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SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2017 | EDITION 115



**EXCLUSIVE:  
HARRIS ACADEMY  
CHAIN PLANS 100  
TEACHER HOMES**

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## NEU's concerns as teaching apprenticeships move ahead

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The National Education Union is demanding reassurances that new teacher degree apprenticeship standards announced this week will not lead to the exploitation of workers.

Leeds Trinity and the University of Hertfordshire were named yesterday as recipients of a slice of a £4.9 million cash pot for 27 degree apprenticeship projects across many professions, including solicitors and sonographers.

Both universities will develop teacher apprenticeships, and Leeds Trinity said it expects to begin its course in September 2018.

Sheffield Hallam is also listed as developing a "teaching" apprenticeship, while Middlesex University is creating a one covering "learning and teaching".

Degree apprenticeships combine higher education study with paid

work, so trainees spend part of their time studying and part of their time at an employer – typically spending one day a week in university, and four days in paid employment.

Greening said in a recent interview with Schools Week that the apprenticeship route into teaching, which would not require a degree before starting, would give "parity of esteem" to vocational routes.

However, the Department for Education subsequently informed the Chartered College of Teaching that no teacher would become qualified without a degree.

It is not yet clear whether this is because the degree given at the end of an apprenticeship would suffice for qualified status, or whether another postgraduate level period of study will also be required.

In fact, Hertfordshire is listed as developing a "level seven" qualification, which is equivalent to

postgraduate level.

Professor Ray Lloyd, Leeds Trinity's deputy vice-chancellor, said the new degree apprenticeship would offer "an alternative route into teaching", bringing together "higher education study with paid work in schools".

"The funding we've received today will create new opportunities for aspiring teachers across West Yorkshire, including those underrepresented in both the profession and higher education," he said.

He claimed providing a teaching apprenticeship was the "next step" for the university as it continues to "develop education professionals of tomorrow".

However, the National Education Union remains unimpressed; Dr Mary Boustead, its joint general secretary, is especially concerned about the pace at which teaching apprenticeships are being developed.

She described it as a "very delicate" policy area and demanded reassurances it won't lead to exploitation of workers.

"I'm rather concerned about how fast they are moving forward with this," she told Schools Week. "We have worked long and hard to get teaching to be a graduate profession.

"We already have undergraduate teacher training, run by universities on a model where the trainees do some work in schools and work towards a degree at the same time."

She said the government needed to ensure that trainee teachers do not end up paid the apprentice minimum wage of £3.50 per hour in their first year.

She also asked whether apprenticeships would give teachers enough study time. The current minimum off-the-job training requirement is 20 per cent.

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## NEWS

## Affordable teacher housing? You'll have to build it yourself!

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

The Harris Federation, one of the largest multi-academy trusts, is planning to build up to 100 homes in partnership with a housing association in a bid to stop teachers being priced out of London.

The chain presented a proposal to the Department for Education in March last year about using surplus land it owns that is not required as playing fields for housing projects.

Since then, Harris has been in talks with LocatED, a government-owned property company, about partnering with a housing association to build "100 units" or houses, among other options.

Dan Moynihan, the trust's chief executive, told *Schools Week* that he had approached three housing associations, one of which was interested in a partnership.

The housing association could either rent the houses to Harris teachers at a reduced cost, giving the trust the right to "nominate who goes into the houses", or Harris could retain the houses itself.

This arrangement is preferable to the "riskier" option of Harris funding a housing development before selling some of the houses to repay the debt, while keeping others for accommodation, he said.

Teachers paying between



£800 and £1,100 per month for a room in the capital could expect to pay "towards the lower end" of that scale for a two-bedroomed house in the development, he said.

The rent would be used for the maintenance of the houses and would be entirely non-profit. Families or two teachers might move in, he added. Harris will continue talks with LocatED on the best model before talking to local authorities about rolling out plans. Building work will



Dan Moynihan

"hopefully" start in the next 18 months or so, said Moynihan.

The driving force behind the plans was teachers "being priced out of London."

"We've got to do something about it. Teachers are so important," he said. "Just because we haven't seen an academy trust partner with a housing association before doesn't mean it can't be done."

If the model were successful at attracting teachers and financially viable, Moynihan said he was sure "other trusts will look at this," as "it's clearly an obvious way to do it".

Meanwhile, in Essex, another trust is offering free accommodation as a perk to attract good maths teachers.

Hathaway Academy, which belongs to

the Academy Transformation Trust, is promising a free bedroom in a house with a garden for an "outstanding" maths teacher during their tenure in an advert posted last week.

The school has been trying to fill the post since February. Ten teachers already pay affordable rent in the former caretaker's house – teaching either English, science, geography, maths or languages.

Since last week's advert, the school has reported an increase in applications, and told *Schools Week* it had now even filled the position.

Harris has also spent £200,000 converting a caretaker's house into four-bedroom accommodation at below-market rates in Peckham in south London, said Moynihan.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said school leaders who found innovative solutions to the recruitment crisis were to be "applauded" yet these measures "shouldn't replace a national strategy."

"It's the government's responsibility to guarantee that every school has enough teachers to fill every post," he said, adding that the best incentive was to have a well-paid workforce with good morale.

"Currently this isn't happening."

## Katie Hopkins' school tour not banned under Prevent

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Schools can invite Katie Hopkins to talk to older pupils if speakers with opposing political views are also invited to talk, a policy expert on the Prevent strategy has said.

Hopkins, a far-right commentator who has called refugees "vermin", is offering discussion sessions for year 9 to year 11 pupils in schools throughout November.

The offer, which is called the Stand Strong School Tour, has led to outrage from education unions, while the Scottish government has urged schools to consider inclusion values before booking her.

Some Welsh schools have indicated interest, according to Mark Cross, Hopkins' agent and husband. No English schools are believed to be confirmed.

Government advice says schools must ensure speakers are "suitable", research their "previous comments", and consider the school's reputation.

Meanwhile staff are "likely to face prohibition if they deliberately allow exposure to such actions that undermine fundamental British values", including "political extremism."

Hopkins' brochure for schools outlines five sessions: "real news and opinion", "who decides what 'hate' is", "identity politics", "protest marches", and "social media shaming", using Donald Trump's election,

the Black Lives Matter movement and Cecil the Lion social media furore among its case studies.

But Anna Cole, a parliamentary and inclusion expert at the Association of School and College Leaders, said the 2015 Prevent strategy against extremism did not require controversial views to be "no-platformed".

"The Prevent duty certainly should not be used to close down space – quite the opposite," she said.

For older pupils "toward the end of secondary school and in sixth form", a figure like Katie Hopkins could be hosted if schools presented alternative points of view, she said.

*The Daily Mail* columnist already has a "huge platform" pupils are exposed to, she added, and "the key thing is not to give her a single platform" without another speaker. The talks would also have to cease if Hopkins incited hatred or violence.

According to the Education Act 1996, headteachers should ensure pupils exposed to political messages are "offered a balanced presentation of opposing views".

In previous comments, Hopkins has described women as "vicious" at work, while men are "rational", and said asylum seekers are "a plague of feral humans".

In May she left her job at LBC radio after tweeting a "final solution" was needed for Islamist terrorism, leading to accusations that she was encouraging genocide.

Her press release says pupils are "under



Katie Hopkins

Jack Monroe

incredible pressure to conform to an approved way of thinking". Hopkins has previously said teachers force a liberal bias on pupils.

"We do not have to like each other to get along," she said. "We do not have to agree to be friends."

Schools have previously been criticised for refusing to host speakers. In November, the Simon Langton grammar school for boys in Canterbury came under fire from parents after cancelling a talk by former pupil and far-right speaker Milo Yiannopoulos. The DfE's counter extremism unit had consulted with the school over the "threat of demonstrations".

But Dan Hett, who has spoken about extremism after brother Martyn was killed in the Manchester bombings, told *Schools*

*Week* the thought of Hopkins in schools was "a horror".

Pupils listening to a speaker "will assume they are in a position of authority and must be right".

Hett has offered to give his own speeches to schools on extremism to counter Hopkins's tour, drawing on his experience. He has strongly argued immigration cannot be blamed for terrorism, and five schools in Manchester have contacted him, he said.

Now his offer has been echoed by the food writer and activist Jack Monroe, who won a libel case against Hopkins in March.

Pupils need to discuss the issues raised by the columnist "but not from the point of view of someone [...] who financially benefits from spreading extremist views," Monroe tweeted.

## NEWS

## CONSERVATIVE CONFERENCE 2017

## Loan reimbursement trial for teachers in shortage

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

## On location

Maths and languages teachers in certain parts of the country will be reimbursed for some of their student loan payments as part of a new trial announced by Justine Greening – even though a similar policy made little difference to recruitment in 2004.

At the Conservative Party conference on Sunday, the education secretary announced a trial to attract teachers in shortage subjects to in areas of the country struggling with recruitment.

The Department for Education said the pilot would affect 800 modern foreign language teachers and 1,700 science teachers a year.

Briefing papers for MPs, seen exclusively by *Schools Week*, revealed that under the scheme, eligible teachers in 24 local authorities will have their previous year's student loan repayments reimbursed.

The areas include Derby, Doncaster, Oldham and Stoke-on-Trent, which are four of the government's social mobility "opportunity areas".

Greening claimed the policy would support schools to "attract and keep the best of the teaching profession".

But Jonathan Simons, a former education adviser to Gordon Brown and David Cameron, questioned the scope of the pilot.

Simons said the pilot could prove a "waste of time" if not carefully implemented.

"Ideally they'd trial many different ways of doing it in a pilot and see what works –



Jonathan Simons

different subjects, different areas, different methods of repayment," he told *Schools Week*. "That's what a proper pilot ought to do. With a clear plan to roll out the most successful model afterwards."

Simons wasn't convinced that reimbursing old loan repayments was more effective than paying off the loans on a month-by-month basis.

"If it's paying off previous loans, as opposed to replacing current payments, then this is likely to have a different behavioural nudge," he said.

According to the government, a typical teacher in their fifth year of work will benefit from around a £540 annual reimbursement through the scheme. Those with additional responsibilities could get a little more.

Between 2002 and 2004, teachers could apply for a 10 per cent pay off of their student loan each year.

The plan was to pay down loans completely for anyone staying in the profession for 10 years, but the scheme stopped after 2005.

An evaluation of the programme, seen by *Schools Week*, shows that most teachers in the scheme already planned to become teachers. Just nine per cent of teachers started in the profession due to the loan repayments, while most teachers said the subject they taught would not change regardless of loan incentives.

The report describes "operational difficulties", with the Student Loans Company making it difficult for teachers to claim the benefit.



Russell Hobby, the chief executive of Teach First, has instead advocated "forgiving" teachers' loans at a percentage rate – meaning teachers would not need to make any repayments at all.

"At time when schools in low-income communities are struggling to recruit this has the potential to bring more graduates into the profession, and support teachers to stay working in the schools we need them in the most," he said.

Sir Richard Lambert, the chair of the Fair

Education Alliance, said the proposal was a "welcome step" towards improving teacher retention.

"Just last month, the 86 organisations of the Fair Education Alliance highlighted teacher retention as a key barrier to addressing the persistent gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their wealthier peers," he said. "In the report, we recommended financial incentives such as loan forgiveness as a way of solving this crisis."

## Maths bursaries topped up to £35,000 – but not all at once

The maximum bursary on offer to new maths teachers is to increase by £10,000, but the amount they receive upfront will decrease to cajole them into teaching for longer.

Some maths graduates will receive up to £35,000 on top of their salaries in exchange for joining and remaining in the teaching profession, under a new bursary scheme unveiled by Justine Greening at the Conservative Party conference on Sunday.

All maths graduates will get an upfront payment of £20,000 when they become secondary school teachers. Those who stay on will then receive two subsequent payments of £5,000 in the third and fifth year of their careers.

Increased incremental amounts of £7,500 will also be available "to encourage the best maths teachers to teach in more challenging schools", the government says.

This is up to £10,000 more than maths teachers can earn under the current system of bursaries, in which the maximum bonus is £25,000.

That £25,000 is currently all paid upfront, however, so

under the new scheme teachers will receive £5,000 less when they first enter the classroom.

Despite the sums that already available for maths teachers, the subject has had problems with retention.

Last year, a survey of 30 providers by the National Association of School-Based Teacher-Trainers (NASBTT) found that more than a quarter of secondary school dropouts were in maths.

The announcement of the new system has been cautiously welcomed by the National Education Union. But its joint general secretary Dr Mary Bousted has called it a "sticking-plaster solution".

"It is good that the government is rethinking its approach to bursaries and adding an incentive for teachers in some subjects to remain in teaching," she said.

"We hope that this is genuine pilot and that the impact on quality and retention is fully analysed before wider implementation. We also need to see the impact on how this

affects take-up of other subjects."

Bousted said workload remained a "serious concern" for NEU members, and warned the change to bursaries would not be enough to "secure enough teachers for every school".

"Only 48 per cent of England's secondary classroom teachers have completed 10 years in teaching, and a worryingly high number of teachers are leaving the profession very early on in their careers," she said.

