.

After taking biology, history, sociology and home economics at A-level in the 1970s, Bailey trained as a PE teacher at Canley College of Education in Coventry, which later merged with the University of Warwick – a four-year programme that was her only spell away from Sutton Coldfield.

“THE MINUTE I’VE GOT ITCHY FEET, I’VE ALWAYS BEEN GIVEN THINGS TO DO”



Bailey at Arthur Terry School, Sutton Coldfield



Bailey and the headteacher of Ruigtevlei, Arthur Terry’s partner school in South Africa



Arthur Terry students visiting Ruigtevlei Primary School in South Africa

SUE BAILEY

She loves working at a teaching school (Arthur Terry was one of the first in the country). Having trained at a specialist college of education, she thinks “the more hands-on people can get in the classroom, the better”.

Unsurprisingly, she’s a great believer in the value of outdoor education and the life lessons students gain from organised trips. “We’re only being measured on certain key things and they don’t always include the things that I think are really important.

“If I’m a very strong performing arts student and I really want to do music, dance and drama because that’s where my career is going . . . it’s frowned upon, and we would encourage them not to do that . . . because of the EBacc focus,” she laments.

I leave Bailey performing her daily lunch queue duty in the atrium, “to keep my hand in”. It means that she has to recognise which year each of the 1,700 pupils is in – and seems to fulfil its function.

CV	
1976-80	PE teacher, Arthur Terry School
1980-82	Head of girls’ PE
1982-92	Head of girls’ PE/junior school liaison
1992-93	Deputy head of PE
1993-94	Acting staff development tutor
1994-96	Deputy director of studies, head of year 7
1996-2000	Senior teacher, member of the leadership group, director of studies key stage 3
2000-06	Assistant head
2005	Masters in education, University of Birmingham
2006-09	Responsibility for extended schools, community and inclusion
2009-12	Four Oaks Children’s Centre lead, extended schools and Four Oaks cluster co-ordinator, designated person for child protection, lead practitioner – community, SSAT
2012-present	Strategic lead for Sutton Coldfield

OPINION



CHRISTOPHER TOYE

Executive head, The Wyvern Federation, Lambeth, south London

The false freedoms of becoming an academy

Many academy heads seem to have swapped local authority and government bureaucracy for strict trust controls, says Christopher Toye

One of the main drivers used to persuade schools to opt into the academies programme was that it would set heads and teachers free from micro-managing bureaucrats and from central and local government diktats. Heads knew their schools and pupils better than anyone, and should be allowed to set direction and take the decisions in their best interest, leading to higher standards.

But the reality is very different – for many academy heads, leadership largely involves successfully applying their trust's policies and systems rather than using their own experience and judgment for the benefit of the school and pupils they know so well. Many tell me they feel restricted, and need to follow a strict set of policies set by their trust.

I have greater freedom than most academy heads. I have delegated responsibilities and can exercise real discretion in decision-making. That the reality is somewhat different to the publicity may explain why so many free schools and academies have had high turnover of leadership, with heads on casual contracts or commissioned as sub-contractors through their own businesses.

Trusts are conscious of the consequences if one of their schools performs poorly. High-profile failures attract bad publicity and have a real impact on expansion plans. Many now run what is essentially a "command and control" model. Trusts that want to grow cannot afford reputational damage and seek to manage their exposure to risk.

Many have preferred supplier lists, set centrally. This can be helpful – there is a quick and easy way to find a recommended supplier in, say, assessment. But it means heads have no capacity to select a provider they know is good and perhaps cheaper. In the maintained sector, we have the whole market to choose from.

Take a specific area such as behaviour and discipline policy. In the maintained sector, this is school-specific, drawn up by the head and senior leadership team and approved by the governing body.

The local authority doesn't dictate it. But many academies have to follow a centrally prescribed policy, which means many heads are more involved in delivery than decision-making or direction-setting.

Another example. In my schools the school development plan is down to me. If I were an academy head, I would have to follow a template from the trust HQ. That can save time, and some people like that. But most heads prefer to have a say over the decisions on which they will be judged.

