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## Salaries soar for CEOs of large academy chains

**JOHN DICKENS**  
@JOHNDICKENSSW

*Investigates*

- Chief executives get rises of 10 per cent or more . . . while teacher pay rates crawl up 1 per cent
- 'Unjust' pay is 'illogical' in the midst of the growing recruitment crisis, says union leader

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SIR DAVID CARTER

P3

“I’m not a puppet”

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## EDITION 60

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## NEWS:

## Primary 'clarification' is no clearer

**SOPHIE SCOTT**  
@SOPH\_E\_SCOTT

The government has refused to guarantee schools they will not face intervention based on this year's primary assessment results – despite one union claiming a commitment had been made.

Schools minister Nick Gibb said this month that he would explain to schools all the changes to primary assessment after discussions with the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) revealed the extent of confusion among teachers.

A clarification document released on Tuesday prompted calls for more explanation.

The document said Mr Gibb has written to chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw to "ensure" inspectors "take into account national performance and contextual factors when considering a school's performance in writing at key stage 2".

Mr Gibb has also asked regional school commissioners (RSCs) to be "mindful" of the impact when making decisions about warning notices and tackling underperformance.

NAHT general secretary Russell Hobby, who has been central to the discussions with the government about the changes, said: "We believe that there is a commitment not to intervene in schools on the basis of 2016 data alone.

"This could be clearer but such a commitment is essential amidst such uncertainty."

However a Department for Education (DfE) spokesperson told *Schools Week* the comments about intervention from Mr Gibb were "not new" and schools under the floor standards could still be "put in the scope" of further measures from either the inspectorate or their RSC.

Lynn Knapp (pictured), headteacher of Oxford's Windmill Primary School, said: "This year should be a pilot year and the results not taken into account at all. It has been such a mess. It's not fair to make significant judgments on schools when there has been so little clarity on the expectations this year."

National Union of Teachers general secretary Christine Blower said staff would "not be reassured by what the clarifications say about the consequences of underperformance in this discredited system.

"The DfE's formulations are designed to be equivocal: Ofsted and the RSCs will take 'contextual factors' relating to this year's maladministration into account in determining whether a school should be held formally accountable for supposed underperformance, but there is no guarantee of security.

"Schools still face the prospect of punishment for failing to push pupils through an

assessment system which many . . . regard as educationally indefensible."

The documents released this week seek to clear up confusion about the way primary school children will be assessed this year.

Pupils will sit a raft of new national curriculum tests and be measured on a new scale, with the average score expected to be 100.

Last month, Mr Gibb confirmed the deadline for teacher assessments had moved back to the end of June. It was originally brought forward by four weeks, to the end of May.

External moderation by local authorities will take place between May 23 and June 30. Schools will be told if they are to receive a visit on, or after, May 20. In some cases this will be before assessments have taken place.

The guidance to schools also tells schools they do not need to provide "tick sheets" for external moderation, and schools do not need to change their processes for internal or external moderation.

The DfE also confirmed the exemplification materials for the written assessment, which came under heavy fire from professionals when they were released last month for being "archaic", were examples of two different children both "working at the expected standard" – the old level 4b. One of the examples showed a child "working at greater depth". The DfE confirmed that was not equivalent to a level 5.



## I'LL SAY THIS ONLY 12 TIMES: SCHOOL DIRECT IS THE ANSWER

**SOPHIE SCOTT**  
@SOPH\_E\_SCOTT

The Department for Education cannot successfully predict local teacher recruitment and is "a long way" from being able to do so, its chief has admitted.

But data compiled by the department, and seen by *Schools Week*, shows the government is aware that some schools have at least 10 per cent of teaching posts unfilled.

Quizzed in parliament on Monday, the permanent secretary of the Department for Education (DfE), Chris Wormald, defended the government's teacher training policies, despite their failure to meet recruitment targets for four years running.

A recent report by the National Audit Office, which prompted this week's Public Accounts Committee hearing, also showed a nine-fold increase in teacher vacancies between 2011 and 2014.