"All teachers need, and deserve, a pay increase after suffering under years of public sector pay restraint.

Sticking-plaster solutions such as this will not address serious recruitment and retention problems."

Announcing investment of £30 million to help schools attract and retain teachers, Greening said great teachers were "at the heart of a great education".

"I want to do more to support schools to be able to attract and keep the best of the teaching profession," she said.



Mary Bousted

# Age subjects

# £18m promised for new maths and English hubs

Justine Greening is apportioning £18 million for new English and maths hubs across England.

The education secretary also announced that the next round of the £140 million strategic school improvement fund will focus on primary school literacy.

Set up in 2014 by then-education minister Liz Truss, there are now 35 maths hubs across the country, intended as models for professional development and good teaching.

£12 million will be used to create new English hubs, and the remaining £6 million will pay for more maths hubs.

Greening hailed the success of maths hubs during her conference speech, but their effectiveness is disputed.

Joanne Morgan, a secondary maths lead practitioner, said it was "hard to know" the effect of existing maths hubs.

"We don't get much information about what projects they're involved in. I feel that most schools have little to do with their local hub," she said.

"From



Joanne Morgan

a personal perspective, I've attended one hub-led training course which was excellent, and we've sent a non-specialist teacher on a hub subject knowledge course which again was very good. But these courses existed elsewhere before the hub programme offered them."

Morgan wants to see more promotion of the maths hub and more details on how their outcomes are measured.

She also suspects there is more impact on primary schools than secondaries.

"We certainly feel that students coming through to year 7 over the last two years have been stronger in key maths skills, which can be attributed to either the work of the hubs or the changes to the primary maths curriculum," she said.

Announcing the new measures in her speech to the Conservative Party conference on Sunday, Greening said existing maths hubs were "spreading excellence in maths teaching".

The £6 million of additional funding will "put them in more areas where we want them to make the biggest difference".

English hubs will be targeted in the "Northern Powerhouse", according to Greening's speech, part of a government plan to

redevelop cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders and a former English teacher, who describes literacy as "one of the last great frontiers of our education system", welcomed the hubs plan.

"That doesn't just mean phonics. It means conversation and debating skills, specific reading skills underpinned by a reading-for-pleasure culture and development of writing in the styles our culture deems powerful," he said.

"None of this happens by accident. So I welcome Justine Greening's announcement of some prototype English hubs to help spread good practice."

Barton also welcomed the emphasis on early-years literacy in the strategic fund grants and said the government's "cautious, evidence-based approach" to the initiative was "sensible".

"I am optimistic that we could be about to see some groundbreaking practical work that uses language to liberate children and break down more barriers to social mobility."



Geoff Barton

## HALFON'S 'CARROT AND STICK' APPROACH

Schools that fail to send pupils into apprenticeships should lose some of their pupil premium funding, the chair of the education select committee has said.

Robert Halfon, who is also a former apprenticeships minister, told a fringe event at the Conservative conference that the government should consider financial incentives to encourage schools to promote apprenticeships.

At the event, where he shared the stage with his successor as skills minister, Anne Milton, Halfon repeated a story of apprentices at Gateshead College, who were refused permission to go back to their old school and speak to pupils to promote their courses.

He said the government's long-awaited careers strategy needs to be "completely focused on skills in every way", and that schools needed a "carrot and stick".

This should include toughening Ofsted's approach, he said, but also a focus on "financial grants that go to schools".

"We should look at things like the pupil premium and whether or not certain parts of it can be based or dependent on how many students they get, especially from deprived backgrounds, to go into high-quality apprenticeships," he said.

During the event, Milton also spoke of certain schools' "intellectual snobbery" when it comes to apprenticeships, and admitted she was anxious about the government's careers

strategy.

The strategy has still not been published, despite being announced almost two years ago.

This July, Justine Greening became the third minister to mention it, after it was first proposed by Sam Gyimah in December 2015 and then by Halfon in January 2017.

During his time as minister for skills, Halfon was frequently critical of schools, and in particular, what he perceived as a reluctance to promote vocational routes of their pupils.

In January, he told a meeting in Parliament that schools were to blame for the skills deficit in England because of their fixation on "university, university, university", and said good advice on apprenticeships and skills in schools was still "very rare".

Halfon also set out his desire to see tougher Ofsted guidance considered as part of the careers strategy.



Robert Halfon

## MAY DOUBLES DOWN ON 100 NEW FREE SCHOOLS PER YEAR PLEDGE

The government will make good on its manifesto commitment to build 100 new free schools a year, Theresa May has confirmed.

During her speech to the Conservative Party conference on Wednesday, the prime minister restated the new target, first set out in advance of June's general election.

There had been some doubt over whether the programme would continue as planned after a series of high-profile U-turns on other manifesto commitments.

Groups wanting to bid for free schools have been waiting since March with no word on when the window for new applications will open.

However, in an address punctuated by coughing fits which was at one point interrupted by a protester, the prime minister said extending the free school programme was "the right thing to do".

"We will extend the free schools programme for a new generation of young people, building 100 new free schools in every year of this parliament," she said.

"Not because our ideology says so... but because free schools work."

Her speech echoed schools minister Nick Gibb, who on Tuesday pledged to open "hundreds more free schools" and continue converting local authority-maintained schools into academies.

Gibb was addressing a fringe event organised by the right-wing think-tank Policy Exchange and chaired by Toby Young, the head of the New Schools Network. The minister gave a glowing review of the party's education reforms since it entered government.

There was a "clamour" in 2010 for a return to "the fundamentals of a classical liberal education for all pupils", Gibb claimed. Structural changes have, he says, freed schools from the "progressive orthodoxies and low expectations" of "too many local authorities".

He also claims the government is "winning the argument" in favour of a knowledge-rich curriculum for all schools. And he espoused the virtues of synthetic phonics, proclaiming that ministers were also "winning the reading war".

Gibb reaffirmed his commitment to introduce a computer-based, timed multiplication tables test for year 4 pupils.

"What a prize it will be when every child leaves primary school fluently and effortlessly able to remember their times tables up to 12," he said.



Theresa May

# NEWS: Investigation

## False teaching assistant job advert revoked

**ALIX ROBERTSON**

@ALIXROBERTSON4

**Exclusive**

A misleading job advert targeting prospective teaching assistants has been removed by the company responsible after pressure from *Schools Week*.

The New Skills Academy, a private online training company, was using The Guardian's popular jobs website to advertise a teaching assistant diploma. The description claimed that to secure a job as a TA, applicants must be "qualified to a certain standard".

TA jobs rarely require prior training and the deceptive content of the advert has spurred the GMB, a trade union that represents TAs, to ask the Department for Education to investigate the incident.

The New Skills Academy offers 10 online courses on education all graded at different "levels".

The "complete SEN diploma", for example, is labelled as "level four", which would usually be the equivalent of an undergraduate degree in National Vocational Qualifications, even though it only takes 15 hours to complete.

The courses are said to be accredited by a body called "the Independent Vocational



Course Appraisal Service" (IVCAS).

However, IVCAS is not on the register of qualifications regulated either by Ofqual or the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. Nor is it recognised by the Federation of Awarding Bodies.

Rehana Azam, GMB's national secretary for public services, said the advert was a "shocking" example of the "unregulated Wild West" that support staff face in finding work.

"This advert is peddling a clear untruth and I will be writing to the Department for Education to demand that it investigates," she told *Schools Week*. "Teaching assistants perform demanding and inadequately rewarded roles.

"This shocking case underlines the need



to introduce national professional standards and restore the School Support Staff Negotiating Body."

The original version of the advert said: "To start a career as a teaching assistant you need to be qualified to a certain standard to be considered for the position, we can train you for as little as £40 so you can pursue your new exciting, rewarding career."

But after *Schools Week* highlighted the inaccuracy, it was changed to read: "To start a career in teaching it would be beneficial although not mandatory to be qualified to a certain standard to be considered for the position."

Chris Morgan, owner of the New Skills Academy, offered refunds to anyone who felt misled.

"When this was brought to our attention the advert was changed immediately, the mistake was an oversight by the member of

**BEFORE**

To start a career as a teaching assistant you need to be qualified to a certain standard to be considered for the position, we can train you for as little as £40 so you can pursue your new rewarding career.

**AFTER**

To start a career as teaching assistant it would be beneficial although not mandatory to be qualified to a certain standard to be considered for the position, we can train you for as little as £50 so you can pursue your exciting new career.

staff who posts the course adverts," he said. "If anyone feels misled then we will offer full refunds."

Jon Richards (pictured), the head of education at Unison, another trade union that represents TAs, said: "The advert for the course is loaded with suggestive wording and seems to offer an unknown accreditation.

"It's difficult to see how a three-month online course would prepare someone for the demanding role of working with pupils in the classroom."

## Who are the New Skills Academy - and are their courses worthwhile?

Courses from the New Skills Academy vary across sectors – including 'Running an ironing business', 'Canine communication', and a 'Christmas course', which costs £299 and includes "exams" about planning your holidays.

The 10 teaching-related courses offered on its website are described as varying in "level" from one to four, but they are all awarded via an online unsupervised test which can be repeated multiple times.

*Schools Week* signed up to take the "complete SEN diploma" at levels two, three and four. It was originally listed at £299, but a coupon alert on the site allowed us to sign up for £69.

The course is detailed, including 22 modules of material to read through, with learning objectives and "test yourself" quizzes at the end of some sections.

Module titles include "the history and evolution of SEN" and "psychological perspectives of behaviour".

However, a special needs expert who examined the materials for *Schools Week* raised concerns.

For example, one section appears to make presumptions about children with English as an additional language.

It states: "The law in the UK does not classify children who speak English as a second language as SEN pupils. However, this does not mean that these pupils cannot have learning disabilities. Some children whose first language is one other than

English have learning difficulties, too."

However, our expert Sara Alston, an independent SEND and safeguarding trainer with 30 years' experience in schools, said the materials were "written in a way that makes no sense at all and feels deliberately written to make it sound academic".

She pointed out that the content includes out-of-date details.

"We don't have IEPs [individual education plans] anymore or seven main areas of SEN, and TAs will not be contacting the local authority for resources," she said.

"The description of ASD [autistic spectrum disorder] is also inaccurate. I am concerned about the use of phrases such as 'emotional disturbance'."

Alston, who has herself developed online TA training courses, said "jargon-free language" and "real-life examples" are important, especially as the content may also be accessed by parents trying to learn more about their children's needs.

"Someone is trying to pass off very little knowledge as an awful lot of knowledge," she concluded. "If somebody came to me and was quoting bits of this I would not be employing them. This is not the language of the British SEND system and has not been for many years."

When presented with these comments, Chris Morgan, the owner of New Skills Academy, said the SEN course "is verified by our own expert – the Deputy Headmaster of

a Special Education school".

The SEN diploma is classed as going up to level four, which is officially the equivalent of an undergraduate degree in national vocational qualification levels. New Skills Academy's version only takes "15 hours" to complete, according to its own website.

When approached by *Schools Week* about the level equivalences, Morgan said they are "based on the content and how much knowledge a student can gain from the course".

"Some of our courses are beginner, intermediate and advanced, others are assessed by levels," he said.

He claimed his organisation was not claiming to offer "a degree or any other college/university qualification", or anything "Ofqual or Federation of Awarding Bodies-approved".

"Our courses are provided to introduce the student to the subject and to help them increase their confidence and develop the skills needed to go on to apply for a job in their chosen field, or to take the subject at college," he said.

On the New Skills Academy's Facebook site, *Schools Week* found an example of an enquiry made about the courses' levels.

The customer wrote: "Looking at different courses you offer ... it says level three. What



does this level relate to please?"

In response, a New Skills Academy representative replied: "Level three is the level that the course was awarded when we had the courses accredited."

When this customer pressed it on NVQ equivalence, New Skills Academy said they were "standalone courses" and "diplomas in there [sic] own right".

*Schools Week* asked Morgan if he was concerned the levels might be misleading for customers.

"Our students are aware that these are online courses only and are not equivalent to any college based courses, such as NVQs," he said.

"We have never had a customer complain that they thought the course was equivalent to an NVQ. If any customer is unhappy with a course, we offer full refunds."

## NEWS

# IVCAS has same owner as New Skills Academy

The New Skills Academy claims its courses, including those for teaching assistants, are accredited by an independent appraisal service called IVCAS – but both organisations appear to have the same owner.

The firm's 10 listed education courses, which cover subjects including "positive handling in schools", a "dyslexia diploma" and even a full "teaching diploma", are all accredited by a body called the Independent Vocational Course Appraisal Service, or IVCAS for short.

"IVCAS does not provide teaching courses. We evaluate online courses to ensure that they meet our minimum criteria for quality and functionality. Once a course passes this a provider can use our logo/branding," said a spokesperson for IVCAS.

IVCAS's website says it is the "first awarding body solely for online vocational courses".

But Companies House records show that both New Skills Academy and IVCAS are owned by one entrepreneur, Chris Morgan.