There is also the issue of individual and collective finances. Some MATs pool all their schools' reserves at the end of the year into a central pot. I know of one head who built up a small surplus over the previous 12 months through sound financial management. But the funds went into the central bank and he was told that he had to submit a business case if he wanted to retrieve them. That's really not how people expected academies and academy freedoms to work.

"I have greater freedom than most academy heads"

Many academies might think local authority schools are now adrift. But we are part of a federation and Lambeth, while maintaining a proportionate approach to supervision of schools, is supportive of clusters or federations. The council also co-ordinates a local network of schools where we can share best practice and facilities, and the benefits of group procurement. An academy trust with 20 or more schools might be able to get better deals for bulk-buying, although when about 80 per cent of most schools' costs go on payroll, there is a limit to the savings that can be made in any structure.

I know there can still be advantages to converting, and it's not off the table for us. But I would not join a large trust – independence is important, and all schools within any multi-academy trust would have to retain their individuality and their capacity to make their own decisions.



MEGAN CHARLTON

Teaching assistants steward for Unison

First they came for the teaching assistants...

The reality of budget cuts for many teaching assistants are proposed new contracts and a loss of up to £4,000 a year, says Megan Charlton

Teaching assistants may be the canary in the mine as staff face the fall-out from shrinking school budgets.

I was in contact recently with a teaching assistant (TA) in the Midlands, a nursery nurse for 30 years, who has been told her post is redundant and the only job available is a level 1, unqualified support assistant.

Her employers know that she will not "dumb herself down". If she takes this job, she won't suddenly start working in a different way. Faced with a child who needs her support, she won't forget her years of training and experience; she will carry on working in the way she always has, doing the best for the children and families she works with.

If she doesn't take that job (and who would blame her?), how will they replace her with an unqualified, inexperienced support assistant? What effect will that have on the school, the teachers, the children and the families she works with?

Co Durham is another case. In May last year we received letters from the council telling us we would be sacked on New Year's Eve and rehired on new contracts that would effectively put us on zero hours contracts during school holidays. The effect was that we would lose 23 per cent of our pay if we stayed on our current hours – or we could work an extra 4.5 hours a week and lose only 10 per cent. This amounts to a pay cut of about £4,000 for an experienced level 3 TA earning £17-£18,000.

We aren't talking about cutting back on luxuries, for many people it will mean perhaps losing their house or being forced to leave their job.

Can anyone imagine this kind of deal being offered to teachers or to NHS staff? In our case, the workforce is 96 per cent female and the employers no doubt thought they'd get away with it because they see us as women working for pin money.

But sometimes you have to look outside your classroom and your school, because

some things are too important to ignore.

In Co Durham we felt intimidated; sometimes we were battling our headteachers, sometimes teachers, sometimes (and this was the hardest part) fellow teaching assistants who were so worried about the proposed cuts they thought we should accept the derisory offer of delaying the cuts for two years and calling it compensation.

"The worst thing was battling fellow TAs"

The strength of our action led to our local (Labour) council suspending the forced implementation of new contracts and agreeing to a full review of our roles.

We have now completed a full review of the roles and responsibilities of TAs of every level in every educational setting across the county so that job descriptions match the jobs we do now – not the ones we did years ago when a classroom assistant washed paint pots and listened to readers.

Currently, human resources and union representatives are going into every school to see where TAs fit on to the new grading system. Once that is sorted, it will form part of a package that will be sent out to every assistant to tell them how they will be affected. We will then be balloted on the proposals.

When I see reports of the campaign against education funding cuts I see our fight but on a much, much bigger scale.

This fight is not just for ourselves. If experienced, skilled, dedicated support staff are forced out of their jobs because they can't afford to stay, what is the future for our schools and the children in them?

And what if we win the fight for our pay only to find there are no jobs left because of the cuts?

Something is not right in education at the moment. So let's all get up and fight, because together we are stronger and the more we fight, the stronger we become.

An encounter in the school canteen convinced George Duoblys of the need for a philosophy GCSE. It would help pupils’ attainment, well-being and critical thinking, he says – and it’s fun

Until December, I was a teacher in east London. One incident at school really brought home to me the need to teach students philosophy at GCSE level.

