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SCHOOLSWEK.CO.UK

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Councils hit back at DfE claims over £53m funds

➤ Targeted scheme to help academies grow is 'patronising', says councillor

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

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NEWS

Confirmed: Teacher apprentices will be paid on unqualified scale

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Teaching apprentices will not be paid at the £3.50 minimum wage, the government has announced, and will instead be guaranteed an unqualified teacher's salary during their training.

Schools Week revealed last week that proposals for a new postgraduate teaching apprenticeship had been rubber-stamped by government officials.

Developed by a group of schools, the apprenticeship will last four terms and grants qualified teacher status. It is a level six qualification, equivalent to an undergraduate degree, but only people who already have a first degree will be allowed onto the route.

The national minimum wage for all apprentices is £3.50 per hour, but schools will be obliged to pay a salary in line with the unqualified teachers' pay scale, which currently starts at £16,626 for those working outside London.

Teaching and leadership unions remain sceptical about the proposals, which have been developed in response to a requirement that large schools put at least three in every 120 staff onto an apprenticeship each year.



Malcolm Trobe (pictured), the director of public affairs at the Association of School and College Leaders, said the proposal looks like a "hastily developed" way of enabling schools to use the apprenticeship levy – a tax paid across private and public sector employees to fund future apprenticeships in all businesses.

"Potential applicants into teaching are already faced with a confusing number of routes into the profession and the addition of another route which appears very similar to School Direct will only add to the confusion," he said.

"It would be far better if schools were exempt from the apprenticeship levy and that the focus was on rationalising the

existing routes into teaching."

Trobe also queried the unusual timetable for the apprenticeship. It will last four terms, with trainees gaining qualified teacher status at the end of the third term and taking their end-point assessment for the apprenticeship in the fourth term.

"The whole implementation timetable is unrealistic in the extreme," he said.

The new guidelines bring the proposed pay of apprentice teachers into line with other salaried routes including School Direct, and aligns their entry requirements.

Would-be apprentice teachers will have to hold a degree in order to enrol on the course, and will also have to pass the numeracy and literacy skills tests before

their training begins.

Sir Andrew Carter, the chief executive of the South Farnham School Educational Trust and a lead on the apprenticeship development, said the route "will be greatly welcomed by the profession".

"The opportunity for more graduates to be trained within the school setting has the potential to increase the number of applicants," he said. "Working alongside great teachers and learning at first hand is the best way to create great teachers."

The first cohort of postgraduate apprentice teachers will start work in September 2018, and the government committed to developing a second apprenticeship for non-graduates, though there is no timeline as yet.

Justine Greening said that getting "the best people to train as teachers and into our classrooms is a crucial part of giving every child the high-quality education they deserve".

"This new route will provide another pathway for talented graduates into a profession that will give them the chance to change lives for the better on a daily basis," she said.

Trainees who apply for initial teacher training through UCAS from next week will also be able to "convert their place to an apprenticeship at a later date".

Jamie Oliver: 'Healthy schools rating' should be compulsory

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEET

A voluntary rating system for healthy schools which the government has committed to rolling out in primary schools should be made compulsory, according to the influential television chef Jamie Oliver (pictured).

Last year, the Department for Health's childhood obesity plan included a series of policies with implications for schools, including the a voluntary healthy rating system for primary schools to be taken into account by Ofsted.

"The criteria for the rating scheme will be developed in consultation with schools and experts but will cover the school's approach as a whole," it wrote.

Enquiries made by *Schools Week* last month revealed that work was still underway at the Department for Education, where officials were reviewing evidence and feedback from stakeholder groups.

Oliver, however, has today published a review into food education in the UK, which criticised the delay and recommended the rating scheme be made mandatory.

"A year on from the Child Obesity Plan's publication, no real action in schools has taken place, with the only political discussion on school food being the proposed Conservative manifesto pledge to scrap universal infant free school meals and replace them with universal free breakfasts," states the report, released by the Jamie Oliver Foundation.



Cash should also be set aside to design and build "cooking cubes", small kits to help primary schools without teaching kitchens, so that more pupils can experience making meals, the report suggests.

The government originally set aside over £400 million for capital funding related to healthy schools, but this was sucked back into the overall schools budget after the general election, when Justine Greening announced it would be used instead to help fund general budget rises across all schools.

"This major report has studied all the data," said Oliver. "We've spoken to everyone from headteachers to food teachers, parents, school governors, and kids themselves. And we've proven the simple point that we need to help kids apply food knowledge in the real world, and we need to support our dedicated food teachers."

"We must stop giving our kids contradictory messages. Most of all, if we want healthy children, we need to make all schools healthy zones. Full stop."

NICK GIBB'S £10,000 AUSTRALIAN JOLLY

The schools minister Nick Gibb went on a £10,000 week-long trip to Australia and Singapore to "reinforce" Britain's relationship with the two countries in July, government documents reveal.

A register of ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings shows that Gibb was flown to the two countries between July 7 and 14.

The trip was arranged to "reinforce relationship (sic) with countries as part of the plan for a global Britain", the document says.

He was also there to "share best practice and help raise educational standards". This included setting out education reform priorities, including a knowledge-rich curriculum and phonics.

When approached by *Schools Week*, the Department for Education would not say whether the trip was paid for with taxpayers' money, or by a third party.

However, a spokesperson did explain that the trip was organised in response to an invitation from one of the countries he visited.

"Minister Gibb was invited to Australia by the Australian government to participate in their work on phonics and share best practice on improving literacy rates," they added.

"This was an important part of our ambition to ensure education is at the heart of our plan for a global Britain."



NEWS

The £53m cash fund with strange criteria

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Investigates

£53 million will be made available to help multi-academy trusts (MATs) take on more schools, but the cash is supposedly reserved for trusts with “a proven record” of turning around underperforming schools.

But the Department for Education’s own guidance suggests school standards will not be taken into consideration when the grants are handed out, and many in the sector are concerned it will incentivise trusts to expand beyond their means.

The fund was first called “the regional academy growth fund” but has now been renamed “the MAT development and improvement fund”. It will focus on 108 areas of the country that have been identified as having “low education standards” and “weak capacity to improve”.

Even though the pot has almost doubled in size this year – £30 million was handed out last time – the government said it would be more discerning in its allocations in 2017-18.

Sir Theodore Agnew, the new academies minister, claimed the fund will help “get the methods that we know are having an impact into the areas that need them most”.

“Giving every child access to the best possible education regardless of circumstance is crucial to driving social mobility and ensuring there is no limit on anyone’s potential,” he said. “I am clear



the most effective way to do this is by using the expertise and talent that exists in our school system.”

In a statement released on Saturday, the government said that only MATs which have a “proven record of working with underperforming schools to improve performance” could apply.

But this is contradicted in the guidance, which states that trusts should be assessed on their plans for turning around schools and other factors like value of money and sustainability, but not specifically on their “track record” of school improvement.

In fact, even new trusts awaiting approvals and sponsorship will be eligible to apply for the funding, as long as they plan to take on two schools in the next 12 months.

Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, warned that trusts are “effectively being incentivised” to take on schools which they may not be able to support.

“The criteria for accessing this fund appears to be based on trusts’ own assessments of their capacity for school improvement, rather than an objective assessment of hard evidence that they have actually improved any schools’ performance,” she said.

Bousted believes it is a “real concern” that the government seemed unable to learn from the “failures” of the academies

programme. She pointed to the recent case of the Wakefield City Academies Trust, which announced last month it would give up all its schools.

“At the start of this term, WCAT walked away from 21 schools, finally recognising that it did not have the capacity to improve them. Yet the DfE is allowing academy trusts with no track record of improving schools access to public funding for this purpose. It is reckless to say the very least.”

As in previous years, most of the grants will be worth between £50,000 and £100,000, which, given the increase in the size of the overall pot, means the total number handed out is likely to increase.

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, has accused the government of “throwing millions of pounds of taxpayers’ money at ideologically motivated vanity projects”.

“Ministers said that they want to promote MATs with a track record of success, but this is not in their guidance and they’re offering money to new trusts which don’t even have any schools to begin with,” she said.

“With hundreds more grants offered this year, it looks like the government is bribing academy chains to aggressively expand regardless of the evidence.”

In 2016-17, 350 grants were handed out to academy trusts under the old regional academy growth fund. Of those, 55 were for amounts over £100,000. Two trusts, the TBAP Trust and Wellspring Academy Trust, received grants of £300,000 or more.

‘Low standards’ councils use data to mount fightback

Councils in areas picked out for multi-academy trust growth-funding have hit back at claims they have “low education standards” and “weak capacity to improve”.

The government says the 108 areas targeted by the new MAT development and improvement fund have been picked due to concerns over education standards and their capacity to improve schools.

However, analysis by *Schools Week* has found that in several of the areas selected, more than nine in 10 schools are already rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’, prompting questions about why these areas made the list.

Milton Keynes, for example, has been included even though 93.5 per cent of its schools are ‘good’ and ‘outstanding’. Warrington is also on the list, with 91.2 per cent of its schools rated the same.

Jean Carter, Labour’s executive board member for children and families on Warrington council, said it was “patronising” to say the area had low standards and poor capacity for improvement.



“That’s not the case,” she told *Schools Week*. “Things have been improving and we have had some good officers working on this.”

She also questioned the appetite for academy conversions in the area after recent discussions about the council forming its own MAT.

“We did discuss it, but the headteachers aren’t interested,” she said. “I don’t think it will come off, and I would prefer that it didn’t.”

However, she does not oppose moves to give more cash to academy chains.

“If it can improve the quality of teaching of children in Warrington, I have no objection,” she said.

The list also includes the Conservative-controlled East Riding of Yorkshire, where 83.1 per cent of schools are ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’.

Julie Abraham, the cabinet member responsible for



THE OFSTED HIGH-FLIERS PICKED FOR INTERVENTION

LA	% OF SCHOOLS GOOD OR OUTSTANDING
MILTON KEYNES	93.5
PETERBOROUGH	92.8
WARRINGTON	91.2
COVENTRY	89.6
SWINDON	88.8
WIRRAL	88.3
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	87.8
PORTSMOUTH	87.6
SALFORD	86.7
KIRKLEES	86.6

SOURCE: DFE/WATCHSTED

schools in the East Riding, also disagrees with the government’s view of education standards in her area.

She was not told about the grant programme, and pointed out the proportion of pupils in ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ schools had risen in recent years, from a low of 52 per cent.

“As far as I’m concerned, in virtually every measure, from early-years right up to A-level, we have a steady trend in an upward direction,” she told *Schools Week*.

“We have a low number of academies.

Something like 12 per cent of our schools are academies, so it’s possible it has something to do with that.”

Abraham said it would be left up to individual schools to decide whether they wanted to convert.

“If they want to academise, then we want it to be organic growth. We don’t want it to be forced on them. And we would want local solutions.”

The Department for Education would not comment further on the metrics used to select the targeted areas.

NEWS

Campaigners: 'Don't wipe old Ofsted reports'

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

A state-school campaign group wants Ofsted to make reports on schools that convert into academies to become accessible "in perpetuity", rather than removing them from its website after five years.

Schools that become academies after December 2013 have previous Ofsted reports wiped from the web five years after they convert. For those that converted before then, the window is just three years.

The Local Schools Network is concerned the rule means "history can be erased".

"You need to be able to see how schools have changed over the years," said Janet Downs, a representative. "People make remarks about how schools were as part of their marketing, and it's important to be able to check."

Ofsted labels schools that become academies as having closed, so their inspection history starts afresh. Past reports are linked to the new school on the inspectorate's website through a tab labelled "related providers".

However, these reports are deleted after five years, effectively erasing a new academy's backstory.

Academies transferring between sponsors are also granted three years' respite from



further inspections.

Professor Colin Richards, a former senior Ofsted inspector, told *Schools Week* the rules were unfair.

"I strongly believe that as a matter of natural justice the same rules should apply to all schools including academies," he said.

"Each of their inspection histories should be publicly available. Why should academies have their records wiped clean?"