Morgan's first project, Be-a Education, was set up in 2013 and operates the New Skills Academy, while his international recruitment and advertising agency Click 4 Careers was established in 2014, and runs IVCAS.

When *Schools Week* first asked about the

connection between IVCAS and the New Skills Academy, Morgan told us they were "not a sister organisation".

But when presented with evidence showing the link to Click 4 Careers Morgan sent a statement explaining why he set up the organisation.

Morgan said: "IVCAS is a company set up through Click 4 Careers. There are a team of individuals who control the running of the company and the accreditation process. I set up the company because I wanted to ensure any online courses could be accredited to a high level and we employed a team to thoroughly check the content of the courses.

"To manage any perceived 'conflict of interest', I do not get involved in the day-to-day running of the business, but I am very proud of the fact that we are now helping tens of thousands of students to go on to achieve their goals by providing courses which are written to a high standard.

"IVCAS has a strict process that is followed to check the courses. We recognised that there was a lack of certifiers for online courses at the time and didn't just want to provide courses without them being fully checked to a high standard, so setting up IVCAS was an obvious business decision."

The New Skills Academy website states that courses are also accredited by the CPD



Certificating Service, the International Accreditation Organization, and the Complementary Medical Association.

Morgan noted that "any organisation, business or school can verify our courses through all the accredited companies mentioned on our site".

The site assures learners that they can have "peace of mind" about their new qualifications because "all of our courses have been approved by IVCAS and CPD".

On Facebook, the New Skills Academy says its qualifications are "recognised nationally by schools and businesses".

However, they are not recognised by government exams watchdog, Ofqual, which told *Schools Week* that "as long as an organisation is not pretending to offer courses regulated by Ofqual, then we don't have a view on it".

"Our remit only covers qualifications that we regulate – we have no jurisdiction over unregulated qualifications that are not listed on our register of regulated qualifications," he said.

# Ofqual: The 2016 KS2 reading test was too hard

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The 2016 key stage 2 reading test was "unduly hard" for pupils with low attainment and special educational needs, Ofqual has ruled.

The reading comprehension test, part of a "tougher" primary curriculum started in 2014, was heavily criticised on social media after teachers realised it was much harder than expected.

SATs results in 2016 showed that just 66 per cent of pupils met the standard for reading, compared with 70 per cent in maths and 74 per cent in writing.

Only around half of pupils (53 per cent) met standards in all three areas compared with 80 per cent the year before.

The exams watchdog has now reviewed the approach taken by the Standards and Testing Agency which designed the reading test.

In particular, Ofqual said the STA "did not foresee the intensity of concerns" raised by teachers even before the results came out.

Throughout 2016, *Schools Week* reported on confusion and worries by teachers surrounding the tests, but the government forged ahead regardless.

In future, Ofqual has recommended that the STA's vetting process for the tests should be "run differently", given how many concerns were missed.

The regulator's report also found "abrupt

transitions" in the middle of question sets, from low-demand to high-demand questions, which could have been difficult for many pupils.

Discussions also highlighted the use of "idiomatic" language which could have disadvantaged pupils with special needs or English as an additional language.

There was an "old-fashioned feel" to the vocabulary that could also have been hard for pupils from poorer backgrounds, since certain words may not be used at home, representatives told Ofqual.

The exams watchdog concluded that it "seemed plausible" that the reading test had been "unduly hard to access for at least some pupils," but it stopped short of saying which pupils were affected.

"We do not have sufficient evidence to reach any definitive conclusion concerning which pupils might have been affected in this way, nor how many pupils, nor to what extent," said the report.

However, social media comments from teachers claiming that even high-ability pupils struggled were not borne out by the report.

About a quarter of pupils were estimated not to have reached the end of the test.

Christine Kemp-Hall, the executive principal of Northornesby primary academy in Middlesbrough, said her staff were "horrified" when they had opened the paper.

"For our special needs pupils it was almost



pencils down," she said.

Archaic words such as "ancestors", or a picture of four kinds of columns asking which one was "a monument", would have challenged some secondary school pupils, let alone primary children, she said.

Since the 2016 "experience", the school teaches pupils test techniques for different types of SATs questions, so they "know the kind of explanation required".

Julie McCulloch, a primary specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said the 2017 reading test was already an improvement on the previous year. A group of psychometricians had helped design the test, and the STA had "been careful to choose texts that were more accessible".

The STA had "worked constructively with teaching and leadership unions" about the standards, she said.

The changes were particularly welcome since the consequence of the 2016 tests had been "quite challenging for schools", driving "quite punitive" accountability measures.

## ONE-PER-CENT PAY CAP MAY BE LIFTED IN 2018

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The independent body advising on teacher pay will next year be given the "flexibility" to recommend an average rise of more than one per cent, the government has said.

Liz Truss, the chief secretary to the Treasury, has written to the School Teachers Review Body, with an update on public sector pay.

The STRB makes annual pay recommendations to the education secretary, Justine Greening, but can only suggest rises in line with current government pay policy.

Average pay rises for public sector workers have been capped since 2011. But growing issues with teacher recruitment and retention, combined with unrest over the austerity agenda, has heaped pressure on the government to lift the cap.

The new guidance means the STRB will be able to recommend a rise greater than one per cent for the 2018-19 academic year.

This is due to a need for "more flexibility" on pay in some sectors, particularly in "areas of skill shortage".

However, next year's pay award for teachers will be delayed due to recent reforms, including the move to an autumn budget instead of one in spring.

Truss admits in the letter that this will delay the Department for Education from providing evidence in a timely manner, as details it would normally provide in September will no longer be available until December.

In turn, schools will need to wait longer for the STRB's recommendations and the final pay scales approved by the DfE.

It could also mean a delay in the month when teachers receive a pay rise.

Truss wrote in the letter that the changing in timing "will impact on when the government can expect to receive your report and, as a consequence, on when individuals will receive their pay award".

"I recognise that this is far from ideal as our hard-working public servants are entitled to receive their awards promptly," she continues. "However, given the importance of the process and the change in timing that has already occurred, I feel it is important we work to a later timeline rather than condensing the process."

The National Association of Head Teachers welcomed the flexibility but said any rise in pay must be fully funded by the government.

"As the letter says, the government has recognised that depressed pay is contributing to a shortage of recruits and the ability to hold on to talented and experienced school staff," said the union's general secretary, Paul Whiteman.

"It is clear that a new approach to pay is needed. The STRB needs a remit that can look beyond a one-per-cent maximum and, crucially, all pay rises must be fully funded into school budgets otherwise they will be meaningless in practice."

## NEWS

## OUTCRY AS NEWHAM REASSIGNS £7M SEND POT TO ACADEMY EXPANSION

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

A group of headteachers have written to their council, challenging its proposal to spend almost £30 million on expanding two schools, claiming it's an "unjustifiable" amount to take from special needs funding.

Twelve headteachers in Newham, a borough in east London, are dismayed that they were not consulted on council proposals to expand two academies by six entry forms, creating a "mega-school" with over 14 new forms starting at the school each year.

The headteachers, including Diane Rochford, who wrote the Rochford Review on special educational needs, said the council's decision to spend £29 million was "seriously concerning" because £7 million of the total is to be taken from a pot that had been earmarked for SEND.

Newham council's cabinet agenda from April shows that £7 million for the "Stratford SEN Unit" will now be handed to Brampton Manor and Forest Gate schools to expand by four and two forms respectively.

The expansion is one of 12 on the agenda, in a meeting recorded as lasting just 24 minutes.

The final decision on the expansion was put before a headteacher board last Friday. The outcome is not yet known.

The heads said the £7 million loss "does not consider the serious deficiencies in SEND provision" in the borough. Some pupils are now "educated at home" due to a lack of suitable provision.

Barney Angliss, a SEND consultant, said the cabinet agenda was a further example of SEND pupils "losing in a numbers game" because local authorities prioritise mainstream place demand over provision for special needs.

"There doesn't seem to be the right balance of interests," he said.

The cabinet report admits the new six forms of entry will lead to a surplus of 378 pupil places by 2020-21.

An alternative option suggested by the letter from the heads is the creation of six "bulge classes" across the 14 secondary schools in Newham rated as good or outstanding.

This would be less expensive than creating the new classrooms at an "unjustifiable" £29 million cost, they claimed.

The impact a "mega-school" with 14 forms of entry at Brampton Manor academy had not been properly assessed, the letter concluded.

But the headteacher of Brampton Manor said he had received almost 2,300 applications for 300 places last year. Consequently, the school had been approached by the council to expand. He had not applied.

The £29 million cost was "based on the council's recent experience of competitively tendering similar school projects", said a council spokesperson.

A "tiered approach" is applied to SEND provision in the borough with the majority of pupils set to be educated in mainstream schools, the spokesperson added. Specialist provision is available for pupils "with the most complex needs".

## New trend for three-year sixth forms

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools have begun to offer three-year stints in sixth form to pupils whose grades are too low to start A-levels or BTECs.

At least three schools and one academy trust have set up a "transitional" year 12 in which pupils with grades below C at GCSE can take level one or level two courses, before moving on to level three courses such as AS-levels or an apprenticeship.

The model suits schools in areas where pupils are struggling to move onto level three courses, but who come from close-knit communities reluctant to send them to colleges far away.

Mark Gilmore, the vice-principal of Minsthorpe community college in Wakefield, one of the schools adopting the scheme, said it served a deprived ex-mining area where many pupils were "either not finishing their courses or failing them".

When the government told pupils to stay in education or training until they were 18 in 2015, the school set up a transitional year 12 for pupils with Ds or lower at GCSE.

Pupils with Fs and Gs take a level one course on "key working skills", resit their maths and English, and do weekly work experience. Around half move into apprenticeships or work afterwards and 25 per cent into level two courses, said Gilmore. The rest leave.

Other pupils take a level two course, again resitting English and maths, as well



Mark Gilmore

as one of seven options such as IT, sport or health and social care.

About 30 per cent of these moved onto an apprenticeship or work, while a quarter continued to A-levels or BTECs, or a mix of both.

As a result, the proportion of pupils staying on from year 11 has risen by 10 per cent.

The school's academic results now reach the national average, as pupils not ready for courses take them later, or take vocational ones.

"It sounds like you're doing it for the results, but when you've got pupils leaving with nothing, this is a way of giving them an extra year," said Gilmore.

Pupil numbers are also steadier, which meant the school did not lose as much funding.

Only about 50 per cent of pupils get the GCSE grades required to move onto most A-level courses, national GCSE data shows.

Paul Hanks, a post-16 funding consultant who works with 200 schools, said at least two other schools – the London Academy in north London, and the Magnus Academy in Nottinghamshire – had also developed a "transitional" year 12.

Meanwhile the Delta Academies Trust in Yorkshire, which has previously come under fire for poor performance, has introduced the model in seven of its schools.

One motivation is to increase overall pupil numbers, said Hanks. His schools found that half of the pupils on level one and level two courses continue to BTECs and A-levels, allowing them to retain hundreds of thousands in funding.

Under current government rules, 16- and 17-year-olds are funded at £4,000 a year, with additional funding for some pupils on top. But 18-year-olds are funded at £3,300, making the extra year somewhat tricky for schools, Hanks pointed out.

James Kerwin, the deputy chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said a three-year pathway is not a new idea for colleges, which have been offering them for years.

He claimed they are a particular financial struggle because colleges, unlike schools, can't draw on lower-school funding and do not get a VAT rebate.

"If more schools are able to provide pupils that need it a three-year sixth form, that is something we would welcome," he said.

## Daventry council demands E-Act hand over sports sites

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

Exclusive

A council wants two schools to open their sports facilities up for public use at the end of the school day in return for lifting restrictions that prevent younger pupils from using a new building.

The Parker E-Act Academy, which teaches pupils aged between 11 and 18, announced in June it would be taking over a building that once belonged to the now-defunct Daventry UTC at the start of this school year.

However, it soon emerged that a pre-existing lease on the £9.4 million building explicitly stated it should be used for teaching 14- to 19-year-olds, preventing younger pupils from accessing the state-of-the-art facilities.

The council claimed last week that E-Act had known about the issue since May but had not attempted to negotiate until last month.

However, E-Act disputes this, and said it had been asking Daventry district council to remove the restriction since May, but could not fulfil the council's demand for full after-hours control of the sport facilities at Parker and the nearby all-through academy Danetre and Southbrook Learning Village, citing safeguarding issues among others.

The council confirmed it wants community access to sport facilities in an attempt to claw back some of the money it



invested into the UTC.

Both sides have accused each other of only restarting negotiations since a negative story appeared on the issue in the local newspaper.

"Due to the council's demands, which included handing over full control and access to both Daventry E-Act academies' facilities as soon as the academy day ended, agreement has not been possible given the adverse impact that this would have on our ability to deliver positive educational outcomes for our pupils, the safeguarding issues that this arrangement would raise and the fact that as a charitable organisation we simply cannot hand over our assets to a third party," said an E-Act spokesperson. "Our pupils must have priority use of their academy facilities.