Mr Wormald with Sinead O'Sullivan, director of programme delivery at the National College for Teaching and Leadership – which is responsible for teacher training – said on more than 12 occasions to the committee that the government's School Direct scheme, in which schools recruit trainee teachers, was the answer to recruitment problems.

This was despite MPs at the hearing pointing out that 57 per cent of schools are

not taking part in the scheme.

Mr Wormald (pictured) said: "Will we ever from a national department be able successfully to predict some of these very local things? Certainly not on our current quality of data, and I think we would be quite a long way from that. It is one of the reasons why we think school-led approaches to teacher training are a good thing because they allow local leaders to react much more to individual local circumstances."

Ms O'Sullivan agreed: "The more local you get the more challenging it is for us to be able to analyse what is going on using data. That is why a dialogue with schools is so important."

But data showed by Marcus Bell, director of the DfE's teachers and training group, during a public event at the RSA in November, revealed the extent of local variations.

He said the department had been looking into regional variations because it understood them "far less well" than the national picture and that "there might be very different positions in different areas that are being concealed by national data".

The data shows vacancy rates at schools in three local authorities. In two of the three there are a number of schools with at

least 10 per cent of teaching posts unfilled. However, in the other almost all schools had no vacancies.

Mr Bell said at the time this showed local data was complicated and did not give an overall picture of whether recruitment was "good or bad" in local areas.

He also suggested the issue may relate to problem schools, rather than local recruitment markets.

"This data needs further analysis so the sort of thing it might be picking up, and we don't know yet, is that schools with high levels of vacancies are perhaps schools that are struggling.

"Maybe they are all in a particular sub area of the local authority . . . so there is a recruitment problem in the coastal areas of a county, rather than all of it."

During the parliamentary meeting, Labour MP Caroline Flint raised concerns that the teacher recruitment crisis was not being taken seriously by the government.

"Can you imagine how galling it is for headteachers in different parts of the country who are facing real difficulties in getting good new teachers in the disciplines they need when it does

not sound like the [DfE] is taking seriously their concerns?"

Mr Wormald said again that the government's School Direct scheme was the answer.



## NEWS

# 'I'm no puppet,' insists new commissioner

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

England's new schools commissioner Sir David Carter has insisted he is not Nicky Morgan's puppet and that he has the full support of government for his plans to improve schools.

Speaking exclusively to *Schools Week* at the Association of School and College Leaders annual conference in Birmingham last week, the former regional schools commissioner (RSC) for the south west and ex-Cabot Learning Federation chief executive insisted he would be allowed to "get on with the job".

*Schools Week* previously reported that the Department for Education was blocking the commissioner from answering questions on his plans for a hierarchy of academy trusts and for avoiding conflicts of interest.

Sir David wants to tackle school improvement through different layers of trusts, based on size. Chains wanting to take on more schools and move between tiers will need a "health check".

He also wants to identify the 100 weakest academies and start intervention quickly.

"If I thought I was a puppet, I wouldn't have taken the job," he said. "I was really concerned that it wasn't an ambassadorial, figurehead role. When I was interviewed for the post, the priorities I have talked about for the past two months were the



ones that I put on the table."

Sir David (pictured), a former head of Deer Park School in Cirencester, said there was a "clear desire" for him to talk regularly to the press, and "to be open and to communicate with people". However his position as a senior civil servant meant he was duty-bound to support government views.

"I'm clearly not as independent as Michael Wilshaw and Ofsted does need to be independent, but I am very confident that, having been appointed to do this role, that people see the value of my experience and allow me to get on with this job."

Asked whether he still held the view he

expressed early in his tenure as an RSC – that the minutes and voting records of headteacher board meetings should be published in full – Sir David admitted he had backtracked slightly as sponsors might be discouraged from taking over schools if information about them was made public.

"Some of the conversations and outcomes of the conversations that the headteacher board has should remain private, because the minutes would have to go into quite a lot of detail and sponsors would say that's not fair."

He said transparency had to be balanced against "the needs to protect the privacy of

the people who are being discussed in the meetings", and said he was worried that his "quest to be upfront" could result in the publication of information about sponsors' "challenges and weaknesses", which could discourage them from expanding.