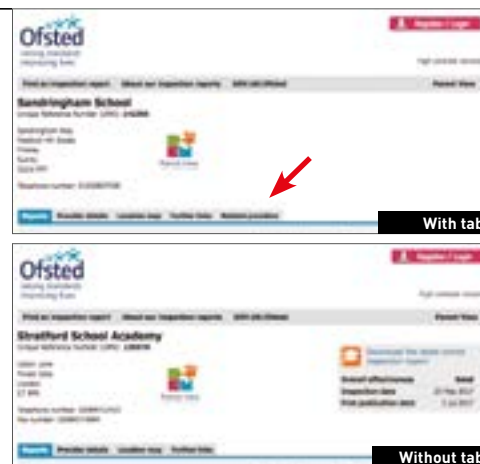
In July, *Schools Week* found the ratings of 718 schools had been wiped clean after becoming an academy or rebroking. We estimate these schools are teaching more than 300,000 young people – or about four per cent of the 8.67 million pupils who attend England's schools.

Downs described the system of hidden reports for some schools as "a mess".

"The reports should be there to check, whether they are predecessor schools or not, because people make claims and these claims need to be verified," she said.

Barry Smith, the new principal of Great Yarmouth Charter Academy in Norfolk, apologised last month after he made comments in a local newspaper that the school had once been like a "war zone".

The school's former headteacher, Ivan



Pegg, said the remarks were "very unfair". An inspection report from 2005, still available on Ofsted's website, shows the school was rated 'good' at one time.

Downs said the incident highlights how important it is for a school's past to remain available: "It's important the data remains accessible so there are facts to rely on."

Historical analysis of Ofsted reports also enabled *Schools Week* to catch a "copy-and-paste" inspector in 2014.

David Marshall, an inspector hired by Ofsted from a third-party contractor, repeatedly used the same paragraphs throughout his reports for several years. If the reports were not available across the timeframe, this repetition would never have been discovered.

Ofsted said the policy has existed since 2010 for any school that counts as 'closed'.

DUNELM? DUNNO: FURNITURE FIRM'S MYSTERIOUS MEETING

Mystery surrounds a meeting between an education minister and a furniture company over potential academy sponsorship, especially as the retailer has refused to confirm whether it even took place.

According to the Department for Education's latest register of ministerial gifts, hospitality, travel and meetings, representatives from Dunelm met with Lord John Nash, the former academies minister, in June this year.

According to the document, the meeting was to "discuss potential academy sponsorship".

However even though it was clearly noted in official government papers, Dunelm said it is "unable to confirm" whether the meeting had even taken place.

"Unfortunately we haven't been able to confirm that this meeting took place, and that we are looking into sponsoring academies," a spokesperson for Dunelm told *Schools Week*.

When asked if that meant the meeting had not taken place, and that Dunelm was not considering academy sponsorship, the spokesperson said: "We're unable to confirm whether this meeting did or did not take place."

The company is also "unable to confirm whether we are or are not looking into sponsoring academies", the spokesperson said.

However, according to the DfE, "there are no plans for Dunelm to sponsor any academies".

Lord Nash stood down from his ministerial post last month, and was replaced by Sir Theodore Agnew, the founder of the Inspiration Trust.


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NEWS

EEF LAUNCHES NEW MUSIC, DRAMA AND JOURNALISM TRIALS

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

Thousands of children across England will take part in new trials to assess whether skills like music, drama and journalism can boost their achievements at primary school.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Royal Society of Arts announced five trials to test the impact of different “cultural learning strategies” as part of the ‘Learning about culture’ programme, which will be rolled out to 9,000 pupils across 400 primary schools from September next year.

The impact on academic attainment, as well as skills and behaviours like resilience, self-confidence and creativity, will be independently evaluated by the University of London’s Institute of Education and by the Behavioural Insights Team.

Schools are being sought to take part in the trials, particularly in areas of high deprivation and low art participation.

Sir Kevan Collins, the EEF’s chief executive, said the trials would allow cultural learning opportunities to thousands of primary pupils “who might not otherwise have the opportunity”, and provide “much-needed evidence on the impact of different approaches”.

“With schools increasingly accountable for the impact of all their spending decisions on pupil attainment, there is urgent need for more and better evidence on the relative benefits of different approaches and strategies,” he said.

For ‘The power of pictures’ trial, delivered by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, year 5 students and their teachers will work with author-illustrators to use picture books to boost reading and writing skills, and develop techniques to use illustration to support reading comprehension and creative writing.

‘The craft of writing’ will meanwhile investigate whether developing teachers’ skills as writers improves year 5 pupils’ motivation and confidence with writing. The project, developed jointly by Arvon, the University of Exeter and the Open University, will see teachers working with professional writers.

The London Bubble Theatre Company’s ‘Speech bubbles’ programme will have teaching assistants working with theatre practitioners to deliver weekly drama sessions over three terms. The programme, aimed at five- to seven-year-olds who have difficulty communicating or have poor attention skills, will also invite parents to take part.

Journalists will help pupils set up their own newsroom, write and publish newspaper articles and put together radio and TV packages in Paradigm Arts’ ‘Young journalist academy’ project. It will assess whether journalism can boost year 5 pupils’ literacy skills, as well as their confidence, communication skills and collaborative working.

Finally, ‘First thing music’ will teach year 1 students the basics of music with daily singing and musical games. The programme, delivered by Lindsay Ibbotson and Tees Valley Music Service, will see teachers trained by members of the British Kodály Academy and is hoping to develop literacy, social and emotional skills.

Gender segregation is bad, Court of Appeal rules

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

The Court of Appeal has ruled that a faith school’s policy of segregating boys and girls is “unlawful” sex discrimination.

But Colin Diamond, director for children and young people in Birmingham, where the school is located, said the ruling was “absurd”, especially given there are single-sex schools across the country.

Last week, judges ruled that the Islamic faith school broke equality laws by preventing boys and girls from interacting during teaching. They also backed Ofsted’s view that segregating pupils caused less favourable treatment for both boys and girls.

It overturned a High Court ruling in November, which agreed with the council that separating pupils was legally permitted.

Diamond said the school had been inspected multiple times since 2014, with issues flagged around progress and finance, but the school’s policy of separating boys and girls had never been a problem until a highly critical report last June.

“The law looks absurd here,” he told *Schools Week*.

“How can it be wrong to have a boys and girls school, where pupils know what’s happening, but up the road there is a single-sex school where pupils have no contact with the opposite gender whatsoever?”

The ruling has been hailed as a test case for other mixed schools that separate by gender. Amanda Spielman, Ofsted’s chief



year. However, the council blocked it from publication.

Lady Justice Gloster said in her judgment last Friday that segregation on grounds of sex “necessarily endorses gender stereotypes about the inferiority of women”.

Government rules “clearly” state that mixed-sex schools cannot discriminate on the basis of sex “save for very limited exceptions” which are not applicable to Al-Hijrah, she said. Single-sex schools are exempt from the rule under a section of the Equality Act.

But Diamond, who is also a former Ofsted inspector, told *Schools Week* the Al-Hijrah school had been used as a “battering ram” to make a point to other schools.

The practice of educating both boys and girls but keeping them separate was “customary” in many faith schools, he said. Pupils at Al-Hijrah would often interact at awards ceremonies, which Ofsted inspectors had not attended.

The school was also “hugely popular with parents”, said Diamond, echoing the original High Court ruling which found segregation was not unlawful because it was “elected for by parents”.

The ruling would have “significant implications for our relationships with our schools”, he added.

The school, which was graded ‘inadequate’ in March, has been ordered to convert to academy status, but is yet to confirm a sponsor.

inspector, has said it will inform future inspections.

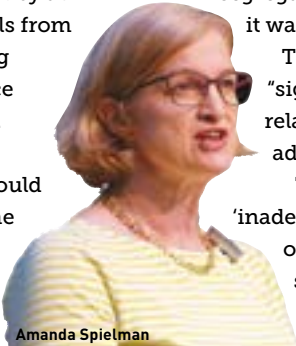
Writing in the *Mail on Sunday*, Spielman said the purpose of gender segregation in most single-sex schools was “different” to that in the Al-Hijrah case.

Single-sex schools try to “tackle gender stereotypes” by encouraging girls towards maths and science or allowing boys to feel they can do drama, she said.

In contrast, the segregation policy at Al-Hijrah, which precluded pupils from walking down corridors or eating together, was designed to enforce “tightly prescribed” gender roles.

Books were also found in the school which suggested men should be allowed to beat their wives, she said.

These points were raised by inspectors in their report last



Upskilling for compulsory RSE needed before 2019

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Funding is available this year for second subject specialism training in maths, physics and modern foreign languages – but sex education is not an option, even though it is due to become compulsory.

The lack of options for free sex education training before the policy is implemented is a worry for Caroline Lucas, the Green Party MP, who championed laws making the subject mandatory.

“This subject requires specialists – and there’s simply no excuse for not providing this free training,” Lucas told *Schools Week*.

In March, changes to the law made it a requirement for all primary schools in England to teach relationships education, and all secondary schools to teach relationships and sex education (RSE).

The government expects this will start “as soon as September 2019”, but Lucas says the plan needs more teacher training to work effectively.

Before 2010, the government funded accredited courses in PSHE education, which included elements of sex and relationship education training.

The coalition government cancelled this funding, causing a 90-per-cent drop in the number of teachers training in the subject. Registrations for the national programme,



run by the University of Roehampton, fell from 1,937 in 2009-10, when it was free, to just 175 in 2013-14, after costs went up to £700.

The government has yet to put aside any funding for training new sex education specialists to deliver the new requirements.

“This lack of training provision seriously calls into question the government’s commitment to effectively implementing high quality PSHE [personal, social, health and economics] in 2019,” Lucas said.

The new RSE will be made up of refreshed, age-appropriate content, which focuses on “mental wellbeing, consent, resilience, age-appropriate relationships and sex education, and keeping safe online”.

A Department for Education spokesperson said the government wants to “help all

schools deliver these lessons so that young people are equipped to have healthy relationships and treat each other with respect.”

“We are reviewing the teacher subject specialism training and exploring possible options for future programmes.”

Jay Harman, an education campaigner for national charity Humanists UK, told *Schools Week* that time and money must be set aside for training.

“At the very least this means including free RSE training in the teacher subject specialism training course, but of course it ought to go much further,” he said.

“We will certainly be pushing the government to provide that funding as they consult on the new RSE provisions over the coming months.”

NEWS

LOOPHOLE LETS PRIVATE ITT PROVIDERS DODGE OFSTED

JESS STAUFENBERG

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Exclusive

The bosses of the two biggest teacher-training organisations in the country have warned against using private providers which aren't subject to the "acid test" of Ofsted inspections.

Emma Hollis, the executive director of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT), said at a conference on Monday there was a "real danger" that companies advertising for new recruits might only meet initial teacher-training standards "in the broadest sense".

All organisations that provide teacher training are overseen by Ofsted, but a number of private companies fall outside its remit as a result of a loophole separating assessment from course provision.

One such private recruitment agency, Castles Education, this year launched a two-year mentoring programme in schools, which allows graduates to work in a school and gain qualified teacher status via an assessment put on by an accredited provider at the end.

The idea is to encourage graduates in English, maths and science who might not otherwise be ready for a PGCE into secondary and primary teaching, said a spokesperson.

They said the programme meets many of the initial teacher-training requirements. For instance, it has "rigorous selection criteria" in place, which it demonstrates by accepting just 11 per cent of the 350 graduates who applied this year.

But although Castles Education, which does not count itself as a teacher-training



provider, meets the initial teacher-training criteria, it is "not expected to, as we are not the awarding body" for QTS, the spokesperson said.

The company is now seeking an awarding body for its first graduating cohort in 2019.

But Hollis believes all programmes should be inspected by Ofsted to make sure they meet ITT requirements, such as ensuring applicants have cleared criminal checks, a degree, and have worked in two schools before gaining QTS.

If Ofsted does not oversee them, these routes will "lack the acid test of a rigorous inspection process", she claimed.

Her words were echoed by James Noble-Rogers, the executive director of the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), who believes new providers are welcome in the market but should be "properly accredited and regulated".

Another company, Premier Pathways, also offers a fully-funded two-year programme leading to QTS. It is now training its third cohort of 135 for 2019, said a spokesperson,

who claimed the company is "essentially" operating a teaching apprenticeship.

At the end of the programme, the teacher is assessed and given QTS by the University of Buckingham's School of Education.

As the university is inspected by Ofsted, trainees on Premier Pathway's programme are inspected too, a spokesperson said.

But the route used by these companies, of having an accredited body signing off on QTS, was not designed for people just starting out in the profession.

The "assessment-only" option for QTS launched in 2009 to allow teachers trained overseas to easily convert their qualifications into one recognised by English schools.