"Consequently the lease was assigned to E-Act on current terms by the ESFA, and we continue to operate the building effectively within the terms of the lease, using the space primarily for 14- to 19-year-olds.

"It was the chief executive's office at Daventry district council that approached

E-Act for a meeting after recent publicity in September, to which we promptly agreed."

E-Act insisted it had put forward "reasonable proposals" for the next meeting and that no other UTC in the country had such age restrictions in place.

Daventry district council's business manager, Simon Bowers, disputed the trust's claims.

"The council was notified by the ESFA in April that it was proposing to assign the UTC lease from the UTC trust to E-Act, so the Parker Academy could use the building in place of an existing building which was to be demolished," he said.

"The council made the ESFA aware that it considered its contribution of land and money to the UTC project should be reflected in some form if the ESFA wished to change the use of the UTC site.

"From May to July there were intermittent contacts with E-Act, but in July E-Act confirmed that the existing terms of the lease would be respected and did not pursue discussion further.

"E-Act then contacted the council in early September seeking to renew discussions, having found that the 14-19 restriction was giving it some operational difficulties.

"The council engaged in those discussions and then, as agreed, made written proposals to E-Act. E-Act has responded with different proposals, and a meeting is being arranged to discuss options"



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## NEWS

## DFE ADVERTISES JOBS TO PUSH GOVERNMENT'S CURRICULUM PLANS

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

The government appears to be tightening its grip on what is taught in schools, and is advertising three senior jobs handling curriculum policy.

According to the job advert, the curriculum policy division is "responsible for policy about the knowledge and skills taught in state-funded schools in England, and for policy on improving the teaching of curriculum subjects".

The three vacant roles are for a "curriculum support policy adviser", a "STEM in schools policy lead" and an "English Baccalaureate implementation adviser".

The salary for the three jobs, which are based in London, ranges between £51,463 and £59,411.

The curriculum support policy adviser will be responsible for coordinating support and "introducing a curriculum fund", which was pledged in the government's manifesto during the election earlier this year.

The STEM policy lead role will be involved in improving the teaching of science and computing in schools.

Finally, the EBacc implementation adviser will work to ensure 75 per cent of year 10 pupils in state-funded mainstream schools study the EBacc subjects to GCSE by September 2022.

Required skills for all roles include "seeing the big picture", "collaborating and partnering" and "building capability for all".

Anastasia de Waal, the deputy director of the think-tank Civitas, said the roles came as a "surprise" from an administration that has been quieter than its predecessors on matters of curriculum.

"I think it's interesting," she said. "It's a bit of a sign that there's been a lot of beavering away in the background on curriculum, but the hiring of high-grade civil servants is something I would have expected a few years ago. It's very interesting that it's happening now."

"We were all very aware that Michael Gove in particular saw the curriculum as his big thing, but that side of things has gone a little quiet recently. I was surprised they were hiring these positions."

"I would say, with all three of these jobs, they are not at the beginning of a process of creation. I would imagine this is much more about implementation than a change in direction."

"We know that curriculum is a priority, even though it's in the background. But who knows what's really going on in the background? It's not always obvious."

A spokesperson for the DfE said: "These advertised posts are part of routine recruitment within the department."

Applications for the positions close on October 9.

## Academies (&amp; prisons) are synchronising exams

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

Investigates

Academy trusts across the country are making all of their schools use the same exam board in a move similar to one recently announced for prisons.

The Ministry of Justice announced in August that it would appoint a single awarding organisation for exams in prisons to ensure continuity for inmates who moved to another institution during a course.

An investigation by *Schools Week* has now revealed that a number of multi-academy trusts around the country have already implemented the same system, claiming that sharing exam boards across secondary schools lowers teacher workloads and allows academies to share resources.

However, other trusts have insisted it is more important to uphold the autonomy of individual academies and consider local contexts when deciding on exam boards.

Delta Academies Trust, formerly known as SPTA, runs 17 secondary academies around Yorkshire, and said it has "worked hard" over the last year to standardise the exam boards used by its schools.

"The specifications are changing as courses move on to the new GCSEs," a spokesperson explained. "This means that teachers are studying new specifications, creating new schemes of work, resources and assessments. This obviously has an



impact on teacher workload.

"At Delta, standardising has allowed staff and heads of department to share these tasks and reduce the associated workload."

The trust said a joined-up approach to exams also means that when certain staff are absent, central staff, who are "experts on the same specification", can step in as additional support.

"We can also purchase textbooks in bulk, making it easier to get better value for money," they added.

A spokesperson for the Harris Federation, which runs 24 secondary or sixth-form academies across Greater London, said it had "always" sought to harmonise exam boards to reduce workload through sharing resources.

"However, our academies are never compelled to do particular syllabuses, and they can and do sometimes choose to do otherwise," she said.

However, a spokesperson for The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT) said that, although

academies may share information, it is important to uphold individual autonomy.

"TKAT has not adopted a trust-wide strategy as we prefer to give our academies autonomy. However, at a regional level within the trust, our academies regularly share this information and collaborate closely where there is overlap," they said.

"Autonomy is a general principle for TKAT, rather than something specific to exam boards. The board is committed to earned autonomy as the principle driver for improving standards and outcomes."

Ark, which runs 18 secondary academies across Birmingham, Hastings, London and Portsmouth, said "the vast majority of schools" within its trust had "naturally chosen to follow the same exam boards in the majority of subjects", as it enables staff to work together, share resources and run joint moderation days for teacher-assessed work.

Although Academies Enterprise Trust said its 29 secondary schools used the same exam boards in core subjects, academies can choose their boards in other subjects "to achieve a curriculum model that suits their children and their local context".

A spokesperson for Plymouth CAST confirmed it used "a variety of boards across the trust to meet need" and there were "no plans" to change that.

United Learning also confirmed it did not, and would not, be putting all of its academies on the same exam boards.

## STATE SCHOOL CADET PROGRAMME EXPANDS – SLOWLY

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

Investigates

The defence secretary has announced that 31 new cadet units will open in state schools – but *Schools Week* analysis shows that just 81 state schools have been approved to have cadets since 2015, despite an injection of £50 million and promises to launch 100 units per year.

Sir Michael Fallon announced the new units under the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) at the Albion Academy in Manchester on Wednesday.

Twenty five state schools were approved to have new cadet units in November 2015, and 25 more came in November last year, according to a "state schools approved for CEP" document from the gov.uk website.

According to the Combined Cadet Force website, there are CCF contingents in "over 350 secondary schools" altogether across the UK. This time last year, the figure on the website was 300, and in 2015 it was 275 – but many are within independent schools.

The CEP was launched in 2012 by then-prime minister David Cameron and received £11 million to increase the number of state school cadet units to 100 by September 2015.

That total was met "six months early", according to the CCF, leading the government to commit to growing cadet unit numbers to 500 by 2020.

In his 2015 summer budget, the former chancellor George Osborne said £50

million – raised through fines levied on banks – would go towards increasing military programmes in schools.

The CEP is designed to give pupils from a state school the chance to experience military cadet activities and prioritises schools in less affluent areas.

But Emma Sangster of ForcesWatch, a campaign group scrutinising army recruitment policies, is critical of the programme.

"The continual promotion of cadets in schools by ministers while education and other services for young people are being massively cut is further evidence that the government needs to make an educational case for what is a defence policy," she said.

"A recent report to the prime minister about 'filling the ranks' recommended that cadets in schools should be utilised for the purpose of meeting recruitment targets."

The minutes of a board meeting of the Combined Cadet Force Association on March 7 said there were "over 100 schools in the pipeline" for the CEP but also pointed to



challenges expanding the programme.

Six failures in establishing cadet units have been noted so far. One example cited "money as the cause", as cuts to school funding meant schools were focusing on "core activities and not on the extracurricular".

A bad Ofsted report meanwhile forced another school to "switch" its focus.

A The Ministry of Defence spokesperson told *Schools Week* that as of September 22, there were 403 cadet units in schools in total. Of these, 214 were in state schools.

"Our Cadet Expansion Programme continues to help young people in less advantaged areas to benefit from being in the cadets," he said. "We remain on track to meet our target of 500 units in schools by 2020."

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## NEWS

## ACADEMIES STUNG AS ESFA POSTPONES LAND VALUATIONS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government has pushed back a planned valuation of academy land and buildings until January, leaving some schools facing the prospect of spending “thousands” on their own surveys to meet accounting requirements.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency was due to issue valuations for new academies opened between September 2016 and August 2017 last month.

The original scheme provided schools with a free valuation to include in their annual accounts, which must be filed by December 31 at the latest.

But officials now say they won't carry out the valuations until January, missing the accounts deadline and leaving many schools with a large bill.

“This is quite simply a waste of the public money and schools' budgets,” said Phillip Reynolds, senior manager at accountants Kreston Reeves.

“[Schools] are effectively being forced to spend thousands of pounds on a valuation which they will receive for free just a few months later.

“The ESFA has blamed this on the move of their own accounts reporting deadline, however it will be the new academies having to pick up the bill.”

Reynolds is now urging schools to speak to their local authority to find out if a valuation already exists, or arrange their own.

In a recent update issued to schools last week, the ESFA said: “We've adjusted the timetable for issuing land and buildings valuations because the valuation date has changed from March 31 to August 31 each year to match the sector annual report and accounts, which has 31 August as the reporting year end.”

Micon Metcalfe, the finance director at Dunraven Academy in London, who is a fellow of the National Association of School Business Managers, echoed these concerns.

Although some new academies, especially those with new buildings, may have alternative valuations available, she pointed out that others will be struck by the delay.

“New academies, unless they have a valuation already, might have been banking on the ESFA's valuation in time to include in their annual report and financial statements,” she said.

“We had the ESFA desk-based survey, but it missed half our site and the rest was a building site. We used our insurance valuations and the build cost of our new buildings after consultation with our auditor.”

The “lateness of the announcement” has caused most of the disruption, as it is happening “just when trust audit season is in full swing”, she added.

A Department for Education spokesperson defended the delay, claiming that the valuation reports are a “reference tool to help the sector”.

They should not be used to “supplement the accounts of individual trusts”, she said.

## Grammar expansion likely to fail legal review

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

Ministers were warned that allowing a Kent grammar school to build a new site more than eight miles away would likely have been declare illegal if put to a judicial review, a former schools minister has revealed.

David Laws' recently published diaries, chronicling his time as a minister in the Coalition government earlier this decade, claim lawyers told the Department for Education that the proposed site would more than likely have been considered a new school, and would “therefore would be illegal”.

Laws, who also claims in his book, ‘Coalition Diaries 2012 to 2015’, that he instructed the DfE's permanent secretary Chris Wormald to show him the same legal advice given to Morgan, warned of “one hell of a public row” if the lawyers went unheeded.

Their advice indicated the government had a 30-per-cent chance of winning any judicial review of its decision.

“As far as I am concerned, this proposal should now be dead in this parliament,” he wrote. “What I shall say to Nicky is that if she wants to delay her decision until after the election, I am happy with this, but if the Tories try to go ahead and ignore the legal advice, then we are going to have one hell of a public row.”

New selective schools have been banned since 1998, but an expansion of the Weald of



Kent grammar school was waved through by Nicky Morgan in October 2015.

Morgan said at the time this was in keeping with Conservative policy that “all good schools should be able to expand”. But critics accused the government of allowing the opening of a new grammar school by the back door.

A judicial review into the decision was proposed, led by the campaign group Comprehensive Future, but it was dropped in 2016 after campaigners were unable to access critical government information.

The group said its request for details on the legal advice and other information given to the government was “not forthcoming and unaccountably delayed”.

The revelation raises fresh questions about the decision-making process, just weeks after the school's new £19 million annex opened in Sevenoaks, more than eight miles from its main site in Tonbridge.

Morgan tells a different story, however. She said further legal advice was sought between May 2015, when Laws left the government, and October 2015, when she made her final decision.

“He didn't see all the advice,” she told Schools Week. “As a lawyer I would not have made a decision without being very clear it was within the law to do so.

“I didn't announce the decision until five months after he lost his seat – that's a lot of legal advice time.”

## NEW NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION TO HELP SCHOOLS SPEND APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

ALIX ROBERTSON  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Exclusive

A new National Institute of Education is being set up to run courses helping schools use the money they pay into the apprenticeship levy.

Since April, many larger schools have paid money into the government's apprenticeship levy, and those that have can then claim funding back in order to pay for apprenticeship training for their staff.

However, schools have complained about a lack of available courses, although a teaching apprenticeship is in planning, as revealed by Justine Greening last week.

The NIE will offer a teaching apprenticeship, a “master teacher” degree apprenticeship and a master's degree apprenticeship for senior leaders. It will also provide a two-year PGCE with qualified teacher status for those entering the profession.

Dave Cobb, the chief executive officer of Oceanova, which is setting up NIE in conjunction with the University of Buckingham and others, said it was a response to the fact private companies will be more likely to draw on the funds if schools are not prepared.

“Barclays are paying £30 million into this levy,” he said. “It would be a crime if the

banks are well organised and put thousands of people onto management development programmes, and schools miss out on that money.”