It was lunchtime and the canteen hummed with noise. A year 11 boy was making his way to his table. It was a squeeze to get through the narrow gap between his friend and another girl sitting behind.

“You fat c***!” he joked.

As the teacher on duty it was my responsibility to act. What should I do? Ignore it? Or follow the school’s strict behaviour system and issue him with a two-hour detention?

Dilemmas such as this illustrate the importance of philosophy, at least in the everyday life of a teacher. I gave the boy a detention as I felt that the punishment was needed to maintain a safe and friendly atmosphere within the school. In ethical terms, it was a consequentialist argument.

Unsurprisingly, the boy challenged me on my reasoning. “Why did I get a detention?”

I explained that even if his friend was happy to be called a c***, doing it in the canteen might make other people feel threatened. I gave him the example of the family stand in a football stadium, a safe space where you’re not allowed to chant “the referee’s a wanker”. I wanted to illustrate that even if swearing



GEORGE DUOBLYS
Associate, LKMco

Why shouldn’t I call my friend a c***?

wasn’t *intrinsically* bad, if the *consequences* were negative overall then it might still be the wrong thing to do.

My arguments fell on deaf ears.

Teaching ethics could be one aspect of a philosophy GCSE. What might the other outcomes be?

- **Attainment** According to the Education Endowment Foundation, teaching students philosophy improves their literacy and numeracy. This came from analysis of the P4C programme, which uses philosophical-style dialogue to teach primary children in more than 60 countries.
- **Well-being** LKMco and Voice 21’s report on oracy highlighted research showing that philosophical debate can boost confidence and self-esteem. The more students can articulate their thoughts, the more they can access other areas of their learning.
- **Critical thinking** A report out last month from the House of Lords illustrated the need for better education around PSHE and digital literacy if young people are to navigate the swathes of information now available online.

But there are also many reasons why it would be worthwhile for its own sake.

- **It’s fun** There’s no better way to spark a classroom debate than a thought experiment, such as Michael Sandel’s example of the bus whose brakes have failed. What should the driver do?
- **It’s engaging** Teaching approaches such as the case method, popularised by Harvard Business School, can allow every student to access philosophical concepts at their own level.
- **It’s concrete** Philosophy addresses the problems of everyday existence. Some would undoubtedly suggest time would be better spent focusing on core subjects such as maths, English and science. They may argue philosophy is too difficult for

most students. And they will likely point to the ongoing teacher recruitment crisis and budget cuts as reasons not to bother.

The first two points are easily addressed.

On the first, Michael Oakeshott has likened subjects to voices, with philosophy reflecting “the relationship of one voice to another”. Taking this view, studying philosophy would not impede students learning maths, English and science; on the contrary, it would link them together and thus make the curriculum more coherent.

Philosophy addresses the problems of everyday existence

On the second, while many of the concepts in philosophy are difficult, understanding them is not binary. Students could have a decent grasp of the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic value, even if they didn’t know those terms. The same can’t be said for trigonometry or electromagnetism; in simple terms, you either know those or you don’t.

The final objection – how to implement it in practice – is more difficult. While there are no easy answers, that shouldn’t put us off. Teaching philosophy at GCSE would be an investment, in people, time and money, but one that evidence suggests would deliver a healthy return.

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Our reviewer of the week is
Andrew Old, teacher and blogger
[@oldandrewuk](#)

CPD: goodbye and good riddance (part one)

By [@EnserMark](#)

Mark Enser describes the INSET he has experienced in his career and observes how money spent on outside speakers and training was often wasted. Some CPD was utter nonsense; some was just unlikely to have any effect. He concludes: "I find it hard to mourn the cutting of CPD budgets. I hope . . . we will focus on effective and efficient means of professional development, which are meaningful for us and improve our teaching and learning."