"It was for people who already had a lot of experience in independent schools or overseas," Noble-Rogers said.

The Department for Education also describes assessment-only routes as being for "experienced" unqualified teachers.

"All training routes, no matter what they are, should be Ofsted-inspected," Noble-Rogers insisted.

NEW ASSOCIATION TO 'OVERSEE' TEACHER APPRENTICE ASSESSMENT

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Two organisations are forming a new company to make sure new teaching apprenticeship routes are assessed properly, but insist the new group will "not be inspectors".

The National Association of School Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT) and the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) are launching the Association of Accredited Teacher Education Providers (AATEP), the legal status of which is expected to be finalised "in the next month".

The new company was "borne out of necessity" by a rule which says apprenticeship routes must all be assessed by a separate, approved organisation, known as an "end-point assessor", which must be independent to the organisation delivering an apprentice's training.

To ensure assessments are "reliable and consistent", an external quality-assurance process is required, which can be delivered by Ofqual, a professional body, a select group of employers or, where none of those are viable, the Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA), a government body.

The AATEP has been created to act as the professional body for teaching apprenticeships, and to ensure assessors apply standards "fairly" and "consistently", according to Emma Hollis, the executive director of NASBTT, and James Noble-Rogers, the executive director of UCET who will jointly lead the new organisation.

Apprentice teachers will complete their end-point assessment in their fourth term, after three terms gaining qualified teacher status. It is this final stage that AATEP will quality-assure.

AATEP will evaluate whether the processes are the same across the country and check the "right people" are making those assessments, according to Noble-Rogers.

However the new organisation is not replacing Ofsted's role in the quality assurance of teacher training, said Hollis. The inspectorate currently regulates all providers of qualified teacher status.

"We are not inspectors," she said. "We are just looking at the processes nationally to ensure consistency and quality."

It is also unlikely the AATEP would unearth poor apprenticeship assessors, according to Noble-Rogers, since these are "subject to Ofsted" too.

Meanwhile, he added that while the new organisation may have its "root" in an IfA rule, both groups would like to take the collaboration "beyond that".

"We'd like to work more collaboratively together on other things too," he said. "It's showing that the distinction between school-led and universities-led teacher training is artificial."

UCET and NASBTT now have cross-representation on each other's boards, and the AATEP will make joint representations on issues and joint responses to consultations.

It will be formally launched as soon as NASBTT, which will have a 50-per-cent stake in the company, has its charitable status confirmed. Hollis said she expected it to form in the next month.

The PE teacher-training ruse

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The government's new scheme to get PE trainees teaching EBacc subjects is splitting the schools community. The Association for Physical Education described it as "a superb idea", but a representative of one training provider claimed the scheme could be used to mislead candidates.

The government has lifted the cap on teacher-training places at school and university-led providers for those starting courses in September 2018, except in secondary school PE and some primary courses.

However, extra places will also be made available for PE, provided trainees have an A-level in an EBacc subject, so they're capable of teaching the subject when in school. Trainees will be expected to take some additional study in the subject, but will not be assessed.

Some delegates who heard the plan at a conference by the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT) claimed the plan would allow them to advertise PE training roles without being "honest" that they also want trainees to teach other subjects.

Thomas Webb, deputy director for initial

teacher training at the government's National College for Teaching and Leadership, told delegates that PE courses were always oversubscribed.

About 800 PE trainees every year have A-levels in various EBacc subjects, but are clearly "keen and motivated" to teach PE first and foremost.

"What we need to try and do is tap that resource and get some of those into the classroom," he said.

But certain members of the audience said they were worried they would have to pressure applicants to train in subjects they didn't want to teach just to win a place on PE course.

"That's a really difficult proposition for me to describe to a potential candidate," said one delegate employed by a training provider, who didn't wish to be named. "I would actually feel a bit morally impugned to say 'come and be a PE teacher, but actually I don't want you to be a PE teacher, what I really want you to do is cover my lower-school geography or maths curriculum'."

Asking PE applicants to cover classes in subjects where there was a shortage was "effectively what schools are doing", which, they added, "is a bit iffy".

Mary Boustead, the joint general secretary

of the National Education Union, said asking PE graduates with A-levels in other subjects to teach those as well is "not the way to fill up classrooms".

It is "hard enough" for teachers with several years' experience to gain the knowledge to teach a non-degree subject, but new teachers would be left feeling "unconfident".

"We know that teachers who are teaching outside their subject area are more likely to leave," she said. "This speaks of government desperation; this idea that teachers can teach any subject, it's just not true."

But Sue Wilkinson, the chief executive of the Association for Physical Education, welcomed the scheme. PE trainees had always trained in two subjects until the practice was scrapped in the 1990s, she pointed out.

Training in a secondary subject is a "superb idea" if PE remains at the forefront of the trainee's learning, and they get professional learning support for up to three years in their secondary subject, she added.

She said she had suggested a similar scheme to former education secretary Michael Gove, but claimed he was sacked "on the cusp of piloting it".

NEWS

SMALL PRIVATE SCHOOL INSPECTION FEES BALLOON

JESS STAUFENBERG @STAUFENBERGJ

Small private schools face a 637-per-cent hike in the fees they pay for Ofsted inspections, under changes proposed in a consultation by the Department for Education.

The government wants to increase fees for inspecting “non-association” independent schools, which are not members of organisations like the Independent Schools Council, from April next year.

This includes many faith schools and smaller private schools such as Steiner schools.

Schools with between 100 and 150 pupils on roll will see the amount they are charged rise from £600 to £4,425.

Those with between 151 and 399 pupils will have their fees increased from £4,998 to £5,997, while schools with 400 or more pupils face rises of £4,998 to £6,696.

In the smallest schools, those with fewer than 100 pupils, fees will rise from £600 to £900.

Non-association independent schools are inspected every three years, but must pay a third of their fees each year to spread the cost.

Under the proposed changes, smaller private schools face an increased surcharge on top of the basic fees. Schools with up to 150 pupils currently pay an additional £9 per pupil per year. If the changes are approved, this will rise to £12.

Two-year-old pupils will also be included in Ofsted’s calculations of the number of pupils at a school, thereby increasing fees for those that take younger pupils.

Kevin Avison, a senior adviser at the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, said the “charges deflect resources away from the means to achieve better standards”.

Most of the group’s schools are not inspected by Ofsted, but at least one small school will be hit by the costs.

“Ofsted as a near monopoly is able to determine its charging structure, and independent schools under its remit have no choice. The charges are, in reality, a tax on independent schools, which, unlike those in many European countries, receive no regular public funding of any sort,” he said.

Charges for “pre-registration inspections” needed by private schools seeking government approval to open will also be introduced. State-funded free schools, subject to the same check, will continue freely receiving the service.

What’s more, the reduced tariff for “light touch” inspections will also be removed as the government now requires private schools to undergo full inspections every three years.

And a rule that says the inspectorate can only charge a private school once per year, no matter how many inspections are carried out at, will also be changed.

Non-associated private schools have come under serious scrutiny by Ofsted over the past five years.

A *Schools Week* investigation recently found that almost 200 non-association schools had failed the independent school standards in the last three years.

If approved, the changes will into force from April 2018. The consultation closes on December 6.

Rigorous online learning platform trials in schools

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS @PIPPA_AK Exclusive

An online learning platform that claims to get students top grades or their money back is expanding into schools.

Up Learn was founded two years ago by new graduates Guy Reise and Andrew Mitson. Now aged 23 and 22 respectively, their platform mixes cognitive-science learning techniques and artificial intelligence to deliver a curriculum which, they insist, always gives the best results.

The group are so confident that each student who completes their course is guaranteed an A or A* grade, or their money back.

In its first year, Up Learn offered free AS-level courses in Edexcel economics. Only 50 of the 160 students who signed up stayed on the intensive course right to the end, but 95 per cent of those got at least an A.

Last year, Up Learn introduced an A-level option and charged for its courses. Of the 180 students who signed up, 60 completed – and they all either got an A or A*.

Now the company is working with three schools, including one in a MAT, to supply the course to students in schools without an economics teacher.

Reise believes programmes like his will deliver the entire exam curriculum in future.

“Instead of students learning in different ways throughout the year and then having a single shot at an exam, you can assess them constantly and determine when they have completed the course and therefore achieved an A* or A,” he said.



“We aren’t trying to remove teachers. There’s so much more teachers can do beyond what Up Learn is able to do, like collaborative learning or bringing a subject to life. Up Learn can take care of the exam curriculum and let the teachers concentrate on the rest.”

He said that 25,000 people have signed up to the service so far, which currently only offers courses in Edexcel economics.

The team are expecting to launch courses in Edexcel maths and OCR physics in January, as well as AQA and OCR economics, and eventually want to offer courses on English literature, geography and chemistry.

The company says each curriculum is designed by professionals, and uses techniques including retrieval practice and spaced repetition to check how much information students are retaining.

It uses an algorithm to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of students, as well as checking how accurately they recall information and the time taken to answer questions. The algorithm self-assesses to

improve its teaching as it is used.

“We want people retaining information beyond exams, rather than frantically cramming and forgetting everything immediately,” said the firm’s director of education, Kris Boulton.

“People are capable of more and deserve more, and as a society we should be tackling this problem from whatever angle we can.”

The course costs £299.99 for a year, or £329.99 for a “master” course, but Up Learn also gives away as many courses as they sell, so students from more deprived backgrounds can receive free learning.

“Money isn’t our main motivation. We get out of bed every morning because of the impact we are having on students and the feedback we get from them, that we are helping them achieve what they thought they weren’t capable of,” said Reise.

“We want to create the most high-quality curriculum. We wouldn’t want it to only be available for those who can afford it. This way, we know we aren’t increasing inequality. We can help social mobility.”

Computing pupils must restart 20-hour test

FREDDIE WHITTAKER @FCDWHITTAKER

Schools must find 20 more hours in their timetables after Edexcel replaced a coursework element of its computer science GCSE following an error.

The change has been branded an “utter nightmare” for schools, which must now rearrange their courses.

A fault in the security settings for a non-examined assessment (NEA) portion of the computing GCSE could have allowed pupils to see the content of the test in advance, according to a statement from Edexcel.

The exam board has removed the original task and replaced it with a new one, meaning every pupil studying for the GCSE must now begin a new 20-hour, computer-based test from scratch, no matter how much of the previous test they had already completed.

Where pupils have completed the entire original test, schools must now schedule a further 20 hours of lab time.

Edexcel said it was aware the error meant some schools would have to find extra timetable slots and it has apologised.

“We’re sorry that your centre has been placed in this position,” it said in a statement.

“We have to balance the need for centres to schedule additional sessions with



maintaining the integrity of the assessment. We have judged at this point in the window that there is sufficient time for a new task to be released and completed by candidates.”

Angry teachers are now calling for action against those at Edexcel who were responsible for the mistake.

Drew Buddie, a computer science teacher and former chair of Naace, the education technology association, said the change would be an “utter nightmare” for schools and that “heads should roll”.

“A lot of schools will already have been working on this, and my concern is over where they are going to reclaim that time from? 20 hours in my school is 10 weeks of double lessons,” he said.

He believes some schools may even have taken pupils off timetable for entire days to complete the test, and would now have to find more time to do it again.

“Where is that time going to come from?” he asked. “This is unfair on the teachers and the students, especially given it’s an exam

board error.”

According to Edexcel, the NEA task should only have been accessible to administrators in centres “that had made either actual or estimated entries for the qualification”.

“However, due to an error in the access settings applied to the document, other centres that are registered to download material from our website have also been able to access and download the document.”

Edexcel said that as soon as it was aware of the issue it “took the difficult decision” to replace the task immediately as the window for starting it had only opened at the start of September.

“We apologise unreservedly for the disruption that centres will face. However our overriding concern, six weeks into a seven-month window, is the security and integrity of the assessment.”

The exam board has urged schools to ensure the replacement task is only provided to pupils under controlled conditions, and pupils are “fully aware that they are not to discuss or share any details about the task with anyone outside controlled conditions”.

Last year 4,546 pupils sat GCSE computing science with Edexcel. Entries are rapidly growing due to the subject’s inclusion in the EBacc performance measure, with increases of around 10 per cent year-on-year.

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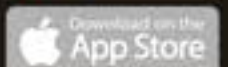
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NEWS

‘CHARACTER EDUCATION’
SCRAPPED IN FAVOUR OF
‘ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS’

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Justine Greening has replaced Nicky Morgan’s flagship “character education” programme with one called “essential life skills” – but some schools are no longer able to apply for grants.