Sir David said his team was avoiding potential conflicts of interest between external advisers – some of whom were from existing trusts or firms specialising in services such as recruitment and selling software – and the RSCs to whom they make recommendations for school improvement actions or academy takeovers.

While he admitted it would be naïve to say there wasn't a risk of a conflict, Sir David said his office was "very skilled" in managing it by ensuring the 93 contractors were not deployed in geographic areas in which they already operated.

"In the south west, we deployed somebody who was on the list from a Bristol multi-academy trust (MAT) to work with a school in Poole, because that school has no intention of joining a MAT in Bristol and the MAT wouldn't want to do that."

But Sir David said he would be "very concerned" if anyone involved in the diagnosis of issues at a school went on to provide support to them in a professional capacity.

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## Delayed exam specifications hold up textbooks

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

The late accreditation of new exam specifications could delay subject textbooks being ready for September.

Figures released last week showed final specifications for more than half of the new GCSEs and A-levels have not yet been accredited.

Qualifications watchdog Ofqual and exam boards have come under fire for the delay, which is leaving teachers "no time at all" to prepare for the changes.

And now teachers are raising alarm bells about the knock-on effect the delay could have on textbooks being ready for the new academic year.

Schools minister Nick Gibb continues to stress how important textbooks are in the classroom. He has previously said an "anti-textbook" culture in English schools was leaving pupils lagging behind those in top-performing countries.

John Blake (pictured), a history consultant and leading practitioner, said: "Certainly the late accreditation of GCSE history – and the new A-level history before it – caused a lot of consternation amongst history teachers, but whatever one thinks about the speed of accreditation the textbook issue is a deeper one."

History was now fully accredited. But Mr Blake added: "It's true one of the problems created by late accreditation is delay in textbooks arriving into schools, as it's



obviously impossible to plan from textbooks you don't have."

But he said a "significant part" of the problem was English education publishers offering – and schools expecting – textbooks tied directly to specific specifications.

He said textbooks instead should cover a range of topics in significant depth.

"Teachers can then adapt to their own use depending on their students and their preferred model of delivery, rather than have the textbook only for one particular specification, which does not deviate from it nor go beyond it."

His view was echoed by Tim Oates, CBE, head of research and development at Cambridge Assessment. He said: "The narrowness of previous textbooks targeting

particular specifications appears to be a principal driver for undesirable narrowing in the school curriculum.

"Good textbooks should therefore be available for subjects not long after the content is signed off by the Department for Education."

A spokesperson for fellow exam board AQA said: "We know teachers find textbooks really helpful, so we're working to minimise any delays – we're staying in close touch with publishers and letting them know about any changes to our specifications as soon as they're made."

Figures from last week showed 90 of the 156 specifications for new GCSE and A-levels were yet to be accredited.

Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said the reform programme was a "major cause of stress for teachers".

However, Mr Gibb said content for core subjects had been published as long ago as April 2014. He added that draft specifications were available from August last year so there was "no barrier to schools getting on with preparations".

An Ofqual spokesperson said: "We understand teachers are keen to choose their preferred board and textbooks. The new curriculum content has been available for some time and exam boards publish draft specifications. We are working as swiftly as possible to accredit the new GCSEs and A-levels without compromising standards."

## WARNING OVER SCARLET FEVER

Teachers are being reminded to be vigilant in the wake of a rise in outbreaks of scarlet fever.

Schools should keep infected pupils and staff away for the first 24 hours of treatment, health bosses have said.

There are between 3,000 and 4,000 cases of the bacterial disease each year, but Public Health England (PHE) has reported a rise in recent months.

Outbreaks in schools have been reported by local press in Norwich, Banbury and Nantwich.

PHE received 4,701 notifications of scarlet fever between early September 2015 and mid-February 2016, compared to 3,399 in the same period last year – an increase of 38 per cent.

Government guidance from 2014 states the disease initially causes headaches, sore throats, fever, nausea and vomiting and goes on to form a red, generalised pinhead rash, which gives skin a sandpaper-like texture.

Complications can include pneumonia, sinusitis or meningitis in the early stages and acute glomerulonephritis and acute rheumatic fever at a later stage.

Doctors recommend prompt treatment.