Schools or multi-academy trusts with a payroll of £3 million or above have been paying the apprenticeship levy since its introduction in April this year – as have grant-maintained schools, through their local authority.

Cobb added: “There's a £3 billion national pot, a £105 million contribution from the schools in this calendar year from April, and we're really worried that schools that haven't got the time to organise around this are going to miss the opportunity to actually spend their levy.”

Schools need to “bust through” the 0.7 per cent of their budgets that they are currently spending on professional learning, he said.

“In Kent alone they are without 45 headteachers at the start of this academic year – we need a revolution in leadership learning,” he said. “There's too much pressure currently on senior leadership in schools and not enough trickle down.”

Members of the team at NIE include Ben Laker, leader of the analytics practice at business management consultancy

Transform Performance International, and John Blake, Policy Exchange's head of education and social reform.

The NIE is not the first body to create a new offer this year for school leadership. Two beneficiaries of the government's Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund are also investigating these areas.

The Institute for Teaching is a partnership between three academy trusts – Ark, Dixons and Oasis – and will be offering masters qualifications for expert teachers in order to tackle the recruitment crisis at challenging schools.

The proposal, first revealed by *Schools Week*, was described as the largest-ever collaboration between multi-academy trusts on teacher development.

Matt Hood, the institute's director, said the project aims to have a “positive impact on the professional lives of teachers, and on the outcomes of pupils in some of the country's most disadvantaged areas”.

Meanwhile, Teach First will also be launching a leadership programme next Spring called ‘Leading Together’.

The two-year scheme will use research to build “effective leadership teams”.

Ndidi Okezie, the body's executive director, said the programme aimed to have “a positive impact on the achievement of teachers and their pupils”.



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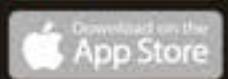


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## EDITOR'S COMMENT

@miss\_mcinerney | [laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk](mailto:laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk)

# All aboard the 'Skills Revolution'! (Even you Mr Gibb)

"The Conservative Party has got a major problem when its own secretary of state for education is on the stage announcing a 'skills revolution', but the schools minister won't let civil servants write the word 'skills' in any of his correspondence."

Making this point while sat alongside a former Tory minister and in front of 150 party members was not exactly comfortable, but it felt important at a fringe event I attended at conference on Sunday. It was important because it's true.

For three days the same questions were on party member's lips: Why aren't we giving children opportunities to do vocational subjects? Why are we killing off the arts, and music, and design & technology? How come the message about apprenticeships is always so negative?

Unfortunately, the most obvious answer is "Nick Gibb". The schools minister has perpetually made "no apology" for his focus on "rigorous" academic subjects, including during a *Schools Week* profile in which he described his best day at school: he recalled making maple syrup as a pupil in Canada, but winced when I suggested this might be a skills-based activity.

As part of his passionate, and not unreasonable, belief that children should all have the right to access

his favoured academic subjects, Gibb has become blind to the benefits of learning anything else. Hence, English and maths are now all that matters in primary schools. In secondary schools, the handful of favoured EBacc subjects are king, while subjects such as music wither on the vine.

If Justine Greening is setting out on a skills revolution, I suspect she's going to be manning the barricades alone.

And then there are apprenticeships. The word was huge at conference. "Apprenticeships are the future," people said. "Apprenticeships will save us from any terrible outcomes of Brexit," people hoped.

But even that policy is divisive in education. Nick Gibb has long banged on about his desire for teachers to have elite degrees, going so far as to say he'd rather have a teacher with an Oxbridge certificate and no teaching qualification, than one from a "rubbish" university with a PGCE.

Now, however, Justine Greening wants apprentices working in classrooms four days a week for four years so they "build up" to a degree which also counts as their teaching qualification.

Regardless of how you feel about the worth of apprenticeships against degrees, it's straightforwardly the fact that the left hand and the right hand

are no longer talking in the education department. The inevitable outcome of this will be schools getting smacked in the face by both.

A perfect example from conference came when I heard a Conservative MP having a dig at schools for not promoting apprenticeships for about the fourth time.

When my turn came to speak, the MP got it full barrels: "You can't now moan about lack of parity of esteem for vocational routes when schools, since 2010, were told academic subjects were all that mattered. What did you expect?"

"Performance measures all focus now on academic subjects or university entrance. Vocational qualifications are gone from the league tables – destroyed, disappeared.

"So is it any wonder schools aren't promoting apprenticeships when the message is that such routes are worthless and preparing kids for them is the pinnacle of low expectations?"

He looked duly admonished.

I did, however, see a glimmer of a redemptive narrative during a canny speech given by Dame Rachel De Souza, the chief executive of Inspiration Trust.

In a smart move, De Souza said that reducing

vocational qualifications in 2010 was important because the courses were often of low quality, and there were too many children tracked into them so league tables could be gamed.

Now, she said, in the brave new world of Brexit, such courses could perhaps return as long as they are more rigorous and tightly controlled. Not so much a skills revolution, but a revival.

This narrative is clever. It does that thing brilliant teachers do when they need to get two fighting kids refocused on their work: it recognises the difficult truths of the past but moves on positively.

And, if the sway of sentiment at the Conservative conference this week is anything to go by, Gibb needs to find a way to join this rising tide.

As the character Omni, says in the brilliant book *Cloud Atlas*: "All revolutions are fantasy, until they happen, then they are historical inevitabilities."

The apprentices are coming. Those who don't get on board with the new skills land, will be left all at sea.





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Teacher of Business

Teacher of English

Teacher of Geography



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# Director of Finance & Operations (DFO)

## Permanent position

**Full / Part time**, dependent on skills and experience

**Salary** to be negotiated dependent on qualifications, experience and skills

The purpose of this role is to lead the delivery of outstanding operations across the Clevedon Learning Trust (CLT).

The role is designed for a high performing, impact driven person who is able to co-ordinate activity across multiple schools, providing efficient and effective operational services so that educational staff can maintain a core, unrelenting focus on teaching and learning. This person will also take a leading role in developing the strategic vision for the CLT and delivering this to secure high standards across the organisation that encourage other schools to join.

You will need to be able to motivate and bring together a team of financial and operational staff to ensure that they work as one central team for the CLT in ensuring value for money, policy compliance, budget adherence, site management and opportunities to generate income.

Reporting to the Executive Headteacher, the post holder will be accountable for the financial and operational outcomes of the CLT and as such will performance and line manage the staff operating in the Business, Finance, Site and Operational Management teams as well as other functional leads to ensure that their objectives are being effectively met.

You will be an ex-officio Director of the CLT Trust Board attending meetings and reporting on all aspects of Finance and Operations.

The role would support the Executive Headteacher in the CLT growth strategy providing expertise to manage the conversion processes for schools joining the MAT. This would involve liaison with the school, Local Authority, Diocese, DfE and RSC.

In addition, the postholder would play a leading role in major CLT projects e.g. building, IT to ensure successful and financially efficient completion.

You will ensure delivery of consistent, efficient and outstanding support across all Academies in order that the strategic leadership team of the CLT (Executive Headteacher, Director of Education and Director of Finance and Operations) can execute the School Improvement Strategy with the maximum available budget.

If you are interested in this post please contact John Wells on **01275 337404** to discuss interview arrangements or to arrange a visit to the Trust.

An application form and further details are available from:

**[www.clevedonlearningtrust.org.uk](http://www.clevedonlearningtrust.org.uk)**

**Tel:** 01275 337404 **Fax:** 01275 340935

**Email:** [recruitment@clevedonschool.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@clevedonschool.org.uk)

**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS**

Friday 20th October 2017

*Clevedon Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and all applicants*

# Wellspring Academy Trust

## Head of Estates

**£42,000 – £50,000**

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

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

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

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

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

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

We are interested in hearing from people who:

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

To download an application pack please visit

[www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk/aboutus/careers](http://www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk/aboutus/careers)

or contact Chloe Wormleighton via phone

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

[wellspringacademies.org.uk](http://wellspringacademies.org.uk)

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

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# Vacancies



Tauheedul Education Trust

## Head of Finance (West Midlands Cluster)

Tauheedul Education Trust (Coventry based)

**Salary:** £48,603 - £53,646  
**Contract Type:** Full Time  
**Contract Term:** Permanent

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

**You will:**

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

**You will find an organisation that:**

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

**Closing date:** Monday 9th October  
**Shortlisting date:** Tuesday 10th October  
**Interview date:** Thursday 19th October  
**Start date:** ASAP, ideally no longer than 8 weeks notice



Eden Girls

## Business Manager

Eden Girls' School, Coventry

**Salary:** £37,306 - £41,967  
**Contract Type:** Full Time  
**Contract Term:** Permanent

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

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

**We can offer you:**

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

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

**Closing date:** 8am on Monday 9th October 2017  
**Interviews** to be held Monday 16th October 2017  
**Start date:** ASAP



Laisterdyke Leadership Academy

## Director of Science

Laisterdyke Leadership Academy, Bradford

**Salary:** Leadership Pay Scale 7 -11  
**Contract Type:** Full Time  
**Contract Term:** Permanent

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

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

**You will:**

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

**You will find a school that:**

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

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

**Closing date:** 12noon on Monday 9th October 2017  
**Interviews:** Tuesday 10th October 2017 onwards  
**Start Date:** Required from January 2018

# READERS' REPLY



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## Greening: Teaching apprenticeships are 'parity of esteem'



**Wendy Harper // @wendy\_harper**

I think it takes a lot more than a degree to be a teacher

**Voice of a Teacher // @VoiceOfATeacher**

Surely a backwards step in improving quality and standards in the profession?

## Nearly 5,000 prospective teachers failed basic tests three times



**Jamie Bee**

They should take away the timed questions, but everyone should be able to pass them as they are basic. Year 6s have more difficult tests than the basic skills tests.



**Mike Cameron // @mikercameron**

So, one day we have "teachers must have a degree". The next "teachers don't need to be able to add up". Confusing, isn't it?

**Sue // @eleonorasfalcon**

Has anyone challenged these tests under disability legislation? I'm dyslexic and time pressured online tests are my idea of hell

## Tighter legislation on private alternative provision ignored by Gibb



**Mary Meredith // @marymered**

If the DfE were tough not just on alternative provision, but the causes of alternative provision, this would be an important step towards a more equitable system. If.

## Popular maths hubs forced to go private



**Claire Tuffley**

What's wrong with sharing? Everyone benefits and it saves schools from spending ridiculous sums of money on schemes.

## UK's biggest free school bans mixed-ability teaching



**Max Vlahakis, Birmingham**

This shows a massive lack of understanding regarding the huge amounts of research readily available that show the benefits of mixed ability teaching. It has nothing to do with hiding ability levels.

## Costs exclude poorer pupils from school trips



**Sunshine Frankie**

This is what the pupil premium fund is meant to be for! Not to top up school budgets



**Gemma Parry**

Many of the schools I work with use the pupil premium budget to support families; equipment/uniform/trips or even a taxi if there is an urgent/desperate need. Schools have to provide inclusive activities for all. My secondary school had an annual ski trip that was over £1,000. Limited numbers and not for all, but £1,000 in the 90s was a ton of money.

## Secondary teachers pair with Oxford academics to deepen their subject knowledge



**David Carter // @Carter6D**

This is a fantastic idea. Challenge is how to scale it but a good starting point for a schools and HE partnership strategy

## Taxi drivers can now take a course in transporting SEND pupils



**L // @555eal**

This should be mandatory and is a step in the right direction. Face-to-face training is on my wish list, but great that this course is available. Much needed and well done.

## England's largest free school bans mixed ability



**Sunshine Frankie**

All the evidence shows this doesn't work! Children learn best from their peers!

**Matthew McGee**

All classes, even within a system of setting or streaming, are mixed ability to some extent.

## Oxford uni CPD scheme pairs teachers with professors



**David Cobb // @David\_C\_Cobb**

Great example of ambitious professional learning. How do we achieve this at scale?

**Peter Barnard // @peterabarnard**

At last...someone has come up with a sensible idea...collaboration, motivation and systems thinking...

## DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

However big or small, if you have information or a story you think our readers would be interested in, then please get in touch. For press releases make sure you email our news email account, and don't be afraid to give us a call.

news@schoolsweek.co.uk  
020 3051 4287

## Greening: Teaching apprenticeships are 'parity of esteem'

### REPLIES OF THE WEEK



**Sarah Rawsthorn**

Appalling. Nothing to do with raising standards for our children and everything to do with addressing the shortage of teachers – which is a result of downgraded pay over the past two decades. I studied for four years full time and did modules on psychology, sociology and SEN. This was essential to make me a competent teacher. Do you think a one-day-a-week apprenticeship will offer this?



**Catherine Ann Coughlan**

I totally agree with apprenticeships and national vocational training – some of the best teachers I ever had were not the ones with the highest qualifications. In fact those with the highest of qualifications were the worst teachers – some food for thought.

## REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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# PROFILE

LAURA MCINERNEY  
@MISS\_MCINERNEY

## Lewis Iwu – Former chair of Fair Education Alliance

Last year, when the grammar schools policy flooded media channels, Lewis Iwu stepped up to speak on radio, television and in campaign halls. It was a moment he had prepared for most of his life and, having coincidentally become the head of Fair Education For All a few months earlier, he was perfectly positioned to be heard.

Set up a few months earlier, the FEA brought together a range of education charities – including Ark, Teach First, the Children’s Literacy Trust – and channels one voice in a “fight against inequality”.

Since 2014, charities have been “gagged” by new laws which mean they must waive their right to complain publicly if they accept government funds.

When the grammar schools policy hit, it made life difficult for many charities who strongly opposed the move. Iwu stepped forward, with his plummy vowels, calm manner and persuasive oratory style.

If he comes across as Blairite-verging-on-Conservative-parish-councillor, it belies his history as a boy educated at St Bonaventure’s, the inner-city London school headed by the former chief inspector of Ofsted, Sir Michael Wilshaw.

“A lot of people were scared of him. But I wasn’t,” Iwu says seriously, as we tuck into drinks and bar snacks in a pub in Greenwich, south London. “I had a lot of respect for him, but I wasn’t scared of him.”

Why were people scared? “I think because he had gravitas. He was always immaculately dressed. He carried himself with such poise and grace that he didn’t really seem like a headteacher. He seemed like some sort of politician.”

Iwu’s own slightly formal manner is unsurprising given the influence of St Bon’s (as it is known locally). At the time Iwu attended, Newham was one of the poorest parts of the country with some of the worst educational outcomes.

But Wilshaw always made his pupils act differently – immaculate blazers, polite language, an almost business-style approach. And the community loved it.

Iwu’s parents moved to the capital from Nigeria in the 1980s. His mother was a nurse, and his father ran a shop. Along with his younger brother and sister, the family lived on the 24th floor of College Point – a tower block not dissimilar to Grenfell.

Despite being of limited means his parents cared passionately about education. For his seventh birthday they gave him a set of encyclopedias. Iwu’s degree certificate now hangs on their living room wall.

But he found school frustrating – “being a cog in a machine” – and his school reports described a “bright but distracted” boy, until one day, when an angry teacher called Mr Farley accidentally changed his life.

“One of my friends was talking when we were supposed to be silent. He was about to get a punishment which was really unfair. So Mr Farley said, ‘okay, defend yourself. In fact, I’ll let you pick someone in this class to defend you and see if they can get you off the punishment’. For some reason, he asked me.”

After 10 minutes of furious preparation, Iwu stood in front of the class and proclaimed that talking in classrooms was not always bad as it can help to repeat learning or clarify a point.

Mr Farley set aside the punishment and later asked Iwu to attend a new school debating club.

“I absolutely loved it,” he recalls. “It was exactly what I needed. It was competitive, I kind of liked the sound

# ‘IT WAS ODD, I THINK I WAS LITERALLY THE ONLY BLACK STUDENT IN MY COLLEGE’

of my own voice at the time, and it felt grown up to have a voice. I became addicted.”

Competing at ever higher levels, Iwu eventually applied for the England schools debating team. A place was so unlikely that he never mentioned his audition until he received a place – and found out the international competition would take place in Calgary.

Trained at Cambridge by a Ph.D. student and former world-class debater, the team was comprised mostly of pupils from top private schools, including Eton. At Calgary, Iwu competed all the way to semi-final only to lose to Australia. The following year he got all the way to the final (where he lost to Australia, again).

The experience prompted him to apply to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Oxford, starting at the university in 2005.

Four years later, David Cameron complained that just one black student had been admitted to Oxford that year. The university issued a statement: the real number was 52. Out of more than 3,000.

“It was odd, I think I was literally the only black student in my college,” Iwu says, but he decided the best way to avoid misery was “embracing the bits of the world I hadn’t experienced” and “try to do something about the situation”.

He therefore got involved in student politics – eventually becoming the head of the Oxford University Student Union in 2007.

A racist incident, involving a squad of student rugby players dressing up as Orthodox Jews as a “joke” on a night out, threw Iwu into the media spotlight. It then emerged that some of the group had also “blackened up” for a safari-themed party.

“The media picked up on it. As the voice of students, I had to comment on it. I think it probably carried extra weight as a black student commenting on it. I came down pretty hard on them and my comments were pretty punchy,” he says.

“It’s awful when you work with an institution, and you get to see all the good things happening, their attempts to try and solve the access problems, and then a few idiots ruin it.”

Iwu dislikes being describing as a role model among his home community, yet it irks when he doesn’t see people who look like him in top roles.

“There is a particular type of black male that gets shoved down people’s throats in music and the media, but you don’t hear the counter-narrative. It’s refreshing to see a teacher, or someone in a charity, to show there’s more than one path.”

# LEWIS

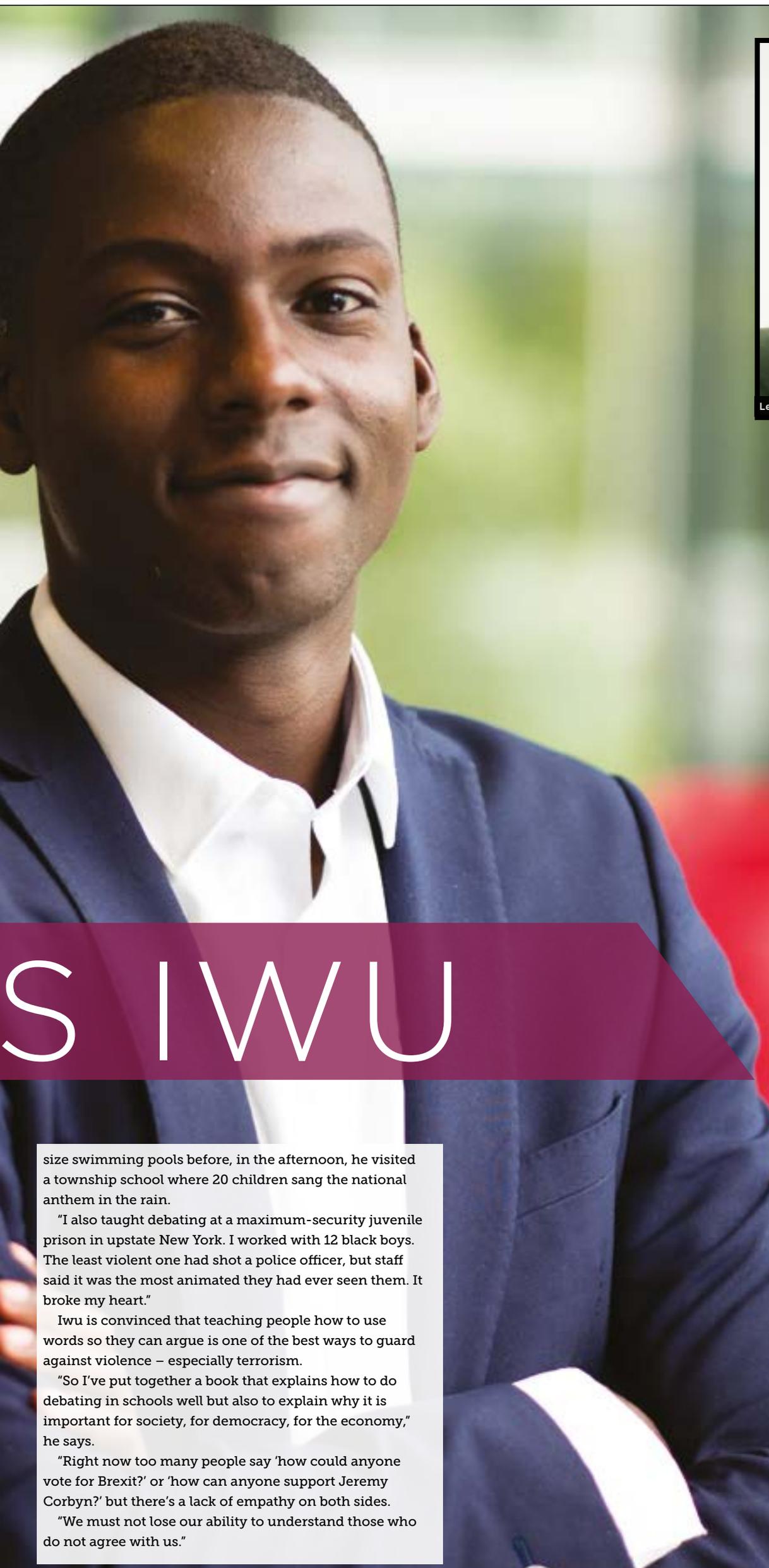
He can count on one hand the number of black men he has sat around dinner tables with during his time in education policy: “There’re hardly any. They are non-existent.”

Originally seduced into law after graduating, he later worked for the public affairs company Brunswick, which reawakened his interest in coalitions. As a child, Iwu was dragged along to a Nigerian community group, where people chipped in with dues each month to cover funeral costs if anyone unexpectedly died, or to help fundraise a hospital trip for a sick child.

When the Fair Education Alliance job cropped up he wanted to recreate that room, but for educational charities, so that issues could be debated and, crucially, solved.

He has now stepped aside from the organisation and gone back into corporate communications, but before he went, he wrote a book about debating in schools.

‘Words that win’ describes Iwu’s continued speaking endeavors – including competing in the world championships in South Africa where, in the morning, he went to a whites-only private school with two Olympic-



# S IWU

size swimming pools before, in the afternoon, he visited a township school where 20 children sang the national anthem in the rain.

"I also taught debating at a maximum-security juvenile prison in upstate New York. I worked with 12 black boys. The least violent one had shot a police officer, but staff said it was the most animated they had ever seen them. It broke my heart."

Iwu is convinced that teaching people how to use words so they can argue is one of the best ways to guard against violence – especially terrorism.

"So I've put together a book that explains how to do debating in schools well but also to explain why it is important for society, for democracy, for the economy," he says.

"Right now too many people say 'how could anyone vote for Brexit?' or 'how can anyone support Jeremy Corbyn?' but there's a lack of empathy on both sides.

"We must not lose our ability to understand those who do not agree with us."



Lewis and Michael Wilshaw



Lewis and Nicky Morgan

## IT'S A PERSONAL THING

### What is your favourite book?

I'm going to go with the biography of George Washington by Richard Chernow. No, I'm going to change. 'My Life' by Bill Clinton. It's a great primer on American politics, which I am addicted to.

### What would you do if you were invisible for a day?

I'd be a fly on the wall in the British cabinet or a big corporate charity. I'd like to get a sense of what they are like when away from the public.

### Which animal are you most alike?

I like to think I am an owl: quite bookish, and I'm getting wiser.

### What would you not do even for a million pounds?

Sell a negative story to the media about my family or friends.

### What's the most exciting phone call you ever received?

From Jesse Jackson [the campaigner who stood next to Martin Luther King when he was shot]. Such a random story: I was at a restaurant in Chicago and next to us Jesse Jackson was having dinner with someone. I went over and said "I'm a big fan of yours". We got into a conversation and he said, "let's exchange numbers".

The next day I got a phone call from him asking "do you want to come and hang out? Just come over to my office". I went over and he was planning Rodney King's funeral and then took me on the tour of a city. It was an incredible day.

## OPINION



# NIAMH SWEENEY

Joint president,  
the National Education Union

## The agony and the ecstasy: A tale of three conferences

**Not all party conferences are created equally. Niamh Sweeney was at all three main ones, and discusses the many differences in tone, from Labour's upbeat event to the Conservatives' funeral march**

I have just about survived three weeks on the political party bandwagon travelling to the party conferences.

### What did I learn?

Education is still very high on the political agenda and, on the whole, the electorate, party activists, councillors, staff and MPs know their stuff. They have been to their local schools, have spoken to concerned professionals and parents. Many are parents, grandparents, teachers, governors and, regardless of political ideological differences, they are committed to make a better society for their families and communities. The similarities end there.

“  
**In 18 months, Angela Rayner has not only gained confidence, but has also researched the issues well**

At the Liberal Democrats' conference the atmosphere was considerate and respectful, if somewhat quiet. Members and party leaders had a lot of time to engage and discuss education. However, they didn't have any time on their agenda to debate education, which angered some delegates enough that they submitted an emergency motion on teacher recruitment and retention for debate on the final day. Well done party members for recognising such an important issue!

They did, however, have a number of education-related fringe meetings. While the Lib Dems seem oblivious to the fact that they were actually recently in government, and their former schools minister is more

than a tad responsible for part of the current situation, they are at least doing some significant research and policy development into skills and education.

The Labour conference was a whirlwind of activity, both in the debate hall and in fringe events. In 18 months, Angela Rayner has not only gained confidence, but has also researched the issues well. She clearly speaks with passion about children, young people and their families. She, and the shadow team, are telling me all the things I want to hear as an education professional, which leads me to believe she has listened to the profession.

Investment in Sure Start, education maintenance allowances and lifelong learning, paying education professionals properly and an introduction of national standards for support staff were all given priority in the her speech.