The secretary of state announced a £22 million fund to direct the essential life skills programme towards her 12 “opportunity areas” of low attainment last week.

But when schools minister Nick Gibb answered a written question from Morgan, Greening’s predecessor as education secretary, it emerged that her character education grants programme has been scrapped to help pay for it.

The £3.5 million character education fund, which Morgan launched at the end of 2014 and was available nationwide, has been replaced by the considerably better-funded focus on extracurricular activities and volunteering, but only in the most deprived areas of the country.

Ruth Jennings, the deputy headteacher and lead for character education at Kings Langley secondary school in Hertfordshire, which won a character education grant, was disappointed that the new programme targeted certain pupils rather than everyone.

The skills programme, which was announced by Greening alongside a work experience initiative involving Barclays and Rolls Royce, seems to be closely linked to employers, she said.

These employers want a “particular set of traits” which are not necessarily about pupils being “better” people, she claimed.

Morgan has previously suggested that pupils’ character relates to intellectual and moral virtues, not just their practical work habits.

Kings Langley would have entered the character grants awards for the third time this year had the programme continued, Jennings said.

The school will now review its character programme, but she believes it is more important to make sure pupils become happier, than simply trying to fashion them into “employable people.”

Morgan herself echoed these words, and told *Schools Week* that life skills sound “utilitarian” and do not prioritise pupils being allowed to “flourish”.

Feedback from employers and universities about the skills young people go on to demonstrate, will be “crucial” to seeing whether the new funding is well spent, she continued.

However Sir Anthony Seldon, a former private headteacher who is now a wellbeing champion, said the change in wording between the two policies was largely “irrelevant”.

“What matters is what actually happens,” he said.

Meanwhile Sir Peter Lampl, the chair of the Sutton Trust, said schools needed “more clarity” on what teaching essential life skills means.

The 12 areas to share the funding are Blackpool, Bradford, Derby, Doncaster, Fenland and east Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich, the north Yorkshire coast, Norwich, Oldham, Stoke on Trent and west Somerset.

ESSEX COUNCIL MULLS A MAT OF ITS OWN

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Essex county council (ECC) is applying to set up its own multi-academy trust which, if successful, would be the first spin-off local authority trust.

The move was confirmed in a council cabinet meeting held last month, and an application will now be made to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Essex is not the first local authority to make moves towards establishing a MAT. In March 2016, *Schools Week* reported that Camden council in London created a separate legal entity for its school “partnership” as a first step towards formally becoming an academy sponsor. However, the spin-off trust did not subsequently go ahead.

Minutes for the Essex council meeting show the authority expects to be a “member” of the new academy trust with “the right to appoint a director”.

Councillor Ray Gooding, ECC’s cabinet member for education, told *Schools Week* the outcome of the application was “eagerly awaited”.

“A local authority-initiated multi-academy trust would provide a group of Essex schools with the opportunity to join together in a strong trust focused on achieving the best outcomes for pupils,” he said.

Last year, ECC had 556 schools open within its boundaries. Around 40 percent are



academies, and 60 percent are maintained.

ECC’s current plans are for an initial pilot involving a small group of schools rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted, with a view to opening membership to all schools in the county later on.

If all ECC’s current schools moved into a single academy it would be more than triple the size of AET, the largest academy chain.

Jerry Glazier, the chief of the local National Union of Teachers branch (now under the National Education Union), said he was worried the council would have less control over a local authority-initiated MAT.

“There is no fundamental, inherent security in them running a MAT compared with anybody else,” he said.

“That’s the union’s worry – that they could be encouraging schools to become part of a MAT which they genuinely believe they can influence the ethos of, but ultimately they will not be able to control it.”

The local authority “can never have

more than a 20-per-cent stake” in a MAT, he explained, adding that “the majority of trustees can make other decisions about the MAT”.

Glazier believes that ECC is concerned about its “future capacity” to support schools and that central government should provide adequate resources so the schools “don’t have to become academies”.

Local authority sponsorships exist in other parts of the country, although only jointly with other partners and for smaller numbers of schools. The Enterprise South Liverpool Academy, in the north-west, was jointly sponsored by Liverpool city council and several other partners including the University of Liverpool and infrastructure company Arney & Arup. However, the group – including the council – withdrew after the school experienced financial difficulties.

In 2016, after former education secretary Nicky Morgan announced that all schools must become academies by 2022, many councils weighed their options.

The Labour leader of Brighton council told *Schools Week* it was looking at establishing a cooperative trust to run it schools. Liverpool, Leeds and North Yorkshire were also reportedly setting up their own trusts.

Sir David Carter, the National Schools Commissioner, has said that he would “welcome a conversation” with those “currently employed” by local authorities who might want to become sponsors of academies.

MATs struggle to recruit management roles as they grow

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Investigates

Multi-academy trusts with more than five schools increasingly need senior finance, operating and executive officers, but school leaders lack the “reference points” to recruit them, as many have never worked with such roles before.

The National Governance Association’s ‘Welcome to a multi-academy trust’ guide states that larger MATs (defined as having between five and 10 academies or 1,000 pupils) usually have a chief executive officer, a chief finance officer and a chief operating officer, as well as a school improvement team.

However, recruiting for these operational roles can be daunting for MAT leaders, according to Stephen Morales, the chief executive of the National Association of School Business Management.

“Where’s their reference point in terms of making a judgement as to whether the people coming into these roles are right?”

Examples of posts currently on offer include head of estates at Wellspring Academy Trust in Lincolnshire, which offers a salary of £42,000 to £50,000 for taking “technical and managerial responsibility” for the trust’s 33 sites.

At Ark, a new regional facilities manager will earn up to £40,000, depending on experience, for delivering advice and support to help the trust’s Birmingham academies run smoothly and to oversee any new

schools joining in the area.

And a chief finance officer post is available at Oak Trees Academy Trust in the Wirral for a salary of £50,000, which requires the candidate to juggle the finances of primary schools and “lead the development of the trust’s growth strategy and sustainability plan”.

Morales said that finding the right candidate for this type of role depends on the salary, the way the position is framed, and who is leading the recruitment process.

A lack of expertise can be inhibiting in terms of advertising for the post in the first place: “You’re framing your recruitment based just on the world that you know.

“I’ve worked with headteachers and governing bodies many times on how we get this right and what should we be looking for in a high quality business professional.”

Training courses for multi-academy trust executives are becoming more popular, with the Institute of Education, Ambition School Leadership and Best Practice Network are all setting up courses.

But most focus on chief executives and less on professional development for leaders in charge of facilities, property or operations.

Emma Knights, the chief executive of the National Governance Association, also raised concerns that introducing roles traditionally found in the private sector into schools could create problems around pay.



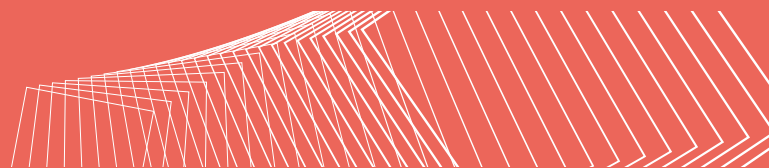
“Our worries are that because they are trying to attract people who otherwise might work in the private sector that may be pushing salaries up,” she said.

“In this time of financial efficiencies, MATs should ensure they are not spending disproportionate money on central posts while allowing teachers’ salaries to stagnate.”

Workforce census figures released in July show that teachers in academies are paid less than their counterparts in maintained schools but the situation reversed for school leaders.

The average salary for a teacher on the leadership scale in a maintained school was £63,100 versus £63,200 for academies.

The figures do not include the pay for chief executives or operational staff who are not counted as teachers within the payroll.



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DfE to collect more data on excluded pupils

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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Exclusive

Explanations for why pupils are moved into alternative provision are to be centrally collected for the first time under changes coming into effect next year.

The move will help government understand if alternative provision is used appropriately by mainstream schools.

From September 2018, councils will have to collect additional data about pupils in PRUs and other AP institutions, including information on the “primary reason” why each pupil was placed there.

Eight options will be available, including pregnancy or childcare, mental health needs, and permanent exclusion.

The changes follow a year of campaigning that suggested AP is used as a dumping ground for disruptive or low-attaining pupils by some mainstream schools. Prompted by Education Datalab’s ‘Who’s Left’ report, and continued through a number of exclusive *Schools Week* investigations, the government has said it wants a better grip on the issue.

The Department for Education will also ask for additional information on each pupil’s special educational needs, the date that they entered and left AP, and the frequency of their attendance.

It said the changes will ensure it has

“more accurate information” on the reasons why pupils move into alternative provision.

The move to collect more data has been welcomed by Seamus Oates, the chief executive of the TBAP multi-academy trust, which runs eight AP academies and has a teaching school.

“I think the more data we can collect around learners coming into AP, the better,” he told *Schools Week*. “Having data will allow us to track the reasons why pupils are coming into AP, and perhaps help us address those reasons through more early intervention.”

Schools Week has reported that the number of pupils attending PRUs has risen dramatically since 2013, and found multi-academy trusts specialising in AP are under increased pressure to expand to cope with demand.

Government data shows the proportion of pupils who were permanently excluded from school rose to 0.8 per cent in 2015-16, up from 0.7 per cent in 2014-15 and 0.6 per cent in 2013-14.

We revealed just last month that mainstream MATs are spending three times as much on private alternative provision than on council-run services, even though many of those private providers have never been checked by Ofsted.

Justine Greening, the education secretary, admitted in an interview with *Schools Week*



Justine Greening

last month that she was unhappy with the “varying outcomes” for pupils in AP, while the education select committee has embarked upon a quality review.

Research published earlier this month by the Institute for Public Policy Research think-tank found that excluded pupils are twice as likely to be taught by an unqualified or supply teacher.

The report found the proportion of unqualified teachers at alternative providers had risen by nearly four percentage points over the past four years – more than double the increase in other schools. The number of temporary staff has also doubled.

Author of the report, Kiran Gill, said the new data collection provided “crucial information”.

“It could shed light on whether AP is being appropriately commissioned by schools,



Kiran Gill

and what new expertise is needed in the teaching profession to improve inclusion and effective commissioning.”

Rushed changes

The changes to the AP census were made using a “statutory instrument”, secondary legislation that does not require a vote in parliament. It went before Parliament on July 31 and came into effect on September 1, leading to accusations that the government rushed it through to avoid debate.

It is not the first time the government has made changes to the data it collects from schools during the summer break.

Last year, legislation enacting a controversial proposal to collect data on pupils’ nationality and country of birth was rushed through the Lords in a similar fashion.

PREGNANCY WILL BE INCLUDED IN FIGURES

Pregnant pupils transferred from mainstream to alternative schools will now be included in new data collections by the government.

In May, an investigation by *Schools Week* revealed that many schools have been moving pregnant pupils into PRUs as a result of cuts to school-support services. At least three council services set up to support pupils and parents had been cut or were set to close.

From next September, however, councils will now have to tell the government why each pupil in is there, and “pregnancy or childcare” will be one of the eight reasons local authorities can give in their responses.

Alison Hadley, the director of Teenage Pregnancy Knowledge, said that central data on the number of pregnant pupils sent into AP would be useful, but must be matched with action to prevent them from being forced out of mainstream schools in the first place.

“I would be interested to know the government’s reasons for collecting the data, and what it plans to do if it shows there is a wider problem,” she said.

Freedom of Information responses from 62 councils revealed at least 89 pupils from 10 areas had accessed some kind of alternative provision outside their mainstream school when they became pregnant.

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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Children could be “labelled for life” by a new system collecting sensitive data about why they have been placed in alternative provision, data privacy campaigners fear.

Changes to the AP census (above) mean the government will hold more information relating to individual pupils outside mainstream education, including the reasons they arrived in alternative provision or pupil referral units in the first place.

Information on mental health problems, pregnancy, and whether or not a pupil has spent time at a young offenders’ institute will all be recorded and held in the national pupil database. Access to this can be requested by third parties, including researchers, private companies and journalists, though organisers claim requests are only accepted under strict conditions.

The changes have angered data privacy campaigners, who are already suspicious of the government’s handling of the national pupil database following the scandal over pupil nationality data last year.

The DfE admitted in December that it had originally intended to share the sensitive information with the Home Office for immigration control purposes, but had backed down in the face of a backlash from parents and schools.