PHE warned that the disease, which is most likely to occur in children under 10, can spread quickly in schools. It reminded leaders to report cases to local health protection teams and keep infected people away for 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

The advice goes on to say: "Good hygiene practice such as hand-washing remains the most important step in preventing and controlling spread of infection."

## NEWS

# Tax relief – only if you sponsor an academy

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Independent schools should lose their tax benefits if they refuse to become academy sponsors, says Sir Michael Wilshaw.

The chief inspector told the Sutton Trust's Best in Class summit in London on Wednesday that independent schools should not have charitable status unless they "get involved" in running local schools.

But there are practical concerns about the removal of charitable status, with one prominent policy chief warning that such a move would likely require legislation to enforce it.

Sir Michael said it was a "moral outrage" that the private sector was establishing schools abroad and "sucking in" teachers from England while "not doing enough to help our own poor children".

"I get quite angry when I hear independent school heads saying 'inequality is getting worse' and wringing their hands.

"[They should] get stuck in. Sponsor an academy . . . and they should lose their tax subsidies and the reliefs they get from the Charity Commission unless they sponsor an academy and show that they really mean what they say."

Independent schools receive tax breaks if they can prove to the commission they provide a wider "public benefit", such as sharing facilities with state schools.

Jonathan Simons, head of education at



Sir Michael Wilshaw



Nick Gibb



Toby Salt

think-tank Policy Exchange, told *Schools Week* that any change to make tax relief dependent on academy sponsorship would need parliamentary approval.

"You'd need to change the rules on charity status. It would certainly be a shift away from how the Charity Commission currently adjudicates public benefit."

Mr Simons said he could see "where Sir Michael is going with it", and acknowledged the need for more academy sponsors, but warned such a change could create issues such as independent schools facing the loss of charitable status if academies were taken from them by regional schools commissioners.

"There's also no evidence that independent schools do it better than anyone else. There are some great

independent schools as sponsors but there are also some that are terrible."

Sponsorship of academies by independent schools in the past has yielded mixed results.

In 2013, Dulwich College pulled out of being the lead sponsor of the Isle of Sheppey Academy in Kent after admitting Dulwich staff did not have the capacity to drive improvement at the required rate, while Wellington Academy, sponsored by Wellington College, has faced issues with staff retention and poor exam performance.

Julie Robinson, the general secretary of the Independent Schools Council (ISC), said it was a "shame" that Sir Michael "continues to attack independent schools", adding that more than nine in ten ISC schools were in "mutually beneficial partnerships with

state schools".

She said: "The typical independent school is a small prep with fewer than 350 pupils and working to tight financial margins with restraints on all other resources. Whilst they work hard within their communities and with other local schools, they couldn't conceivably sponsor an academy."

The summit also heard from schools minister Nick Gibb, who prompted a mixed response when claiming that no government since 2010 had "done more or made greater progress" to make schools into engines of social mobility.

Toby Salt, the chief executive of Ormiston Academies, warned the summit that the "bewildering" level of school choice in the education system today was marginalising "weaker" parents.

## 'OLD' NEW TECH ADDS TO WORKLOAD

Digital illiteracy amongst teachers and a lack of innovation in educational technology is increasing workload, suggests a new report released today.

Respondents to the coalition government's workload challenge last year said repeatedly that inputting data contributed to increasing working hours.

The publication from Advanced Learning, a company providing cloud-based management information systems (MIS), was written by John Roberts, the chief executive of teachers' union alternative Edapt.

Mr Roberts told *Schools Week*: "User experience puts people off embedding technology in classrooms. There doesn't seem to have been enough consultation with end users, the teachers, about how tech can ease pain points they have with data.

"Training staff in using new technology needn't be costly; just one staff member can be trained and be a mentor for colleagues."

The report criticises Capita SIMS, the MIS used by more than 80 per cent of schools. "With a single provider dominating this market, disruptive education technology innovation has been stifled."

Mr Roberts said he did not envisage every classroom "needing an iPad" but the work of taking registers and marking could be reduced via technology. However, more work needed to be done to upgrade many schools' technology, and access to fast broadband.