Party members, candidates and activists were keen to engage with our campaigns on school funding and the post-16, post-Brexit skills agenda. There was a confident buzz about the type of education system the party wanted to provide and the direction of party education policy.

Moving on to the Conservative conference in Manchester the buzz was less apparent. Sadly, the hall was by no means full for the education secretary's address on the first day. Although many polls have said education was one of the major topics of concern for the general election, many delegates left as Justine Greening started speaking.

Speaking to her later I think she is genuinely passionate about what she said, but she rattled through announcements – although many were not new – on literacy and numeracy hubs, free childcare, apprentice degrees, pilot student loan programmes and alternative provision.

I was pleased she talked about alternative provision. I'm just not sure what she meant by it, and sadly SEND was again conspicuous by its absence.

Overwhelmingly the difference between the three events was the answer to the questions asked many times at all of them. What do we want the purpose of education to be?

I came away much clearer in my own mind about what that is for me as a teacher and a member of a community. I hope all political parties will continue to engage with the profession to ensure our education service is giving all of our children the opportunities they need to achieve and become well-rounded and active citizens.



# DAVID SPENDLOVE

Professor of education,  
University of Manchester

## Excellence everywhere to anyone, anywhere

**Once again, DfE meddling is making teacher training harder to pull off, says Prof David Spendlove**

The new initial teacher training allocations for 2018/19 are possibly the most significant confirmation that the government has lost all hope of developing an effective teacher-supply strategy. It also confirms that the sleight-of-hand allocations system has now ended in favour of the notionally school-led system.

“  
**This is a huge gamble which adds further uncertainty for providers**

In effect we now have the first no methodology and free-for-all allocation system, which pays little or no attention to regional need, quality of provider, or type of provision.

This is therefore a potentially bold (or perhaps naïve) move by the DfE, but it does seem that it has finally recognised that the teacher supply model, previously used to justify allocations, is also defunct.

It does little to address last year's National Audit Office concerns that the DfE didn't appear to understand how different routes into teaching affect schools' ability to recruit and retain newly qualified teachers. As a consequence the free-for-all does little to address supply, quality or retention issues.

This is a huge gamble which adds further uncertainty for initial teacher education (ITE) providers. At one time allocations to providers would mean you were effectively guaranteed to fill the allocation that you had been given. As a provider your allocation for three years meant you could plan staffing, finance and develop medium-term plans with confidence.

This latest methodology (or rather lack thereof) is the seventh different approach to allocations in seven years. In 2011-12 we had one-year allocations and the introduction of new bursaries, and in 2012-13 came the first

900 School Direct places and providers were asked to consider their future involvement in initial teacher training (plus pre-entry skills tests and £9k fees were introduced).

In 2013-14 we had the expansion of School Direct and 'outstanding' providers guaranteed annual allocation, in 2014-15 the increased School Direct allocation was prioritised over core HEI allocations with every lead school guaranteed a place, and in 2015-16 the School Direct lead school allocation guarantee was removed while allocations were given to HEIs to take into account involvement with School Direct.

Then in 2016-17, we had the introduction of the absurd recruitment controls. This year, 2017-18, we scrapped recruitment controls and introduced three-year allocations for some providers – and finally 2018-19 will see the start of the free-for-all: there'll be no allocation by region, quality or type of provision.

Inevitably this constant change of priorities does little to secure stability in the ITE sector. From a university perspective it plays havoc with staff contracts and financial forecasting, and it does equally little to inspire confidence within university senior leadership teams where ITE programmes are seen as having greater vulnerability and volatility than many other programmes.

As a consequence of the increased uncertainty, significant time and resources are now being spent fishing from the diminishing pool of applicants in highly competitive and convoluted "ITE market" conceived by the government.

While the deregulation of ITE allocations instantly solves one DfE-created problem, through establishing an unmanageable market of potentially thousands of providers, it doesn't address the fundamental problems: the teacher-supply crisis and ensuring teachers are working in those areas where they are most needed. Neither do the recent sketchy plans for 'loan forgiveness'. As is often the case with markets the most vulnerable will inevitably suffer the most.

Therefore while the 2016 white paper 'Education excellence everywhere' attempted to bring stability to the sector by giving ITE providers three-year allocations, thereby establishing greater certainty for the "best" providers, this latest allocation methodology has done the opposite – by guaranteeing uncertainty everywhere!

### The watchdog's new consultation on short inspections needed to be much further-reaching, says to Colin Richards

Almost all schools and inspections are "-ish". Only a few schools are clearly and uncontroversially 'outstanding', and only a few are undoubtedly 'inadequate'. The vast majority are 'good'-ish or 'requiring improvement'-ish. Inspection is not a science but an art; it involves complex judgements which don't necessarily point in the same direction.

Does the recently announced new consultation on short inspections recognise this?

Because of the value judgements involved, inspectors can never claim that their interpretation of a school is the only correct one. Nor can inspectors claim a monopoly of objectivity or authority, as expressed in an overall grade or description. Equally importantly, the unique judgements each one gives cannot be directly or robustly compared with the equally unique opinions of the same school inspected the previous time, or the next. Each inspection is in a sense sui generis. Direct comparison over time is at best problematic, and at worst invalid.

But of course Ofsted does not recognise this. It persists in wanting to place schools into one of four supposedly water-tight categories, or it has until now, now it has announced a new consultation on changes to short inspections. Under these proposals, 'good' schools that are not definitely good (whatever that means) are to be given two



## COLIN RICHARDS

Former HMI, Emeritus professor of education, University of Cumbria

### Ofsted's short inspections: escaping a self-dug hole?

years to prove their 'goodness', making them in the meantime just 'good'-ish or, more likely 'probably in need of considerable-ish improvement'. Similarly, 'good' schools that are 'outstanding'-ish are promised a full inspection later to confirm their status.

While the issue of grading remains contentious, more short inspections for more schools should be widely welcomed. But let's be clear: the new consultation did come from Ofsted rethinking the effects of short inspections on schools and students. They resulted from the logistical difficulties created by the uncertainty of conversion following an initial inspection and the fact that considerable numbers of would-be inspectors would not be fully employed.

The new proposals may resolve the logistical issue but will result in a three-tier split in overall 'good' judgements, considerable uncertainty and desperate efforts by schools for the two years before the

“  
The answer to Ofsted's self-created problem is not another sticking-plaster fix

follow-up inspection in order to retain their 'good' or have their 'outstanding' confirmed.

The answer to Ofsted's self-created problem is not to come up with another sticking-plaster fix to an insoluble problem: it's to reconsider the terms in which schools are evaluated so as to avoid the -ish issue, and other problematic notions.

Inevitably and, in my opinion rightly,

inspection judgements are not only tentative but qualitative. On an inspection nothing speaks for itself: everything needs interpreting and value judgements, using descriptors such as "good", "very good", "excellent", "satisfactory", "reasonable", "fair", "poor", etc. There can be no stipulation as to which qualitative terms are to be used; they must "fit" the perceptions of the activities being evaluated. They cannot be reduced to just four numerical grades, as they are under the current Ofsted regime; reality is much more complex than fourfold categorisation.

Oversimplification may be useful for the purposes of educational accounting but fails to take into account the varied facets of educational reality which can only really be captured (and then only in part) in well-crafted prose. Inspection teams need the freedom to dispense entirely with artificial, misleading constructs such as overall grades, and to present schools in their idiosyncratic variety with idiosyncratic descriptors to match. Each inspection report has to be bespoke – not a formulaic account with minimal variation from school to school. Misleading, over-simplistic grades should make way for prose which gives a vivid sense of what a particular school is really like – as witnessed by a group of expert observers.

Through this consultation, Ofsted is trying – I suspect vainly – to get out of the hole it has dug itself. The real answer is both deceptively simple: abolish overall gradings and the angst that goes with them, and hellishly difficult: creating credible word portraits of schools' inevitable peculiarities, strengths and weaknesses.

# Early Career Teacher Conference

CHARTERED COLLEGE OF TEACHING



Amjad Ali  
Assistant Headteacher  
Aureus School

Held at  
Friends House  
173-177 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BJ

Saturday  
14 October 2017  
10.30 – 16.00

“If you want to survive and thrive in the first few years of teaching then always reflect on your practice. Do this in a variety of ways; ask yourself what is working and making a difference and what am I doing that isn't. Reading books, blogs and listening to podcasts can help. When doing so, write a list of tweaks you can put in place. One tweak a week. Also, don't be afraid to try and refine ideas presented to you.”

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## REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS  
OF THE WEEK

To view individual blogs visit  
[www.schoolsweek.co.uk/reviews](http://www.schoolsweek.co.uk/reviews)



Our blog reviewer of the week is Jill Berry, a former head, now educational consultant, author and Twitter addict @jillberry102

### Reflections upon our relationship with food

@DaringOptimist

There is a good deal of activity on Twitter and in blogs on the subject of wellbeing, including the highly successful #teacher5aday initiative and now regular posts from @HealthyToolkit. In this August post, Daring Optimist explores the subject of our relationship with food and how it connects with our physical and mental wellbeing.

The writer shares her personal experiences and recounts her changing attitude towards food over time, concluding: "When I was depriving my body of food and working out to the extreme, I was self-harming. I was trying to gain control of one area of my life when I lost it somewhere else. When I was comfort eating, I was self-harming too. I was trying to silence the chaos in my head by distracting myself with treats."

She goes on to suggest three strategies which could be helpful if we are committed to developing a healthy approach to diet.

### Invisible children

Dr Clare Owen

In this Huffington Post blog, Clare Owen discusses the existence of "invisible children" in our classrooms who, "whether cautious or coasting, are hidden in plain sight, working under their teachers' radar, practically anonymous." These children may "lack a label" and fail to register as having a specific learning need, and not attracting the attention we are aware certain groups of students require.

However, without recognition and a commitment on the part of the teacher to giving these pupils the support they

require, they are unlikely to fulfil their academic potential. They may be introverts, and they may be anxious, shy or lonely. Dr Owen suggests that in a busy and pressured classroom situation, teachers may be tempted to allow the quiet children to remain invisible because they make no overt demands and are no trouble. Yet those who are quiet and well-behaved do not automatically achieve. They need more from us, and we should "notice them and give them a calm chance to shine."

### If we push children to become the readers we want them to be...

Robin Stevens, @redbreastedbird

Children's author Robin Stevens begins by explaining what she hopes young readers will gain from her books. "I'd like them to teach children how to be kind, how to think more deeply about the world and how to be resourceful and brave in the face of the huge odds that life will throw at them. I'd hope that they will expand children's vocabularies and broaden their minds," she writes.

But she recognises that, if she is to achieve any of this, children need to enjoy her fiction and to be motivated to continue reading. She wonders whether, in our commitment to encouraging young people to read widely and ambitiously, we lose sight of the enjoyment and risk putting them off reading altogether.

She suggests the books we read should be age-appropriate in a way which stretches us: "Reading is not a ladder. It is a universe". If children are enjoying reading, and rereading books they love, perhaps we should accept this and not push too hard too soon.

### Why aren't I a better teacher?

@MrSamPullan

Finally this week, I enjoyed the honesty and openness of this post by Sam Pullan. I am fond of saying that, in my experience, the best teachers always want to be better teachers. Sam's post made me think more deeply about our motivation to succeed and the less comfortable elements of competition, rivalry between and ranking of teachers, especially in exam results season. Sam recognises he is generous in sharing resources and expertise throughout the year, and yet results days "bring the usual question: why hasn't my obvious teaching genius been reflected in uniformly jaw-dropping results – particularly when compared to those of colleagues?" Does this strike a chord?

### When the adults change, everything changes: Seismic shifts in school behaviour

By Paul Dix

Publisher: Independent

Thinking Press

Reviewed by Holly Hartley, principal,  
Thistley Hough Academy



Relationships matter. People matter. As educators, we are not dealing with faceless statistics, we are dealing with brilliant, funny, smart, infuriating, imperfect human beings. Hundreds of them, every day. People respond best to people, not to rules, and our pupils are no exception.

We take it for granted that we all do what we do because we genuinely care about improving the lives of the young people in our schools. However, how often do we say it – to ourselves, or to others? How often do we show it? This book reminded me that we should all say it, loudly and regularly.

I found myself nodding so much in agreement at Paul Dix's notion of "deliberate botheredness" that I almost gave myself whiplash. It is not enough for you to know that you care; you have to show it. Even when faced by silence, blank faces, or eye-rolls, we need to go out of our way to show our young people that we care about them and their success and wellbeing.

I challenge everybody to take the "policy language: education or incarceration" quiz in this book and not be shocked at how much prison terminology litters the language of education. It is hardly surprising that relationships can be fraught, when they are often formed using the language of prisoner and warden.

I pride myself on being somebody with a decent level of emotional intelligence, but this book made me cringe thinking of some of my own behaviours and patterns. It forced me to reflect on things that I do and things that I don't do. In the short time since reading this book, it has already made me a better principal, and in the process, a better human.