The government has since updated its guidance for schools after the Information

THE HATEFUL EIGHT



When filling out the census, councils will have to select one of the following eight options for a pupil’s “primary reason for placement”

- SETTING NAMED ON EHC PLAN
- MENTAL HEALTH NEED
- NEW ARRIVAL WITHOUT A SCHOOL PLACE
- OTHER
- PREGNANCY / CHILDCARE
- PERMANENT EXCLUSION
- PHYSICAL HEALTH NEED
- PUPIL IN YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTE / SECURE TRAINING CENTRE

Commissioner’s Office ruled that it was not sufficiently clear about what data parents could refuse to provide or retract.

Now Defend Digital Me, one of the campaign groups at the forefront of the fight, wants to know how the government intends to tell schools and parents about its changes to the AP census.

“The DfE’s data handling is unsafe and shrouded in secrecy,” said Jen Persson, the group’s coordinator, who also warned that children are being “labelled for life, and data [is] never deleted”.

“Young offender labels, reasons for exclusions like violence and theft; we have serious concerns that teen pregnancy will

be added to this and revealed to thousands of third parties without consent,” she said.

She wants an impact assessment to “assess fit and proper handling”, and is also demanding that people are told “how [the data] will be used and why”.

“These pupil data expansions continue, regularly, and collect increasingly sensitive data at national level for millions of children without any plans to tell schools exactly how the data will be used,” she said.

“It’s an outrageous privacy invasion at a time when new data protection law is in Parliament and supposed to be giving children’s personal data special protections, and privacy by design.”

NEWS

Alternative provision: how good is your area?

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

The quality of alternative provision for excluded pupils varies wildly across the country, and even between adjacent authorities, exclusive data obtained by *Schools Week* reveals.

In fact, unequal funding structures between councils mean pupils can end up £4,000 worse off than those from neighbouring regions.

The data shows that 86 per cent of councils have alternative provision that is all either rated ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted.

But there are four authorities where the only available alternative provision is graded at four, while in 15 others, more than half is ‘inadequate’ or ‘requires improvement’.

Schools are increasingly under pressure to show that pupils moved into alternative provision are receiving a decent education.

In 2016, Sean Harford, Ofsted’s director of education, warned that schools are responsible for the safety of pupils moved into other provision. Earlier this year, he asked inspectors to pay more attention to children who have been “off-rolled” and placed into other centres.

But funding varies according to the type of schools pupils move into, and where in the country they are placed, which clearly isn’t helping matters.

A child at a pupil-referral unit is automatically funded at a base rate of £10,000, with top-up money coming from the council.

Depending on how councils slice their funding, some PRUs end up with less than they need, according to Dave Whitaker, the executive principal at Springwell special and AP academy in Barnsley.



Sean Harford



Dave Whitaker

IN 15 LOCAL AUTHORITIES LESS THAN HALF OF PROVISION IS GOOD

LOCAL AUTHORITY	REGION	% OF AP PLACES ‘GOOD OR ‘OUTSTANDING’
BARKING AND DAGENHAM	OUTER LONDON	0
CHESHIRE EAST	NORTH WEST	0
DUDLEY	WEST MIDLANDS	0
GATESHEAD	NORTH EAST	0
THURROCK	EAST OF ENGLAND	0
LINCOLNSHIRE	EAST MIDLANDS	0
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	NORTH EAST	0
NORFOLK	EAST OF ENGLAND	0
READING	SOUTH EAST	0
SHEFFIELD	YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	0
BURY	NORTH WEST	4
CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER	NORTH WEST	5
NOTTINGHAM	EAST MIDLANDS	13
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	EAST OF ENGLAND	31
NORTH YORKSHIRE	YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	48

Over half of the places available in alternative provision in these areas are at schools rated ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’.

In Cheshire West, only five per cent of places are ‘good’ or better, while in Bury, just four per cent of places cross that threshold.

In some areas, the only state-funded provision on offer is in the bottom two Ofsted grades. One such area is Barking and Dagenham, the only London council in the poor performers list.

Two pupils in the referral units where he works have allocations that differ by £4,000 because they fall in different local authorities.

“A difference of £4,000 per child is absolutely massive,” he said.

Pupils at AP academies and other private providers are funded at whatever level they had at the mainstream school they were excluded from, according to a spokesperson for Islington council in London, which has both a PRU and an AP school.

The funding for that excluded pupil “will definitely be less than £10,000”, they added.

The school which excluded the pupil pays the AP institution’s costs up to £10,000, and the council steps in to provide additional cash where necessary, though this is rare.

“If they’re on the PRU’s roll, there is more access to funding from the off,” said the spokesperson.

These funding disparities are likely to remain unchanged until the new national funding formula arrives.

The Department for Education said the new formula has been designed “alternative provision in mind”.

“Underfunded” local authorities will get up to three per cent more higher-needs funding in 2018-19, and up to a further three per cent in 2019-20.

THE NORTH-WEST, LONDON AND THE SOUTH-EAST HAVE THE MOST COUNCILS WHERE ALL PROVISION IS GOOD OR OUTSTANDING

REGION	NO OF LA WHERE 100% OF AP IS GOOD OR OUTSTANDING
10. EAST MIDLANDS	5
9. EAST OF ENGLAND	7
8. NORTH EAST	10
6. SOUTH WEST	10
7. YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER	11
5. WEST MIDLANDS	12
4. INNER LONDON	13
3. SOUTH EAST	15
2. OUTER LONDON	16
1. NORTH WEST	17

THERE ARE 4 LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHERE ALL THE AP IS ‘INADEQUATE’

LOCAL AUTHORITY	% OF PLACES RATED ‘INADEQUATE’
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	100
GATESHEAD	100
LINCOLNSHIRE	100
THURROCK	100

Four councils can only offer alternative provision with Ofsted’s very lowest rating, ‘inadequate’. Two of these, Gateshead and Newcastle, are in the north-east.

The Linhope PRU in Newcastle went from ‘good’ to special measures in February last year, mainly because safeguarding procedures were poor and too few pupils returned to mainstream schools.

The other two councils with only inadequate provision are Lincolnshire and Thurrock.

Absence stats: holidays up, sickness down

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Pupil absences are on the up despite falling levels of illness, which suggests government attempts to crack down on term-time holidays aren’t working.

Pupils taking days off school without an authorised reason rose from 0.9 per cent in 2015-16 to 1.1 per cent last year, according to new stats.

Unauthorised family holidays are the main driver behind the rise, the Department for Education admitted in its report.

Over the past year, 86.6 per cent of pupils had a least one session of absence, compared with 85.4 per cent the year before.

The percentage of sessions missed due to unauthorised family holidays rose from 0.2 per cent in 2015-16 to 0.3 per cent last year.

Meanwhile, absence rates due to family holidays agreed by the school remained the same, at 0.1 per cent.

The government even won a high-profile case

on this very issue against a parent, Jon Platt, at the Supreme Court in April.

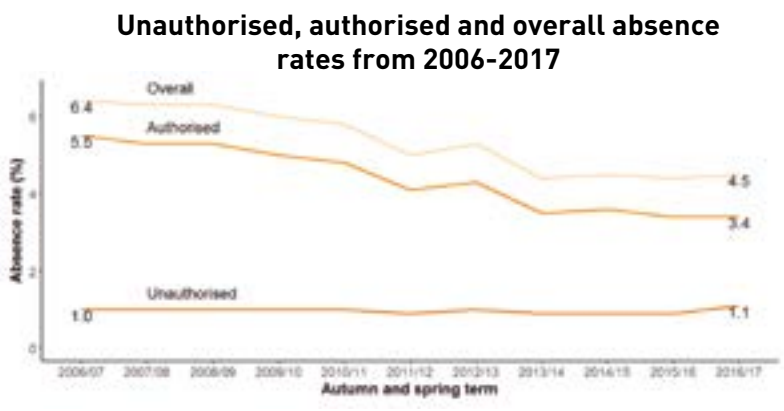
Judges ruled that taking his children on holiday during term meant they were not “regularly” attending school, and that Platt should pay a fine.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, has said he is looking to strengthen the law against parents taking children on holiday during term.

Illness, on the other hand, is not to blame for more absences, and has in fact fallen dramatically over the past three years.

Only 60 per cent of absences were accounted for by sickness, which is lower than in 2015-16 when it caused 62.2 per cent of absences, and is almost five percentage points lower than in 2014-15.

There has also been a slight rise in serious incidences of flu in the country during the same period. Between October 2015 and April 2016, 668 “acute” flu outbreaks were reported in the UK. There were 662 in 2014-2015, according to statistics from Public Health England. Forty-one per cent of these outbreaks happened at schools.



Given these additional outbreaks, it will be a blow to the government that the rise in pupil absences can’t be pinned on sickness. Attendance has become a key consideration for Ofsted when it judges schools, for instance.

Overall, the number of days missed due to absences rose from 34.2 million in 2015-16, to 37.4 million last year. This is roughly equivalent to pupils taking an additional half-day off school – as the average number of days missed per enrolment rose from 5.2 days to 5.5 days

NEWS



Nudging the small things has served me well as a school leader...

EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

In praise of smallness (from a 5' 4" editor)

"Good things come in small packages," said the salesman trying to explain why KitKats are now 20 per cent smaller but still cost the same.

However, smallness can sometimes be mighty.

Genghis Khan, the founder of the largest contiguous land empire in history, was just over five feet in height. Winston Churchill was only 5'7. Dolly Parton is only 4'10.

And in the animal kingdom, mosquitoes are amongst the deadliest living things on the planet.

Marginal tweaks are also super cool in business right now. Google found that by making its blue toolbar a tiny shade darker it increased clickthroughs to websites. The Education Endowment Foundation found that texting students for GCSE exams genuinely increases exam results.

It is therefore heartening to see a number of tiny changes seeping their way into education policy this week. Stories that look like footnotes might actually be the start of a whole new chapter.

Take, for example, the change in data the government will hold on pupils excluded from mainstream schools. Our senior reporter Jess Staufenberg has plugged away on this issue over

the past 18 months. Slammed, at first, for highlighting the issue as part of the superheads research by Ben Laker and Alex Hill, her drip-feed of stories is starting to take root, and the education secretary has said she will "bring forward" policies for improving alternative provision in the future.

One of these changes is the way data will be collected. Instead of children moving from pillar to post with no records on the reasons why, the government will now keep tabs on the reasons for a shift. If pregnant pupils are pushed out inappropriately (another issue Jess raised) then it will become immediately obvious.

Concerns over privacy are fair: Jen Persson at Defend Digital Me is an avid campaigner on these matters and rightly raises the prospect that these reasons remain on computers for life. The national pupil database holds records for every person schooled in England and under the age of 33. These are now linked to tax records, and there are plans to continue linking more data across people's lives.

Few 33-year-olds will know this. Persson's view is that they should. Personally, I don't know if they will care. In either case, it is helpful that the country is getting more data so it

can make more informed decisions: on alternative provision and a plethora of other policies. But it is also right that we start a grown-up conversation about these records and whether people should have the right to have their data deleted, for example.

Both will lead to marginal gains; both are exciting.

Other nudge behaviours mentioned in this week's paper include the government's ruse for getting wannabe PE teachers simultaneously training in other subjects, such as science and languages. Sneaky? Maybe. But it's not new. Drew Povey, the executive head of Harrop Fold School and the star of the *Educating Greater Manchester* TV series, was brought into teaching through a similar trick. A cap on funding for PE teachers was lifted too late for him to gain a place in the year he wanted to train. But a cunning RE lecturer noticed he had studied theology as part of his degree and convinced him over to the biblical side. Povey trained as an RE teacher, and did PE on the side. The government's new plan may be equally successful.

Up Learn, the spunky

start-up promising to get all A-level pupils an A or A* if they complete a rigorous online course, is another interesting shift. If I was still leading a sixth form, and looking at this £299-per-pupil course, might I try it out on a few students? Probably. Would I be happy a few years later if online courses replaced all my staff? Hmmmm...

Likewise, when Ofsted first ticked off Al-Hijrah School for segregating its pupils by gender, the lead inspector presumably had no idea the whole thing would end in a court battle. Yet, that decision has led to a judgment that could now be used to push back against single-sex schools. After all, how can it be a problem to separate children in the same building, but it is okay to send them into different ones in the first place? The judgment also poses difficult questions for academy trusts choosing to open boys' and girls' schools in the same town.