## DfE HAZY ON WHO OWNS ACADEMY SITES

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Department for Education chiefs have no idea how many academy sites belong to the government and have said it might be too expensive to find out.

The department currently makes an assumption that land and buildings used by academies belong to the government and records this figure in its annual accounts.

But in 2014, the National Audit Office (NAO) said that it could not determine whether the department's total value was correct as some buildings were leased or belonged to other bodies, such as religious groups.

The issue formed part of a long list of criticism from the NAO of the department's accounts, including how it includes the accounts of academies alongside its own although they have different year ends.

It means the department is not complying with accounting principles, something that will be publicly stated each year when auditors check the accounts.

A solution has now been proposed, but permanent secretary Chris Wormald has admitted that his department had it wrong in previous years.

At an education committee hearing into the department's finances on Wednesday, Labour MP Catherine McKinnell said: "This is not a diminishing issue – it's growing." She added: "For public accountability,

it's incumbent on you to meet that challenge."

Quizzed about how many academy sites may not belong to the government, Peter Lauener, head of the Education Funding Agency, said: "I don't have that kind of detail."

The department sidelined the problem after the NAO's 2014 report because a solution would have cost between £20 million to £40 million, which was not "value for the taxpayer".

Mr Wormald said: "We took a positive decision we wouldn't spend large amounts of public money on that."

He said potential problems over land ownership should not affect academies while they occupied sites.

But the department was criticised last year for an "unacceptable lack of clarity" over who owned assets on the Durand Academy site in south London.

It followed a public accounts committee grilling of the school's former executive head, Sir Greg Martin, over management fees paid to his private company that ran leisure facilities on the school's site. Sir Greg said the land had been "gifted" from the academy trust to a separate organisation. An investigation by the



Charities Commission is ongoing.

Mr Lauener (pictured) said his department was planning a new condition study to unpick some of the land issues.

Richard Calvert, director general of strategy and resources at the department, added: "[It's about] pinning down the scale of uncertainty. If this is the remaining issue to keep us from clean accounts then we want to get that sorted."

Mr Wormald also fielded questions over the department's proposed solution to its consolidation problems.

The department will publish a separate set of accounts for the academies sector, which means there could be an eight-month lag between when accounts are filed by schools and when they are presented to parliament in the academies sector report.

## NEWS

## PAY LEVELS SOAR FOR (SOME) ACADEMY BOSSES

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

The heads of some of the country's largest academy chains have pocketed pay rises totalling more than £80,000 this year – despite a 1 per cent cap on pay increases for their teachers.

A *Schools Week* investigation reveals that four chief executives received salary increases of at least £20,000 in the past 12 months.

Professor Toby Salt of Ormiston Academies Trust got a £30,000 boost from £150,000 to £180,000, while Sir Daniel Moynihan (Harris Federation), Karen Roberts (TKAT) and John Murphy (Oasis Community Learning) received £20,000 each.

The pay of other chief executives of the 13 chains that operate more than 20 schools stayed on the same level, except David Moran of E-ACT who dropped by £8,500 after the chain lost 10 schools, and John Mannix of Plymouth CAST, who moved up by £1,000.

Our analysis of the 2014/15 accounts of these 13 chains also shows a huge disparity in the salary of chief executives and the number of schools they run, leading to accusations from one union head that the academy system is "dysfunctional and completely unaccountable".

After our analysis, we produced two tables, one showing the per-school cost and one showing the pay per good or outstanding school (right).

Sir Daniel was again the highest paid chief executive with a £395,000 salary, more than £10,000 per school.

That compares to just £2,429 per school for Mr Mannix, the lowest paid, who takes home £85,000.

Professor Salt's pay rise works out at more than £6,000 per school.

Christine Blower, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, who described the system as "dysfunctional and completely unaccountable", said teachers would feel aggrieved at the "completely unjust state of affairs".

She added: "Pay deregulation and the implementation of market reforms have predictably resulted in these massive disparities, with soaring salaries for some CEOs while teachers have suffered a pay freeze.

"It is totally illogical given the crisis in teacher recruitment and retention."

Sir Daniel now earns more than two-and-a-half times the salary of prime minister David Cameron.