A pen licence? It is only just a stupid piece of plastic

By [@Xris32](#)

Although Chris Curtis usually blogs from the perspective of a secondary English teacher, this is written as a parent. He describes seeing one of his two children rewarded with a "pen licence" at their primary school and explains the effect of this particular reward system has had. It is reminder to teachers that they should be rewarding the choices and effort of their students, not the natural abilities of the majority at the expense of the minority.

Five things I wish I knew when I started teaching

By [@C_Hendrick](#)

Carl Hendrick discusses the misconceptions about teaching and learning that plagued him early in his career. He is particularly concerned about activities that seem important and require considerable time or effort, but don't actually aid learning.

No, don't forget everything we know about memory

By [@Nick_J_Rose](#)

Researcher Nick Rose blogs only occasionally

these days, but when he does he is a great debunker of pseudoscience and education hype. In this post he takes aim at a claim that recent research in neuroscience invalidates decades of studies into how memory works. He explains the difference between neuroscience and cognitive psychology, and the provisional nature of results in science.

Student feedback do's and don'ts

By [@ebeftl](#)

University tutor Russ Mayne analyses the research behind the practice of judging teaching on the basis of student feedback, something that is common in universities and colleges and occasionally fashionable in schools. However, the evidence seems to suggest that the wrong things are rewarded, such as being a man or good-looking.

Against 'pupil-friendly' language

By [@ladybarkbark](#)

Sarah Barker, an English teacher and head of department, challenges the common practice of using "child-friendly" written language in teaching. She argues that this is incompatible with the important task of developing a student's academic vocabulary. "By simplifying language, we're lessening each child's opportunity to do well. The phrase 'dumbing-down' actually applies more to the impact on the pupils, rather than the language itself."

An anti-anti-SATs rant

By [@iQuirky_Teacher](#)

This post confronts the negativity around key stage 2 SATs. It argues that "at the end of the day, SATs are a proxy for ensuring children are able to read, write and add up such that they're able to get the most out of their secondary schooling and therefore life". The author has little time for those who argue that primary school should be more focused on fun than study, saying they are complacent about children arriving at secondary school without those basic skills.

Another one bites the dust

From [ijstock.wordpress.com](#)

I don't know how people last for decades as full-time classroom teachers. One who did has written this post. Unfortunately that makes it even sadder as eventually the environment at work made him ill and he writes this as he leaves the profession. "In the end it was the 'friendly' fire that did for me, from a system that would apparently rather have no teachers at all, than ones that know their own minds and who adhere to their own sincere and justifiable principles".

Hacking the Curriculum: Creative computing and the power of play

By [Ian Livingstone](#) and
[Shahneila Saeed](#)

Published by [John Catt
Educational Ltd](#)

Reviewed by [Tony Parkin](#)



It's been a challenge for teacher trainers to equip would-be teachers with the ability to understand and teach the new computing curriculum introduced three years ago. (How many other compulsory subjects are taught by teachers who have rarely studied the subject themselves?)

When I first skimmed this book I was immediately struck by how closely the coverage matches much of what I deliver in computing sessions with initial teacher training students.

The sub-title "Creative computing and the power of play" reinforces the impression that here is a book that aims to tap into the current trends in one of the most radical curriculum transformations in recent years. (The seismic shift from an often rather tired approach to ICT to one that encourages more experimentation and creativity through coding.)

The authors' pedigree is sound. Ian Livingstone is a digital hero for our times. Middle-aged "boys" go misty-eyed at the mention of *Fighting Fantasy* gamebooks, a genre he helped to invent ("If you want to go through the door, turn to page 94"); or remember long, nerdish conversations about *Dungeons and Dragons* in one of his games workshops.

Millennials go even more misty-eyed at memories of the effect Lara Croft had on their early teens. And we of the older generation praise his excellent co-written *Next Gen* report from Nesta, which was one of the wake-up calls that helped to shift curriculum thinking towards the new computing.

Co-author Shahneila Saeed of Digital Schoolhouse, now equally well known, is one of an impressive team at Ukie, the trade body for the UK's games and interactive entertainment industry that has done so much to promote this crucial area of UK digital expertise. So an ideal pairing to create such a book.