When leading a school in difficult circumstances, Ofsted and the local community, quite rightly, want tangible improvements, and quickly, especially when it comes to behaviour. As a result, the focus is often on policies and tactics, not people and relationships. These policies and tactics can have real impact in the short term, but it is vital that they are created, monitored and enforced, remembering the people we are here to serve.

I credit the transformation Thistley Hough with our drive to re-establish the ethos and culture of the school. We needed to take the time to remember why we do what we do. Building strong relationships amongst staff and with pupils and parents allowed us to ensure that teachers could teach and learners could learn. We are now the most improved school in Stoke-on-Trent, in the top 25 per cent of the country for progress, and have gone from special measures to 'good' with 'outstanding' features.

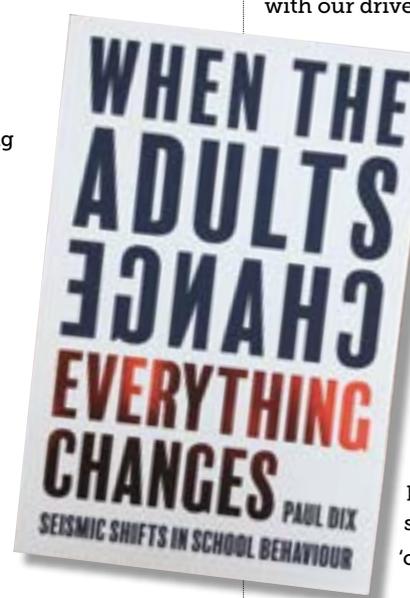
It was not easy and I wish that we had had this book to accompany on our journey. It provides a useful common-sense framework for leaders. I will certainly be using this to help me to be more ambitious in what we can achieve, as we continue our journey to outstanding.

However, this book is not just for senior leaders. Regardless of where you are in your career, it is an important read. It provides newly qualified teachers a tangible way to shape their practice – "keystone tips", "flipping the script", and "30-second interventions", while also being a great reminder to more seasoned practitioners of the fundamentals of human interaction. Every chapter ends with three takeaways: testing, nuggets, and things to watch out for, making it easy to pick up and put down as necessary.

Education is a serious business, but serious does not have to mean boring. This book is warm, full of humour and its anecdotes make it easily relatable to all of us. I genuinely laughed aloud throughout.

As I read *When the adults change, everything changes*, I was constantly reminded of the Rita Pierson quote, "every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them". This book will help you to be that champion.

## BOOK REVIEW





# Week in Westminster

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

## SATURDAY:

Teaching apprenticeships are so hot right now. So when Justine Greening announced "the next wave of 27 degree apprenticeship projects" at the Conservative Party conference, we waited with baited breath to hear whether teaching might be one...  
...and we're still holding on.

Greening, it turns out, was not launching 27 new degree apprenticeships, but 27 projects relating to degree apprenticeships, which will include marketing and employer engagement. It is not clear whether any of the projects will lead to the creation of any new degree apprenticeships at all.

Next wave? Week in Westminster thinks all sense and logic waved goodbye.

## MONDAY:

Dear reader we must apologise. We must fall on bended knee and beg forgiveness. Our swords shall splay open our hearts.

The Inspiration Trust got in touch with Week in Westminster today asking for an apology for our comment last week, that

Dame Rachel De Souza chaired the honours committee which gave Sir Theo Agnew – the trust's chair and new academies minister – a knighthood. Alas, she did not chair. She was just a member of the committee. Mea culpa!

It is also important we explain that De Souza was not at all involved in discussions. Apparently she had her hands over her ears at that bit.

This is not the end of our atonement however. Like a child in detention we also must write that we were wrong last week when we said press releases had exhorted their delight that Theo Agnew was the new academies minister but that they did not mention: one, his cosy links to the former minister's trust, two, a £400 Vera Wang tea set purchased by his trust, three, his link to the honours committee, four, donations to the Tory Party, five, his position as a non-executive director at the DfE, and six, the substantial grants given to his trust.

So why is this necessary? BECAUSE – OH MY GOD – A PRESS RELEASE FROM INSPIRATION TRUST DID, IN FACT, MENTION THAT HE HAD ONCE WORKED

AS A NON-EXEC AT THE DFE (see point 5).

Still, it's just as well we didn't mention the huge furore over a behaviour policy that recently occurred at one of the trust's schools. Or that the former regional schools commissioner, who used to oversee the trust, is now the chair of governors at another trust school involved in applying for a controversial merger which will be signed off by another commissioner and overseen by ... dun dun duuuun ... the new academies minister Theo Agnew.

Don't worry, we are perfectly sure Agnew will put his hands over his ears too.

## TUESDAY:

Also doing the rounds at Tory conference was the immovable Nick Gibb, who addressed a Policy Exchange event about his government's education reforms.

The speech had everything you might expect from an address by a schools minister who has been in government for 72 years. (And for the benefit of humourless press officers everywhere: that's a joke).

It wouldn't be a Gibb speech if his hero

E.D. Hirsch didn't get a mention. This speech included three references, while his favourite free school, Michaela, got just two.

Gibb also heaped praise on Policy Exchange, founded by his former boss Michael Gove, and its head of education John Blake.

He also lavished kind words on the Parents and Teachers for Excellence campaign, which is funded and run by a veritable gang of Tory supporters, including many who have vocally supported Michael Gove. Also, John Blake again.

## WEDNESDAY:

We think Theresa May said something today about free schools. But it was quite hard to tell with all the coughing. We were only surprised Nick Gibb didn't run on the stage and tell us all about his best mate Rachel De Souza. Sorry, we mean John Blake. NO, SHHHH, IT'S A JOKE FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE...

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



**Name** Jon Barr

**Age** 53

**Occupation** Headteacher

**Location** South Gloucestershire

**Subscriber** since June 2015

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



## FLY ON THE WALL

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

When I am travelling by train, or at home on a Sunday.

**Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?**

News – your investigative journalism is what is needed.

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

The unfit-for-purpose Ofsted inspection system and its distortion of England's schooling.

**Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?**

Estelle Morris – she had integrity, a listening approach and didn't outstay her welcome.

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

The rather-too-regular coverage of academy CEOs who lack the moral purpose of the one I work with.

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

It's recycled or read by my wife Jo, who is also a headteacher.

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

Keep the paper at the cutting edge of investigative journalism

**Favourite memory of your school years?**

Either being on the rugby pitch or playing kiss chase.

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

That's a worrying reflection, when I look back at where I was before teaching...

**Favourite book on education?**

Currently Patrick Lencioni's 'The five dysfunctions of a team'

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

A look at emerging primary curriculum models in England.

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

Sir David Carter, as he guesses where the DfE is heading.



# School Bulletin *with Sam King*

If you have a story you'd like to see featured in the school bulletin, email [samantha.king@schoolsweek.co.uk](mailto:samantha.king@schoolsweek.co.uk)



## Rap club brings rhyme and reason to Croydon

FEATURED

## BEHAVIOUR999, WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY?

**A**n extra-curricular rap club is helping improve pupil behaviour at a Croydon secondary school.

Established in January, Oasis Academy Shirley Park's weekly two-hour rapping sessions teach pupils how to write and perform their lyrics, as well as use the genre to channel emotion.

Since its inception, Ben Turner, the music teacher who founded the club, has noticed a marked improvement in the behaviour of a number of pupils involved in the project.

"A lot of the naughtier kids in the school have ended up being involved," he said. "I was quite keen to get some data on it, so I monitored their behaviour by asking teachers how they were doing and overall, it was a very positive improvement."

"The behaviour was changing a lot, even within their lyrics. At the beginning they were quite anti-school, but gradually they became more pro-learning and working hard."

Currently the club is 12 members strong, with involvement from pupils in year 8 through to year 11.

"My favourite session was when I played a beat, and the pupils silently wrote out really deep raps. One was about how they felt they didn't have friends, and they then performed it in front of the others, who were supposed to be their friends – it was a bit intense," said Turner.

The club recently took first place in a Battle of the Bands competition hosted



The stars of Rap Club

by charity Restore the Music in central London, which was open to schools who had been awarded funding to develop their music departments. The club's pupils were the only group performing rap.

"All the other groups had violins and mini orchestras, so there was quite a big scream when we won. The prize was £3,000, and we're hoping to use as much of that as possible towards Rap Club," Turner explained.

The club's next venture is to close the annual Teach First Impact conference on October 24 at the SSE Arena in Wembley, with pupils set to perform their school-themed raps.



Taking the stage on a trip to Disneyland

"I sent an email hoping for a small performance somewhere, but after watching the kids perform they decided that they were going to let us close the whole event."

An author and multi-academy trust CEO is using Twitter to give schools free advice on behaviour management.

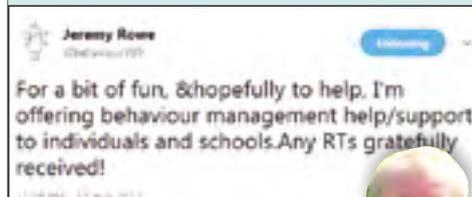
Jeremy Rowe, the CEO of the Waveney Valley Academies Trust, and author of *Sorting out behaviour: A head teacher's guide*, is encouraging schools to get in touch via the handle @behaviour999 for free advice on individual and strategic behaviour management.

Schools and individuals can put a query to the account anonymously, or email Rowe directly to receive advice tailored to their needs.

"I've been to quite a few schools to help and work with them and I thought there might be a gap for an anonymous helpline that schools could use if they wanted to, no charge," he explained.

"I think some schools are afraid they need help with this – but there's nothing wrong with it because everyone's been there."

To get in touch with any queries, you can tweet @behaviour999, or email [JRowe@sirjohnleman.co.uk](mailto:JRowe@sirjohnleman.co.uk)



Jeremy Rowe



Reach Academy and Hampton Court House teachers pose before their classes start

## On pointe: Ballet classes for teachers

**T**eachers from a secondary academy are learning ballet, sewing and Mandarin through an innovative partnership with a local independent school.

The link-up is part of Hampton Court House's 'Form 7' scheme, which allows teachers to develop new skills in their free time through evening classes in everything from languages to painting.

Usually reserved for teachers at the independent school, students and their parents, staff from Reach Academy Feltham have been offered free places as part of a CPD initiative bridging the gap between the independent and state sectors.

"We're looking to do a lot more work with

Reach because we feel as an independent school that we want to learn from the state sector," said Adam D'Souza, the director of the Form 7 programme.

"I'm going to start going over to Reach myself to observe lessons, and do a bit of teaching. We're trying to make it a real two-way street."

The sessions, which are run and attended by staff from Hampton Court House, allow teachers to build relationships and swap ideas while picking up new skills.

"This is a brilliant opportunity for our teachers to be learners once in the week," added Reach's principal Ed Vainker, who is also a governor Hampton Court House. "They are buzzing every Friday morning."



Dr Matt Berriman addresses students at the launch of the project

Image credit: Genome Research Ltd

## Sequencing the whipworm genome

**S**ixty schools from across the UK will work with scientists to help solve a global parasite problem.

In the year-long research project, students will work alongside scientists from the Wellcome Genome Campus to identify and annotate the genes in the DNA of the human whipworm.

Launched by the Institute for Research in Schools (IRIS) and Wellcome, the project will help researchers understand the parasite's biology so a treatment or vaccine can be developed.

Students will be trained how to find, identify and label genes using their own computers, and will investigate the

functions of some of the genes. There are approximately 15,000 genes in the human whipworm, which pupils will work to identify.

"It is a fabulous opportunity for school students to carry out real research, working directly with scientists on a globally important project," said Professor Becky Parker, the director of IRIS. "This is the first time ever that students have been able to help curate an entire genome."

The whipworm affects around 500 million people globally, mainly children in Asia, Africa and South America, and causes diarrhoea, abdominal pain, malnutrition and developmental problems.

## MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



### DANIEL MUIJS

Head of research,  
Ofsted

**START DATE:** January 2018

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Professor of education and associate dean of research at University of Southampton

**INTERESTING FACT:** Every morning before work, Daniel takes his cat Salem for a walk.



### ADRIAN KIDD

Headteacher,  
Trumpington  
Community College

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Deputy headteacher at the Harwich and Dovercourt High School

**INTERESTING FACT:** In 2002, Kidd climbed Mount Everest and reached Base Camp and Camp 1. He also summited another peak to 6,800m.



### LAURA MCGLASHAN

Head of school, Burnt Mill Academy

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Deputy head at Burnt Mill Academy

**Interesting fact:** She was once given first place in a dancing competition where Len Goodman was the judge.



### JOHN BLANEY

Executive headteacher, Burnt Mill Academy

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Head of school, Burnt Mill Academy

**INTERESTING FACT:** He loves to sing and has been a member of a male voice choir in London for over 10 years.



### NEIL WARNER

Executive headteacher (Secondary), Arthur Terry Learning Partnership

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Headteacher of Arthur Terry School (ongoing)

**INTERESTING FACT:** He is a trained Reiki healer and reflexologist, and also serves as a magistrate.

### Get in touch!

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

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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

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



### Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**



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

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week