A spokesperson said all 25 of Harris's academies that have been inspected since the trust took over have been rated good or outstanding.

"Just one of these joined the federation with a 'good' rating. Many of the others were very challenging schools but have, without exception, been transformed."

Mr Mannix said there was "muddled thinking" about roles in education that were above headteachers.

He would not be drawn on specific examples, but said: "The current variation in senior pay is understandable while a new

## ACADEMY TRUST CEO PAY PER SCHOOL MANAGED

|    | Chief Executive      | Academy Trust                      | Salary Per School | Minimum Salary | No of Schools |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1  | Sir Daniel Moynihan  | Harris Federation                  | £10,676           | £395,000 ↑     | 37            |
| 2  | David Moran          | E-ACT                              | £6,587            | £151,500       | 23            |
| 3  | Sir Barry Day *      | Greenwood Academies Trust          | £6,500            | £195,000       | 30            |
| 4  | Professor Toby Salt  | Ormiston Academies Trust           | £6,207            | £180,000 ↑     | 29            |
| 5  | Lucy Heller **       | Ark Schools                        | £5,294            | £180,000       | 34            |
| 6  | Wendy Marshall       | David Ross Education Trust         | £4,545            | £150,000       | 33            |
| 7  | Sir Steve Lancashire | REACH2                             | £4,314            | £220,000       | 51            |
| 8  | Sir Paul Edwards*    | School Partnership Trust Academies | £4,302            | £185,000       | 43            |
| 9  | Jon Coles            | United Learning                    | £3,721            | £160,000       | 43            |
| 10 | Karen Roberts        | TKAT                               | £3,659            | £150,000 ↑     | 41            |
| 11 | John Murphy          | Oasis Community Learning           | £3,617            | £170,000 ↑     | 47            |
| 12 | Ian Comfort          | Academies Enterprise Trust         | £3,358            | £225,000       | 67            |
| 13 | John Mannix          | Plymouth CAST                      | £2,429            | £85,000        | 35            |

\* Has since left post

\*\* Pay includes salary from Ark Schools and Ark charity

↑ Increased salary since last year

## ACADEMY TRUST CEO PAY PER GOOD OR OUTSTANDING SCHOOL

|    | Chief Executive      | Academy Trust                      | Salary Per Good/OS School | Minimum Salary | No of Good/OS Schools |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1  | Sir Steve Lancashire | REACH2                             | £24,444                   | £220,000       | 9                     |
| 2  | Sir Daniel Moynihan  | Harris Federation                  | £15,800                   | £395,000       | 25                    |
| 3  | David Moran          | E-ACT                              | £15,150                   | £151,500       | 10                    |
| 4  | Professor Toby Salt  | Ormiston Academies Trust           | £12,857                   | £180,000       | 14                    |
| 5  | Wendy Marshall       | David Ross Education Trust         | £12,500                   | £150,000       | 12                    |
| 6  | Sir Barry Day *      | Greenwood Academies Trust          | £12,188                   | £195,000       | 16                    |
| 7  | John Murphy          | Oasis Community Learning           | £10,000                   | £170,000       | 17                    |
| 8  | Sir Paul Edwards *   | School Partnership Trust Academies | £9,737                    | £185,000       | 19                    |
| 9  | Lucy Heller **       | Ark Schools                        | £9,474                    | £180,000       | 19                    |
| 10 | John Coles           | United Learning                    | £7,619                    | £160,000       | 21                    |
| 11 | Karen Roberts        | TKAT                               | £7,500                    | £150,000       | 20                    |
| 12 | Ian Comfort          | Academies Enterprise Trust         | £5,769                    | £225,000       | 39                    |

\* Has since left post

\*\* Pay includes salary from Ark Schools and Ark charity

Note: Plymouth CAST has had one Ofsted since converting its schools so is not used in our analysis



**TOBY SALT**  
ORMISTON  
BIGGEST PAY RISE



**STEVE LANCASHIRE**  
REACH2  
HIGHEST PER GOOD SCHOOL



**DANIEL MOYNIHAN**  
HARRIS  
HIGHEST PAID



**IAN COMFORT**  
AET  
LOWEST PER GOOD SCHOOL

system and a new way of thinking about education responsibilities beds in."