If the isometric pixelated Minecraft-style cover and mention of playful learning isn't enough to set off the creativity klaxon of the traditionalists, a quote from Sir Ken Robinson in the introduction should ensure it is triggered. Add in Piaget and Sugata Mitra for good measure, and so will significant parts of the content as it focuses on learning by doing, group work and playful learning. All guaranteed to get the trads tutting and reaching for Twitter.

But this is no progressives' pamphlet, rather a solid book full of essential information and practical examples for those faced with ensuring that the new computing curriculum is taught effectively. Indeed, if there is a criticism, it is that it is slow to get going and rather too focused on explaining the thinking behind

the curriculum development from the start – perhaps at the expense of some of the excitement and buzz that the shift hopes to bring about in the classroom.

Unless you're already in the know, or need to be, you may never get far enough to be inspired by this book. That would be a real shame. The later chapters, if you want to skip ahead – including the wonderful "Cat on Your Head" game

– show how much fun and learning about gameplay you can have, even without a computer.

"This book is targeted at educators,

“
**These two are an
ideal pairing to
create such a book**

whether you are an academic, a headteacher, or a classroom practitioner" says the introduction. A slim 168 pages that aims to meet the needs of all three seems over-ambitious. Nevertheless, it is an excellent introduction for those educators trying to get their heads around the thinking behind this major curriculum shift.

And of course, it is an absolute must for all student teachers who intend to deliver computing in the curriculum.





A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

An election is coming and all through the house (of Commons) no one is stirring except for a mouse. Well, loads of mice. The place is overrun with them. But the broader point is that nothing much is doing down at government as we officially hit PURDAH – that time when everyone involved in public administration stops working and says “soz, got to wait for new government, innit”.

No new postcards from Ofqual. No juicy reports from Ofsted. Nada.

In Manchester, however, former shadow education secretaries were having all the fun. Andy Burnham, shadow under Ed Miliband, won the first city mayoralty. In his manifesto Burnham promised to develop a “curriculum for life” that will include sex education, counselling, and political education. He also pledged better access to mental health services. Themes that, so far, are uniting both sides of the political divide. Will he actually be able to do anything as mayor? We'll take a look in a

few years to find out.

FRIDAY:

Week in Westminster was delighted to hear that Rachel Wolf, former head of the New Schools Network and education bod at No 10 under David Cameron, has been chosen by the Conservatives to stand in south London's Dulwich and West Norwood constituency. Labour won last time by about 15,000 votes, so she's unlikely to win, but it's a start for the education climber who also worked for Rupert Murdoch's school tech endeavour, Amplify, for a few years.

Exciting news in today's copy of *The Bookseller*. Sir Michael Wilshaw, of former Ofsted fame, has signed up to write a book. Just in case you were missing Wilsh saying controversial things once a month, right along with your utility bill, then fear not! *Wilshaw's Way: Lessons from the Dirty Harry of Education* is touted as his first book (there will be more?) and will cover the “lessons learned during his career as a maverick headmaster” (note: master).

It's out in September. Maybe skip Radio 4 interviews that month unless you want to be throwing things as you get ready for work in the morning.

MONDAY:

Good news for Labour, at last! Buried in a *Daily Mirror* round-up of political polling, the reds came out as the most trusted on education by a country mile. Of the 2,006 adults asked, just 20 per cent said they trusted the Tories more on education compared with 42 per cent for Labour. Of course, that might be because so far the blues have said very little on education. We shall be keeping an eye.

TUESDAY:

Where is Justine Greening? Has anyone seen her? Please send sightings. We are worried.

WEDNESDAY:

God loves a trier, so it's perhaps no surprise Tim Farron loves God. The leader of the Liberal Democrats came out today promising £7 billion for schools.

This is some way north of Labour's £4.8 billion extra, and a long way up from the Tories minus £3 billion in the last

parliament. But where is the money coming from? Farron was tight-lipped, saying the information would be out in “due course”, which we all know is the last refrain of a scoundrel and the DfE press office when the ministers are hiding important reports in their desk drawers.



CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name Dave Baker
Age 53
Occupation Chief executive, Olympus Academy Trust
Location South Gloucestershire
Subscriber since edition 88, December 2016

Welcome to Fly on the Wall – 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...