Hence, we must not forget that what starts as a small nudge can become a big shove.

Never underestimate the power of small things.



Principal, Castle Academy



Salary Range: Leadership scale, negotiable.

Contract Type: Permanent, Full-time.

Reporting to: CEO, Executive Director of Education.

Location: Castle Academy, Station Road, Conisbrough, Doncaster, DN12 3DB

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(OFSTED, June 2015)

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(OFSTED, June 2015)

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(OFSTED, June 2015)

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- **Job Start Date: April or September 2018**
- **Contract/Hours: Permanent, Full-time**
- **Salary: Leadership Scale L18-24**
- **Contact e-mail address: vacancies@larkrise.oxon.sch.uk**

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We are open to conversations and applications from people both inside and outside of Oxfordshire; and from groups underrepresented in the national school leadership workforce.

Application Procedure

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Please note, the 'Selection Criteria and Job Description' document includes instructions and details to guide you in filling in the application form. Please read the instructions carefully to ensure that your application can be considered fairly.

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READERS' REPLY



EMAIL



TWEET



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

Delayed report to recommend support for older teachers



Lynn Haslam

This is a joke right? Most teachers I know count down the days to retiring, they can't wait to leave!

Lisa Parsons

So pension age raised but they teachers in their 60s need support to do the job? Surely they should be allowed to retire then?



Kelly Leonard // @viewthrudifeyes

Are there any teachers that actually make it to their pensionable age in teaching?! Can't see me making it to 68!

MATs risk investigation for monopolising markets



Roger O'Thornhill // @ROTSchools

Irony given the charge against the local authorities was that they restricted choice. This was always going to happen – we're reinventing the wheel!

Claire Cuthbert // @Clairecuthbert9

And so they should! Where is the transparency around growth and expansion?

Ofqual 'refusing to engage' on colour blindness



Chris Rossiter // @_chrisrossiter

I'm colour blind and it can be impossible to decipher colour – goodness knows how you manage with exam pressure.

Geoff Chapman // @eAssessmentChap

Accessibility issues with paper exams rumbles on – pity none of the responses mention on-screen delivery as a solution.

Don't make schools collect 'character' data, insists Morgan



Debra Kidd, address supplied

As soon as we start to 'measure' something, we devalue it and make it even harder to obtain. I remember watching lessons in the early 2000s on skills – 'risk taking, Level 5' etc. It was excruciating. Character, skills, knowledge – it all needs to be wrapped up in meaningful context. Context is king. As soon as we atomise and separate, we have to make choices. Choices about timetabling, resourcing, funding. It's perfectly possible to offer children a rich education that values their character, their thinking and their knowledge. It just means we move beyond lowest common denominators and start to

think about plaiting purpose together into contexts that are meaningful, transferable and valuable to children. Less measuring and more valuing.



Peter A Barnard // @peterabarnard

Well-being, character and so on is the product of how the school organises itself as a supported learning system. For once, Nicky is kind of right.

Science teachers unclear over GCSE 'standard pass'



Damian Ainscough // @damianainscough

The main issue is the unrealistic demand on science teachers to predict grades as so many variables have changed in the new GCSEs

Wendy Maria // @wendymaria100

I can barely follow this and I'm a science teacher! What an unholy mess we have made/allowed.

School performance data: winners and losers



Education State, address supplied

Why call it 'performance' data? These are simply test scores. For performance it would have to be a machine, and schools aren't machines. They're made up of individuals who have good days and bad and have lives and minds of their own. We legitimise a way of understanding, and impoverishing, the world by using its language.

From courtroom to classroom



Naomi Frisby // @Frizbot

Great piece from one of my former teaching students. It takes some guts to change career at 46.

£17K fitness zone keeps pupils fighting fit



Gary T // @Garyt2

Fitness zones? We call them playgrounds here

Ofqual 'refusing to engage' on colour blindness

REPLY OF THE WEEK



Mark Watson, Gloucestershire

One of my best school friends is colour blind and he had so many problems because it isn't considered in so many different areas, as anyone who isn't affected generally doesn't think about it. On an individual level it's understandable (it took a while for him to get me to recognise the implications), but on a national and system level it's inexcusable.

Well done on pushing Ofqual to re-engage on this – keep the pressure up!

REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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PROFILE

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

Sam Twiselton – director of the Sheffield Institute of Education

Sam Twiselton narrates the Carter Review of initial teacher training as a satisfying morality tale of evidence over ideology.

The director of the Sheffield Institute of Education played second fiddle to headteacher Sir Andrew Carter as a member of the government-commissioned review in 2014, “sticking to [him] like glue” for months, as the pair toured the country to identify best practice among ITT providers.

As she tells it, then-education secretary Michael Gove recruited Carter to write a review, officially to find out “what was and wasn’t working” in teacher training – but in truth to justify his desire to “take teacher training out of the ivory towers and put it into schools”.

Carter, who ran his own school-based teacher training, shared Gove’s bugbear, considering it unfair that universities had a “monopoly on the academic award” – a gripe reinforced by his ideological belief that “universities aren’t that good at teacher training”.

“That was definitely his starting position,” she admits. “He said that’s what Michael Gove spoke to him about and why he asked him.”

But despite Carter’s initial bias, and the awkward fact he’d been hand-picked to “come up with the right answer”, Twiselton ended up with “a lot of respect” for her nemesis, with whom she had plenty of “challenging, robust conversations” along the way.

“You don’t get to a position like Andrew’s,” she concedes, “without being clever and good at your job and caring that you get it right.” The same applied to the others in the group, she adds: “We weren’t going to write a report that we couldn’t stand by”.

Far from fulfilling Gove’s intentions, then, the final report emphasised the value of partnership between schools and universities. “In the end, [Carter] couldn’t really go against the force of the evidence, that the best teacher training provision we saw had a really good combination of universities and other people in schools,” she explains.

It’s “one of the things I’m most proud of”, she says, that he ultimately came to see “the value of partnership”. In a complete volte-face, Carter now sits on the advisory board of the Sheffield IoE.

Getting to that stage was a long haul, and Twiselton admits she often thought about walking away. A huge amount of behind-the-scenes work went into dialoguing with various parties – and Twiselton certainly wasn’t popular with everyone in the university sector, some of whom saw her as “having gone over to the dark side” for taking part.

Despite having been involved in teacher training for most of her career, she admits that as she did the rounds with Carter, she witnessed some aspects of existing provision that were “hard to justify”.

In addition to “very vague” written standards for the PGCE qualification, the level six “professional certificate of education” wasn’t distinguished from the “postgraduate” level seven award, with exactly the same acronym. Credits on PGCE courses could range from 60 to 180, and some SCITTs were providing a very similar training programme, without being allowed to award the certificate. Since QTS only allows teachers to teach in England but not abroad, this makes it a less attractive option to some trainees. “It wasn’t brilliant,” she concedes.

Twiselton’s experience of working closely with schools made her a good choice for the DfE, which

"TAKE TEACHER TRAINING OUT OF THE IVORY TOWERS AND PUT IT INTO SCHOOLS"

was looking for someone from the university sector “who wouldn’t be completely, outrageously anti school-led teacher training”.

Latterly at Cumbria, she recounts, “we’d experimented with different forms of more school-based teacher training, sometimes just for logistic reasons”. One example was design technology, where the university partnered with a nearby school to let it use its kit. But “what we found when we got there is actually [the trainees] were picking up all sorts of other things”. Moving from a training session in the school straight into a class to see examples in practice “just sticks much better”.

She has been at home in the classroom from a young age, spending time at work with her primary teacher mum from childhood right through to her twenties. She studied at Oxford, and returned home to Ambleside to train and work as a primary teacher for several years. After having children she took a research position for its more family-friendly hours (she notes the irony). Twiselton then worked her way up to run the primary PGCE at Cumbria, before becoming associate dean, then dean of the university, and was eventually appointed by Sheffield IoE as its very first director.

So what of Justine Greening’s controversial announcement of a teacher apprenticeship route for non-graduates – can she see it working?

“I honestly can, if the degree part of it is thought through enough, and I haven’t seen anything to suggest it won’t be,” she says. She admires Greening’s obsession with having “evidence with absolutely everything” – in contrast to some of her predecessors.

Rigour doesn’t have to be a concern, since similar bachelor of education degrees already exist, as do part-time degrees, and QAA regulations would ensure subject knowledge was covered.

So is there no risk to moving to a more school-centred model? Obviously “you’ve got to be careful”, she insists – you need “the right schools with the right practitioners – not anybody can do this”. And both sides need to recognise they have different strengths.

As to what the apprentices could usefully do in a school in the early years of their training, this would likely be a “teaching assistant kind of post”, best suited to career changers or TAs who would like to convert to teacher status.

Since sitting on the Carter review, she’s been something of a regular in these consultations – participating in Tom Bennett’s behaviour review, and now on Ofsted’s curriculum panel. The Bennett Review was controversial for many reasons, and not least because it covered a

SAM T

“very narrow group” in terms of representation, but she believes that after many hurdles, “the substance of it was written by sensible people”.

The curriculum review and its focus on subject knowledge is a particular passion. Her own PhD concluded that the most effective teachers are those with “broad and deep understanding of what they’re trying to teach ... in a way that they can come at it from lots of different angles, and they can get children to apply it in lots of different ways”.

Extremes of knowledge-veneration make her uncomfortable, however, “where people are talking about knowledge as if it doesn’t have to have application”. Christine Counsell, the director of education at Inspiration Trust, who is also on the review, is “associated with the knowledge end of the spectrum, but actually



Sam with husband Ian and children Molly and Jake, outside the Cumbria home where she grew up



Sam with her mum Cynthia Clark, on holiday in Palma, Mallorca



Sam Twiselton with Andrew Carter (third from right) and members of the review



Launching the South Yorkshire Futures social mobility initiative



Laying the foundations: Sheffield Institute of Education

WISELTON

when you speak to her, for her it's about meaningful application".

This lifelong teacher, trainer and academic speaks about observing children's learning with a joy that seems alien to me, but which infuses her being.

Twiselton denied her mum's influence on her life for many years, because "it's not cool to be what your mother is", but after she died of septicaemia this summer, she's started to re-evaluate.

"Just in terms of being values-led, of standing up for yourself, not feeling that you've got to behave like a man in a man's world," she reflects, emotional yet self-assured. "I think she was the role model for me in how I ended up doing that myself in my own career."

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

- Naughtiest thing you've ever done**

I can't tell you and you'd never guess – and if you did I couldn't possibly confirm or deny...
- What was your role in the family, growing up?**

Definitely peacemaker. My older sister and brother were very close in age and always fighting like cat and dog. I was four or five years younger and my role was always to calm things down.
- What would you have done if not gone into education as a career?**

A journalist, ideally the kind that writes articles about luxury hotels in exotic places.
- Favourite book**

Birdsong – it actually surprises me that I've said this as I often chose books that cheer me up, but this is the novel that's stayed with me, as it moved me above any other.
- Alter-ego movie star**

Mowgli from *The Jungle Book*.



ANDREA SQUIRES

Head of education law,
Winckworth Sherwood

The beginning of the end of single-sex education...

The recent judgement against segregation in schools suggests that ideology-based segregation in education is harmful. Where does this leave single-sex schools?

On Friday 13 October, the Court of Appeal ruled that the Al-Hijrah school's policy of segregating boys and girls was unlawful discrimination by sex. The decision gives Ofsted considerably greater powers and could mark the beginning of the end of single-sex education.

The courts were asked to consider whether denying either group the opportunity to mix was a lost benefit, amounting to less-favourable treatment for one or the other. The High Court's view was that as both groups were treated equally, because it could not find that one sex was being treated less favourably than the other.

“
Ofsted is both determining policy and policing its implementation

Ofsted disagreed, arguing that it resulted in the loss of opportunity to choose to learn and socialise with each other, and posed a particular detriment to girls as they have less power in society. It also argued that this treatment of girls amounted to “expressive harm”, caused by the implication that the need for segregation is based on the belief that girls are inferior.

The Court of Appeal agreed, and Sir Terence Etherton, said “there was direct evidence from some, albeit a small number, of the pupils that they regarded the complete segregation of the sexes as detrimental to their social awareness and development”.

The decision is a definitive win for Ofsted, perhaps going further even than it may have expected to give its inspectors the power to judge a school's overall effectiveness in regard to its social policies. (Remember there was no suggestion here that teaching and

learning differed.)