Only time would tell "what value society ought to put on this role".

An Ormiston spokesperson said Professor Salt's salary was increased after a review and market benchmarking to "take into account the excellent job he does as chief executive of a large academy trust that has never shied away from taking on some of the toughest challenges in education".

*Schools Week* found further disparities when the number of good or outstanding schools in each trust's stable is taken into consideration.

Sir Steve Lancashire topped this table – earning nearly £25,000 for each of REACH2's nine good or outstanding schools.

That compared to £5,769 for the 39 good or outstanding schools run by Ian Comfort's Academies Enterprise Trust (AET).

But a REACH2 spokesperson said more than two-thirds of the trust's schools have yet to be inspected, adding: "Of those that have, 80 per cent – which prior to joining the REACH2 family were failing – are now good or outstanding."

Mr Comfort remained on a minimum salary of £225,000 for the year. AET – England's largest multi-academy trust with 67 schools – was criticised by Ofsted last month for failing too many pupils and handed over eight schools last year after concerns about their "geographic isolation".

A spokesperson said the number of

good or outstanding academies in the trust had doubled to 64 per cent in two years and Mr Comfort had headed "significant improvements" since taking the role in 2013.

Malcolm Trobe, the interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said salary levels were set by factors including the value-for-money the chief executives provided, and could be offset by the saving an academy chain could bring, such as group discounts for contracts.

"It is important that individual trusts have autonomy over pay policies in order to take account of their specific circumstances.

"Strong and effective leadership of multi-academy trusts is essential and salaries have to be commensurate."

## NEWS

## Free school support group opens regional office

The government-sponsored New Schools Network (NSN), paid to promote and support the opening of free schools, will open its first regional office next week.

Adviser John Briggs will be permanently based in Manchester to support applicant groups and lead on the network's campaigning activity across the north east and north west.

In an exclusive interview with *Schools Week*, due to be published next week, NSN director Nick Timothy said that the office would continue advice work for applicants, but would also "facilitate advice provided by others" so that successful bidders could "effectively evolve from being an applicant group to a governing body".

Mr Timothy has pointed out in the past that 28 per cent of children in the north of England attend a secondary school judged as "inadequate" or "requires improvement", compared with about 17 per cent of pupils in the south.

"The figures show that neither Greater Manchester nor the region as a whole has yet had the chance to benefit fully from the new opportunities provided by free schools."

The network has benefited from more than £3 million of government grants, receiving £1.27 million between September 2013 and August 2014, the last year for which figures are available.

Complaints were made when the first grant, given in 2010, was handed over without being publicly tendered. All grants since have been competitively won.

## Boles again backs moving UTCs to trust chains

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Plans to encourage university technical colleges (UTCs) to join multi-academy trusts (MATs) risk giving academy chains a loophole in new GCSE requirements, says a headteachers' leader.

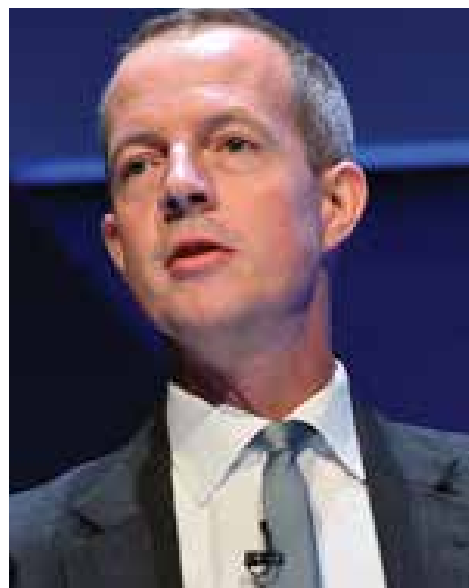
Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, has questioned the government's desire to see UTCs function within MATs, given they will be exempt from the requirement to have 90 per cent of pupils in a school study English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects until 16.

School leaders have criticised the compulsory baccalaureate for being too rigid and failing to take into account the needs of low ability pupils and those with learning difficulties.