FLY ON THE WALL

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

At my desk early on Friday or in my sitting room at home over the weekend.

Which section do you enjoy the most?

The book review and finding out who is moving to new posts in education.

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

Currently it would be a toss-up between policies on funding, and curriculum and accountability to ensure that breadth of learning is valued.

Who is your favourite education secretary?

Estelle Morris, a former teacher with great integrity. Also David Miliband (the man who should have been prime minister), who was an excellent schools minister.

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

Public interest stories are always good to follow as they are alluring and horrifying at the same time; I never cease to marvel at some of the poor decisions leaders in education can make, which give all of us a bad name.

What do you do with your copy once you've read it?

I read the digital version so I file it!

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

I would seek out stories of success in adverse circumstances, focusing on individual learners and their teachers, as well as schools that are achieving in the face of significant challenge.

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

In my dreams I would have been a professional basketball player. In reality, I would probably have used my languages to teach English as a foreign language to adults in another country.

Favourite book on education?

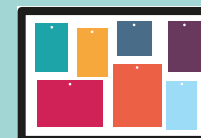
Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*. It is not specifically about education, but closely associated with it because it is about success.

What new things would you like to see in *Schools Week*?

More about innovation and success.

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

José Mourinho. I would be fascinated to see what we could learn for education from his approach to coaching and leadership.



V&A launches design scheme for schools

FEATURED

London's Victoria and Albert Museum is launching a national programme to support design education in state-funded secondary schools.

DesignLab Nation, which launches in September to support the new design and technology GCSE, aims to get regional museums working in partnership with their surrounding schools to deliver art projects that explore local history and heritage.

Cara Williams, schools programme manager at the V&A, said: "We'll be selecting objects from V&A collections that really complement and enhance local stories and use them to help students learn about the heritage of their area.

"The idea is to join up education, cultural learning and industry."

Each regional programme will be delivered by local artists, with plans to run three school art projects a year.

The V&A will use £100,000 it won in the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2016 award to fund the new scheme, which is estimated to cost £50,000 in its first year.

Emmajane Avery, the V&A's director of learning and visitor experience, said: "We were shortlisted for the award after our Alexander McQueen exhibition. We were really lucky to win, and what we wanted to do with the money was to have regional relevance, and make sure that the V&A's collections are able to benefit young people as widely as possible."



Ceramicist James Rigler with Alpertown Community School pupils from west London



Inset left and right: Highgate Wood School pupils from north London explore V&A exhibits

The scheme will also provide the chance for art and design training for teachers, as well as ongoing professional development at networking and skills-sharing events.

Tristram Hunt, director of the V&A, said: "The V&A has a responsibility to protect and promote design education for the future. By



bringing together local industry, museums and schools, DesignLab Nation will ensure that the V&A delivers on our founding purpose, to educate and inspire the artists, innovators, designers and creatives of tomorrow."

The scheme will begin in Coventry and Blackburn this September, and expand to Sheffield and two extra locations in the next academic year.

To find out more, contact schools@vam.ac.uk



CHARITY WANTS TEACHERS FOR TWO WEEKS IN AFRICA

A charity is calling for UK teachers to spend their summer mentoring teachers in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Qualified teachers will travel on July 28 or August 11 to spend two weeks running workshops to help to build the confidence of local teachers.

The project, the International Teacher Training Programme, is run by Street Child, a charity providing educational opportunities for the some of the world's poorest children.

Would-be volunteers apply online, with successful applicants invited to an interview.

Successful volunteers will need to pay between £170 to £200 a week to cover accommodation, breakfast, lunch and transport.

They are also asked to commit to a minimum fundraising target of £1,000, with the charity providing support and resources to help to reach this.

Since 2010, Street Child has trained more than 400 teachers and helped at least 17,000 children in rural communities across Sierra Leone to go to school.

The charity's programmes assistant, Laura Harvey, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for teachers to volunteer their skills to those in need and to develop confidence in their own teaching practice."