Amanda Spielman this weekend responded with a public defence of same-sex schools. She recognises the exemption in the legislation that permits it, and believes there are benefits for both girls and boys. The point she emphasises, and one that schools will need to keep in mind, is the purpose behind the segregation.

Ofsted highlighted a breach of the duty to promote British values, that segregation is not a British value. However, given the lack of guidance from the DfE and Ofsted itself as to what would and would not be compliant, it's hard to resist the conclusion that Ofsted is both determining policy and policing its implementation.

Al-Hijrah's policy was driven by religious ideology rather than inherent gender bias, and it would be easy to dismiss this ruling as only applying to segregation in an otherwise mixed-sex school. But that would ignore the significant undertones of this ruling, which suggest that ideologically driven segregation in education is harmful, particularly for girls.

Following this reasoning to its logical conclusion, it could open the door for challenges to faith-based multi-academy trusts running single-sex schools – which in turn raises difficult questions about discrimination, if faith-based trusts were treated differently to secular trusts in this regard.

Ofsted has for some time wished to extend greater influence on informing educational policy, and now seems to have achieved that.

If, as at least one of the judges indicated, it is accepted that the ability to mix and form working relationships with members of the opposite sex is so crucial to the educational development of all pupils, are there any circumstances where it can be justified that it is appropriate to exclude the opposite sex, beyond mere tradition? What regard is there for parental choice?

While single-sex schools are clearly lawful, being expressly exempted from aspects of the Equalities Act 2010, could this judgement fuel a challenge that single-sex provision is inherently worse and that a local authority offering only this choice may be unfairly limiting a parent's options?

This judgement may well lead to a rise in discrimination challenges and open up a wider debate about single sex education.



KAREN WESPIESER

Head of impact, National Foundation
for Educational Research

Why is the best CPD held at the weekend?

We need to bring the buzz of weekend conferences to continuing professional development delivered during working hours, says Karen Wespieser

As we reach the first half term of the new academic year, there have already been a series of high-profile education conferences. Nick Gibb and Justine Greening have given keynote speeches, and many hours of continuing professional development (CPD) time have been racked up. There's just one catch: they nearly all took place at the weekend.

Weekend conferences have grown massively in popularity over the past few years, driven primarily by grassroots, teacher-led groups such as ResearchED and WomenED. They argue that these events, organised by and for teachers, provide unique access to a choice of CPD opportunities beyond the regular school-level offer.

Miffed at missing another one of these events in order to chaperone my kids to their rugby and gymnastics classes I composed a peeved tweet questioning why these events are still weekend fringe events; if the profession values CPD, why does it not happen during paid work hours?

I was overwhelmed by the response. The question touched a nerve for many, with staunch views shared on both sides. But what do we actually know about the value we place on teacher CPD?

Last year in NFER's analysis of teacher retention, we looked to see if providing appropriately for a teacher's professional development was significantly associated with a greater desire to remain in teaching or to leave the profession. We were surprised to find no significant association at all.

Responding to the finding, CPD guru David Weston suggested that teachers tend generally to have very low expectations of what “appropriately providing for professional development” actually looks like, meaning that they are likely to report positively on self-report surveys, even if the quality is relatively poor, hence the low correlation with intention to leave.

These low expectations are supported in the evidence. Figures compiled by the Teacher Development Trust earlier this year found that across the whole sector, schools spend an average of just 0.7 per cent of their income on developing their teaching workforce.

The research also shows that the most common training involved sitting watching a PowerPoint. When CUREE conducted a

snapshot of training provision in 2011, barely one per cent of the training they looked at was effectively transforming classroom practice.

This all fits then with the rise in weekend “do-it-yourself” CPD. If schools are not providing appropriately then it is only natural that a market will begin to flourish to meet that need. It may also fit the need of a younger, more mobile workforce.

But what needs to be remembered is that whilst this is a fix that will benefit some teachers, it will not be reaching a majority who cannot or will not give up their own free time (and often money) to travel to weekend CPD events.

“
If the profession values CPD, why does it not happen during paid work hours?

What can be done about this is a harder question. Last year the Department for Education published a new standard for teachers' professional development for all schools in England. The standard describes five key concepts:

1. Professional development should have a focus on improving and evaluating pupil outcomes.
2. Professional development should be underpinned by robust evidence and expertise.
3. Professional development should include collaboration and expert challenge.
4. Professional development programmes should be sustained over time.
5. Professional development must be prioritised by school leadership.

Of these, only items one to three have the potential to be fulfilled by weekend CPD. Therefore, whilst it is a nice add-on we must ensure that this does not come to replace school-coordinated CPD within working hours.

We need to take what is best about these weekend events – the high energy and the varied mix of speakers and sessions – and find ways to replicate them so that schools can provide and prioritise professional development that will create a buzz for all staff and, ultimately, effectively transform classroom practice.

English schools need much more than a paltry £1.3 billion in extra funding taken from elsewhere, says Gillian Allcroft

Sorry to be churlish, but £1.3 billion more for school funding is not nearly enough. Yes, I know, there are lots of other deserving causes, but our children are our future and if we cannot provide them with a good education, we have failed them.

The extra funding is frankly a bit of a sticking plaster. It means that the Department for Education has been able to rejig its figures so that if the National Funding Formula were implemented in full (which it won't be this side of 2020-2021) no school would lose out. It doesn't make up for what wasn't there in the first place.

School funding has effectively been static for eons now, but cost pressures haven't. Aside from general inflationary pressures, schools have had to manage significant increases to national insurance and teachers' pension contributions, both unfunded. Public sector pay restraints may have restricted general increases to teachers' pay, but they too have been unfunded. And, teachers have, quite rightly, still been moving through their pay ranges during that time.

This year we have to contend with the anomalies of the apprenticeship levy, which forces some schools with a payroll far below the £3 million threshold to pay because their LA is the legal employer of staff. This is all the more irritating because a school next door of a similar size and budget won't have to pay



GILLIAN ALLCROFT

Deputy CEO,
National Governance Association

School funding promise is woefully inadequate

because its governing body is the employer.

Then there are LA budgets, or what's left of them. It may come as a surprise to some, but just over 60 per cent of state-funded schools in England are still local authority schools. The vast majority of those are in the primary sector, and have traditionally relied more heavily on their LAs for support. As budgets have reduced, the educational support services LAs used to provide have disappeared or are now charged-for services. Again, schools haven't received extra funding.

But there is no cash cow for academies either. Yes the early academy converters received a financial "bonus" in the original Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant but its heyday was short-lived and

its replacement Education Services Grant disappeared completely for new academies from this September, with varying levels of protection for existing academies.

Much of the debate has focused on the effects of funding reform on mainstream schools and pupils. But what of our children and young people with special needs and disabilities? In theory the reform doesn't alter how special schools are funded – they'll still get per-place funding and top-up funding depending on individual needs. But this is vulnerable to funding restrictions elsewhere in the system – perhaps a pupil only warrants £3,000 not £5,000?

The Isos partnership research which was commissioned to inform the reform of the high-needs budget found potential variations

in the level of top-up funding more than £10,000 for children with similar needs. Now that's what you call a postcode lottery, but for

“The extra funding is frankly a bit of a sticking plaster

our most vulnerable children.

If you have post-16 provision you've probably been quietly weeping into your tea for several years already. At a time of financial retrenchment we are meant to be not just reaching for the moon, but jumping over it in terms of attainment and progress.

Yes governing boards should all be looking at how effectively the money is used and asking professional staff whether there are ways to do it better. But many schools have already been there and done that. Our students deserve the best education and opportunities to succeed, but in order to do that we need to ensure our school staff are ready and able to teach them.

School governance remains a voluntary role and the vast majority of those volunteers signed up in order to give something back – not make redundancies and cut the curriculum offer. Governors and trustees tend to be a resilient lot, and boy do we need that resilience right now.

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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

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Our blog reviewer of the week is Iesha Small, an educational researcher, teacher and commentator @ieshasmall

World mental health day
October 2017

By @AKnill

"I know about mental health issues, I left the job that triggered many incidents for me so I must be fine now, mustn't I?"

There is, rightly, much discussion of mental health of pupils in schools and the ongoing inability of CAMHS services to meet demands due to funding issues. We must also remember about the mental health of teachers. When I first met Andy Knill about five years ago, he was a vibrant member of the teaching community, a geography teacher with decades of service with the energy and curiosity of an NQT.

Sadly, the vocation that he loved also contributed to serious periods of ill health, but hopefully by speaking out about mental health we can create a climate for other teachers to be supported in a way that allows them to be effective members of their school communities whilst still being kind to themselves.

Are you enjoying it? Reflections
on new motherhood

By @bristol_teacher

"Everyone had an opinion," writes Claire Nicholls, likening her experience as a new mother to that of being a teacher. Everybody has been to school and everybody has been a child so often people offer unsolicited opinions about how to teach and how to parent. In a majority female profession, it is highly likely that if you are currently working in a school, at least one of your colleagues is off on maternity leave, or about to be, or has just returned.

This blog compares the writer's actual experience of and feelings about motherhood, to how she perceives wider society is expecting her to feel. It's directly relevant to school leaders because sadly I have been present in meetings or informal discussions where they automatically assume that female members of staff who are pregnant will be less ambitious or interested in their work when they return. For some this may well be true but it is not for others, and neither camp should be made to feel bad about their choices.

The difference pupil: exclusion and
alternative provision

By @lkmco

"I hardly knew what alternative provision meant despite having worked in a school which excluded far more pupils than I like to even contemplate," writes Loic Menzies, as he sheds light on the Cinderella sector of alternative provision. Personally, I've worked in education for more than a decade and, as all my leadership roles being curriculum-based, I have never visited an alternative provision setting.

Last week saw the launch of The Difference, a training and development programme designed to place mainstream teachers in alternative provision settings where it is hoped that they will be able to positively impact some of the most vulnerable young people in our education system.

Loic shares key information, including the killer statistic that each cohort of permanently excluded pupils will eventually cost the state an extra £2.1 billion. These are often our most challenging students and the ones with the most social needs so it's no surprise that they go on to cost more due to their increased interactions with our health, benefits and criminal justice systems. I agree that "teachers can't be expected to do everything, [but] we certainly can't underestimate the urgency of tackling the issue."

Why we should share our
knowledge with others

By @erickimphoto

"I am glad to learn in order that I may share."

When I first read this blog, originally aimed at photographers, I immediately thought of the parallels as a teacher and a leader. We know that it is our job to share things with students but sometimes that knowledge can be things we have known for a long time. Photographer Eric Kim encourages us to share new things that we have learnt. For me, it's a reminder to consider how generous we are in sharing new insights with our colleagues, or the wider educational community.

BOOK REVIEW

Mindful teacher, mindful school:
improving wellbeing in teaching
and learning

By: Kevin Hawkins

Publisher: SAGE Publications

Reviewed by: Hannah Wilson



Mindfulness in schools splits the audience and invites naysayers to critique certain "fluffy" approaches. However, what Kevin Hawkins does well is integrate the theory with the practice, underpinning the practical actions with the concepts. I am not sure the title or front cover does this book the justice it deserves.

I caught myself nodding throughout and smiled to read the language that we use at our school. "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all" is one of the straplines in my prospectus. "Holistically educating the whole child" is a phrase I have used repeatedly over the last few weeks in our endless round of open evenings and mornings as I share our vision and values with prospective parents.

However, for me the focus needed to be inverted – one mindful teacher with one mindful classroom in a school causes a ripple, but a mindful school, full of mindful teachers, creating mindful classrooms causes a wave. This is the wave of change that our school system desperately needs.

The intertextuality of seminal theories and texts from Coleman to Covey are threaded seamlessly throughout this accessible book. I dipped in and out, chapter by chapter, but picked up threads and looped back to revisit concepts which anchored different sections.

The exploration of Bloom's taxonomy of affective (emotional) skills supports my belief that we need to educate the whole child and that we are failing our children if we fail to do so. We have lost the balance, hence the societal epidemic of mental health issues symptomatic of our focus on cognitive versus emotional development.

The chapter propagating self-care is emphatic and should be read by all school

leaders. We should not be presenting our learners with teachers who are struggling with their own wellbeing. Our school culture has become obsessed with doing rather than being, at the expense of the humans in the system, primarily the adults in our schools.

This book is a journey we need to go on in order to grow, learn and flourish as educators and learners. Moreover, the advice and tips on managing our inner critics is reminiscent of many tweets, blogs and talks I have witnessed through #WomenEd activity. This book could be speaking directly to our community.

Hawkins explains that as we understand our mind, body and emotions more

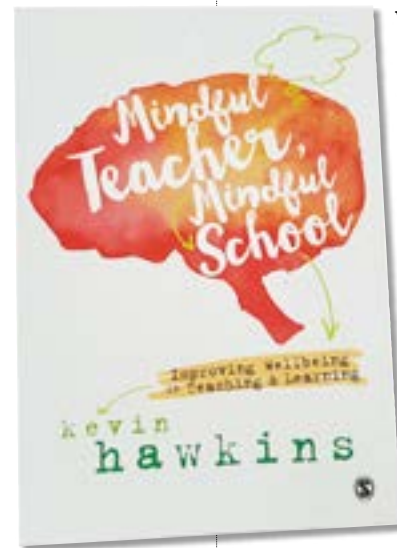
through mindful practice, we recognise our negativity biases and behaviour patterns. Through the use of the cognitive behaviour model we can help children understand their inner bias more explicitly. How many conversations have I had in the last few years about this in relation to representation in our schools?

The section on presence really made me think. I have led sessions for new and struggling staff on how to develop a presence,

but this technique is encouraging us to "be present", reminding us how to show up in our classrooms and in our teaching. In the world of white noise from emails, bells and radios it is hard sometimes to be truly present. And we wonder why our staff and our students are frazzled and stressed?

It seems we are behind the times, as the international research cites multiple case studies of how the States, Canada, Sweden and Australia have embedded mindful practice and positive psychology into their education system. Our schools need to be more mindful – we need to bring the heart back in to the core of mainstream education. This book is a call to arms for us to change our school system, to counterbalance our investment in professional development with a commitment to personal growth.

The final words, "we aren't teachers, we are people, people who teach" remind me of Mary Myatt's *Hopeful Schools*. She says "we are humans first, teachers second". Hawkins has filled my empty tank back up with hope and optimism for the future of our schools.





Week in Westminster

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

SATURDAY:

Ofsted's head honcho Amanda Spielman wrote a column today for the Daily Mail explaining how it's totally unfair for Al-Hijrah School to separate its pupils by gender but totally fine for boys' and girls' schools to exist at the same time. Her main argument was that the latter has a special legal exemption under equalities law (so that's fine then!). But she also said girls' schools help girls do better. This is verified by data, but she conveniently forgets that boys' schools are not so good for boys. Could the real reason be that Spielman herself went to a girls' school? You may well believe that, readers. Week in Westminster couldn't possibly comment.

MONDAY:

We looked at the ministerial gifts cupboard this morning... and the cupboard was bare. Boo. New figures looking at ministerial hospitality and presents revealed a nil return for everyone. Boring. Maybe we'll send a cake, see if it makes it in next time.

TUESDAY:

PANIC STATIONS! Week in Westminster learned today that Ofqual has no plans for what will happen to GCSE exams if the Queen should die while they are on.

Complicated traditional reasons mean that when the Queen dies (sniff) the funeral must be 12 days later. But if the funeral day were to land on, say, GCSE maths or English day, this would have huge implications. For example, some FE colleges have over 2,000 students sit their exams on the same day, and at least one hires a warehouse to cope.

But, alas, Ofqual holds no documents at all related to this issue. We know because we asked. So if Queenie dies next summer, we're all going to have 12 days to figure out what the heck to do. Don't say we didn't warn you.

WEDNESDAY:

UKIP has a new leader, a new logo and a new approach to education: don't talk about it.

The party unveiled its new top team, with

more than 30 positions now filled.

But education was conspicuous in its absence, meaning the party no longer has an official named spokesperson.

It might have something to do with the fact that David Kurten, a London Assembly member and former Chemistry teacher, told new leader Henry Bolton where to shove the job after he was overlooked for a deputy leader position.

Kurten had served as spokesperson on education since last September, but said in a statement he had "decided to step away" from the role, despite being offered it again.

Maybe it's just a cost-saving initiative? After all, Ukip doesn't exactly need a dedicated spokesperson just to chant "bring back grammar schools" over and over again, does it?

THURSDAY:

A strange report released by the Department for Education today reveals the results of a survey undertaken in 2015 about performance-related pay. It shows that shortly after its introduction the majority


of LAs (over 90 per cent) were following the rules, as well as "a majority" of academies (62 per cent).

It also suggests a "majority" of teachers were "positive" about the rules. Then it produces a plethora of statistics showing around half of teachers thought it was consistent and easy to understand. Positive? Hmmm. Week in Westminster would say that's ambivalent, at best.


Hallelujah, meanwhile, as the DfE finally says that teacher apprentices will be paid the minimum unqualified teacher salary, rather than the £3.50 an hour allowed under regular apprenticeship rules.

Also new figures out today for the early-years profile showed that a remarkably high number of pupils got EXACTLY the score needed to be at the "expected" level for a four-year-old. It's almost as if the teachers knew where the boundary was in advance. Oh, what? They did! We are SHOCKED to hear this. SHOCKED WE TELL YOU!

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name Andrew Stanley
Age 64
Occupation Former head of education policy at a professional engineering body
Location Westminster
Subscriber since June 2015



FLY ON THE WALL

Where do you read your copy of *Schools Week*?
Usually at home at the weekend.

Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?
It ought to be the news items, but I enjoy the personal profiles.

If you could wave a magic wand and change one education policy, which would it be?
Careers education is dire, and I get a lot of feedback from parents and students about denied opportunities and misinformation. I would like to see a post-16 funding policy that creates a minimum size for sixth forms, preferably reverting to the tertiary college model of the late 70s. Too many schools have a limited curriculum offer at 16.

Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?
Gillian Sheppard was a very sensible, measured advocate for education in John Major's government, and understood that the sector needed to breathe. I'm impressed too by her ongoing commitment to fair access.

What is your favourite story or investigation reported in *Schools Week*?
Anything that highlights wastage in UTCs/free schools.

What do you do with your copy of *Schools Week* once you've read it?
I recycle the paper version and file selected editions/articles from the online version for use and as reference.

What would you do if you were editor of *Schools Week* for a day?
Run a feature on transgender kids and the lack of inclusion, as I have a transgender relative.

Favourite memory of your school years?
Bunking off from my grammar school as a year 10 in 1968 to join the demonstrations and general mayhem at Essex University. Youthful indiscretions and I've moved beyond this now.


If you weren't working in education, what would you be doing?
The job I enjoyed most was farm work, especially orchards in East

Anglia – I'd like to work with heritage English apples and pears.
Favourite book on education?
Colin Ward's *The Child in the City*

What new things would you like to see in *Schools Week*?
Profiles of teachers likely to be impacted by Brexit.

If you could be a fly on the wall in anyone's office, whose would it be?
If I could be a malaria-carrying mosquito, it would be Nigel Farage.

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



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

Robot TAs coming to a classroom near you

FEATURED

Unlocked

Leading change on the inside

A university professor nicknamed the 'Dr Who of AI in education' is developing a robot teaching assistant named Colin to help lighten teachers' workloads.

Professor Rose Luckin, a professor at UCL's institute of education, has been working on the artificially intelligent Colin for over 20 years and the parts are finally ready to be combined.

Colin will assist with organising starter activities, collating daily student performance records and providing teachers with a detailed analysis of how well a learner is engaging with lessons – as well as their mental state. Rather than taking on physical form, however, Colin will be software-based.

"It's an ongoing project and I keep getting people phoning me up asking if I've built Colin yet," Luckin said. "There are bits of Colin that exist all over the world and we just need to bring them together into one being. Now it's a case of finding the right people to help bring the ingredients together so he can exist as a whole thing, rather than just bits."

Luckin, who has taught in primary, secondary, further and higher education settings, hopes that a machine constantly collating data on pupils' performance in the classroom will eradicate the need for frequent tests and assessments, relieving the pressure on both teachers and students.



Instead, focus can be put on pupil wellbeing by using data collected by Colin to identify the areas where students need the most support in the classroom.

To avoid a future led - rather than assisted - by AI technology, Luckin says that educators should "get in discussions about what AI should and shouldn't do" sooner rather than later.

"There is a risk that big business will drive us towards a model where there will be claims you don't need to employ people because there's kit that does it which doesn't take any sick days," she said.

Humans will not be replaced in the classroom, however: "There are artificially



intelligent systems that can kind of fake emotional intelligence, but they don't really have it. A good teacher understands how to teach and how to learn in a way that an AI system never really will."

PRISON OFFICERS WANTED...

A two-year training programme placing graduates and career changers in frontline prison officer roles is calling for more teachers to apply as it expands into youth prisons.

Run by charity Unlocked Graduates, the programme trains participants how to work with prisoners and become a supportive leader during a prison placement, while working towards a fully funded master's in leadership and custodial environments.

For the first time this year, the scheme will place participants in two additional prisons: STC Medway, a secure training centre housing boys and girls aged between 12 and 18, and Cookham Wood, housing boys between 15 and 18.

"As a former teacher I'm very aware that it is the children I wasn't able to reach who were most at risk of ending up in jail. This offers passionate graduates a chance to work with those children who most desperately need them," said Natasha Porter, CEO of Unlocked Graduates.

"I want to encourage experts who have already honed their skills in the community to bring that expertise into the youth prisons estate."



Every dog has her day

A disabled dachshund that gets around using a pink custom-made wheelchair was the star of Brookvale Primary School's assembly on resilience and accepting others this week.

Poppy, a six-year-old miniature dachshund, lost the use of her legs and became incontinent after she was diagnosed with a spinal condition a year ago.

Now, Poppy – who used to be a therapy dog at care homes for the elderly – tours schools with her owner Sarah Griffiths as a way of promoting acceptance of disabilities and how struggles can be overcome.

"Today's assembly was all about



acceptance, about imagining that it is you who may be different or faced with a disability," explained Griffiths, who is also a teacher at the Birmingham primary. "Using Poppy as a teaching aid is a great way of bringing the subject to life. The children can see how she has overcome adversity and they are engaged and animated."

"Poppy has taught us that we can all be different. We don't need to be the same," added Inayah, a year 5 pupil.



Enterprising pupils invent epilepsy vest

Two students from Loughborough Grammar School have been touring the world with an invention that warns epilepsy sufferers when they're about to have a seizure.

Reigning UK Young Engineers of the Year, David Bernstein and Sankha Kahagala-Gamage, created a wearable vest they've called E1 after witnessing someone having a seizure.

The device monitors heart rate and body temperature to predict a seizure up to eight minutes in advance. If one is detected, the device sends a text message to the wearer's phone, and sends a warning text to a carer.

The students have so far presented their

invention at the Royal Society of Medicine's Medical Innovations Summit, taken part in the China Adolescent Science and Technology Innovations Contest in Hangzhou, where they won two awards, and most recently visited Estonia to take part in the EU's Contest for Young Scientists.

"We are very proud of Sankha's and David's success which has been borne out of their desire to make the world a better place for epilepsy sufferers," said Duncan Byrne, their headmaster.



MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



STUART POPE

Executive head, Cooks Spinney Primary Academy & Roydon Primary School

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS ROLE: Head of school, Cooks Spinney Primary Academy

INTERESTING FACT: He plays guitar in a band and once performed at V Festival.



SOPHIE LAING

Executive head, Little Parndon Primary Academy & Freshwaters Primary Academy

START DATE: September 2017

PREVIOUS ROLE: Head of school, Little Parndon Primary Academy

INTERESTING FACT: She has some serious baton twirling skills and used to be in the Lyme Regis majorette squad.



NICKY MORGAN

Education advisor, KidZania UK

START DATE: October 2017

PREVIOUS ROLE: MP for Loughborough and chair of the Treasury select committee (ongoing)

INTERESTING FACT: Her political nickname is NiMo – like the fish.



ANGELA WELLS

Headteacher, Netherwood Academy

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Headteacher at the Buckingham School

INTERESTING FACT: Angela plays classical guitar.



MARK NEILD

Headteacher, Samuel Ward Academy

START DATE: October 2017

PREVIOUS JOB: Director of secondary education at the Samuel Ward Academy Trust

INTERESTING FACT: He enjoys cycling, and playing squash and badminton.

Get in touch!

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

future



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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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Difficulty:
EASY

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

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



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