To apply, visit: <http://9nl.at/internationalteachers>

Pupils take the plunge in plumbing club



Budding plumbers show off their work

Pupils from seven high schools across Lancashire have been taking part in an after-school plumbing club at Bury College.

During workshops, year 7 to 11 pupils from Bury, Bolton and Manchester learned how to measure, bend and solder pipes, and produced plumbing frames and aeroplane models with industry standard equipment.

Harry Parkinson, a year 11 pupil at Prestwich Arts College in Greater Manchester – one of the schools involved – has now signed up to study a

plumbing course.

"The six sessions have been great and I have enjoyed learning how to solder and make frames and model aeroplanes. I have applied to study plumbing at the college and think that I've already developed a lot of great new skills ready to use."

Stevan Tomlinson, a plumbing technician at the college, added: "The pupils have done brilliantly during these practical workshops and by taking part in the after-school club they have taken their first steps into the industry."



Hill West Primary School pupils recreate a Renoir painting

Life imitates art in Birmingham

Year 5 pupils from Hill West Primary School in Birmingham recently re-created Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* during an ICT lesson that explored the digital alteration of photographs.

They swapped their uniforms for floral dresses and white vests to re-create the famous oil painting, which is dated 1880 to 1881.

Photographs were taken of the children, which were modified on computers using programs such as Photoshop.

Alongside broadening their knowledge of

Renoir's artwork, the project was an attempt to help them to understand how images in the media can be digitally altered.

Teacher Dr Rhian Warrack said: "In ICT and digital literacy lessons, we have explored the alteration of photographs of famous people, and have considered how we perceive people before and after images have been altered. We have also considered whether we see the real person when we see people in photographs and in films.

"We wondered what the people in Renoir's picture were doing or thinking and tried to re-create this in our images."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Sofia Darr is the new headteacher of Rockwood Academy in Birmingham. The academy is a member of the CORE Education Trust with Nansen Primary School, also in Birmingham.

Darr joins Rockwood from Waverley Studio College, a 14 to 19 academy set up in 2013. During her tenure as principal, she moved the college out of special measures to a rating of good.

She has more than 20 years' experience in leading and managing schools, and hopes to bring the skills she has gathered to her new headship.

"I will continue to raise standards for all and strive to become a beacon of excellence to enrich the curriculum further.

"Rockwood is a place where students are placed at the heart of everything. It's a place where relationships between students and teachers are highly effective; respect is shown and the school goes the extra mile to ensure achievement for all."

Darr succeeds Fuzel Choudhury who is taking up a position at Heartlands Academy in Birmingham.

The Academies Enterprise Trust has announced **Lauren Costello** as its national director of primary schools.



Sofia Darr

The AET, the UK's largest multi-academy trust, has 66 primary, special and secondary academies that educate about 35,000 children.

Costello OBE is the co-founder of the White Horse Federation, a multi-academy trust in Swindon. She was the federation's director of education.

She also volunteered with the Samaritans from 2009-11, and has served as an executive principal and headteacher in



Lauren Costello

a range of schools, spending her early educational career as a secondary teacher in Derbyshire.

In 2016 she was appointed by the secretary of state to chair the Department for Education's workload challenge group on data and assessment.

The chief executive of AET, Julian



Pippa Daverson

Drinkall, said: "Primary schools have been a real strength of AET, where our average Ofsted rating is 'good' — and improving. Under Lauren's leadership, we are geared up to see a real acceleration in the rate of this improvement, with schools moving from 'good' to 'great', and will be ready to invite further schools to join our portfolio."

Pippa Daverson has been appointed the head of junior school at Putney High School in west London.

The school is an independent, all-girls' school and a member of the Girls' Day School Trust, a union of 26 schools.

Daverson is currently director of innovation and learning at Kensington Prep School. She has spent the past ten years at the school, where she has held posts such as director of studies and head of English.

Before this she was a teacher at Kingswood Prep in Bath, beginning her educational career as an art and year 4 teacher at Rowdown Primary in Croydon, south London.

She will start her new job in September.

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SCHOOLS WEEK **Sudoku challenge**

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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.