Nick Boles, skills and enterprise minister (pictured), told parliament on Monday that UTCs were "stronger" as part of larger organisations, and admitted he wanted to replicate situations where UTCs were doing well in trusts, citing Leigh UTC in Dartford, Kent, as an example.

But Mr Hobby warned the change could be misused. "Ninety per cent of students inside a school must sit the EBacc subjects, unless it joins a group, sets up a UTC and streams students into the UTC.

"Why is it morally imperative that those students sit the EBacc in one institution, but not if they move into the other?"



Mr Hobby added that Mr Boles's plan, coupled with requirements for year 7 pupils who haven't achieved the equivalent of a level 4b in their key stage 2 SATs to re-sit the tests, amounted to a "troubling combination".

If academies streamed these pupils into specific classes to repeat the primary curriculum, it would replicate a "grammar-style" system, separating children by ability at 11.

A Department for Education spokesperson dismissed the possibility of such an arrangement: "This does not change the fact that admissions authorities must ensure the allocation of school places is fair and

complies with the school admissions code."

Under the regulations, pupils cannot be moved between schools without their agreement, and that of their parents. UTCs also cannot select by ability.

Should any evidence come to light academy trusts were operating in this way it would be investigated, the spokesperson confirmed.

Mr Boles launched a review of UTCs following the closure last summer of the Hackney and Black Country UTCs, which both suffered from slow recruitment and poor Ofsted ratings.

The minister's recent admission has been interpreted by some as a further sign the government does not have confidence in UTCs as standalone institutions.

Activate Learning, based in the Thames Valley, currently runs UTCs in Didcot and Reading under a separate trust to its mainstream schools, but is now exploring moving them into the same trust.

Chief executive Sally Dicketts said such a move had been "frowned-upon" by government until recently, but would make its operation "much easier".

"For us, to have a MAT the UTCs could fit into would be preferable. The two UTCs already share best practice, but it would make it much easier if they were all part of the same trust."

She also said her organisation would not use the changes to move less academically-able pupils into its UTCs.

## LOW STUDENT NUMBERS FORCE STUDIO SCHOOL CLOSURE

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Another studio school is to shut, the 14th of the 47 schools to close and raising questions over the model's future.

The Shared Learning Trust, formerly known as Barnfield Academy Trust, last week said it was closing its studio school in Luton after "carefully weighing up its long-term viability" in the face of dwindling pupil numbers.

Studio schools are an alternative to mainstream education for 14 to 19-year-olds, with institutes taking on cohorts of up to 300 pupils. They provide work-related curriculum with pupils receiving vocational and academic qualifications, as well as work experience.

The Studio School, Luton, opened in 2010 but only has 66 pupils and 12 staff, with no new students signed up to start in September.

Shared Learning Trust chief executive Andrew Cooper said the decision to close was "incredibly difficult" but necessary to ensure pupils were given the "best possible educational chances".

"We've had to take a step back and look at whether what we're trying to achieve at the studio school is working – with so few students, it clearly isn't."

The Shared Learning Trust changed its name last July to sever ties with the Barnfield College-led Barnfield Federation.

In 2014, the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency both published critical reports into the federation following the departure of former principal Sir Peter Birkett, knighted in 2012 for his services to the academy movement.

The Studio School was told it required improvement after an Ofsted inspection in October 2014.

Mr Cooper said: "The team has tried so hard to turn it around. But there comes a point when you have to look at the pupil numbers, and the finances, and accept you've done all you can."

The announcement came a day after two Da Vinci studio schools in Hertfordshire said they too were closing due to the "real challenges" they have faced.

It marks a string of closures for the programme which has struggled with recruitment since its conception in 2010. To date seven have closed, with seven more due to shut. Six are still due to open.

Latest Ofsted data shows that of the 31 studio schools visited so far, 21 are less than half full and only one – Bournemouth's LeAF Studio – is at the 300-pupil mark.

Two are in special measures, and only one, the Rye Studio School in East Sussex, is rated outstanding.

David Nicoll, the Studio Schools Trust's chief executive, said the schools' have had difficulties recruiting because the model is not seen as "traditional".

"Parents have to learn about the model

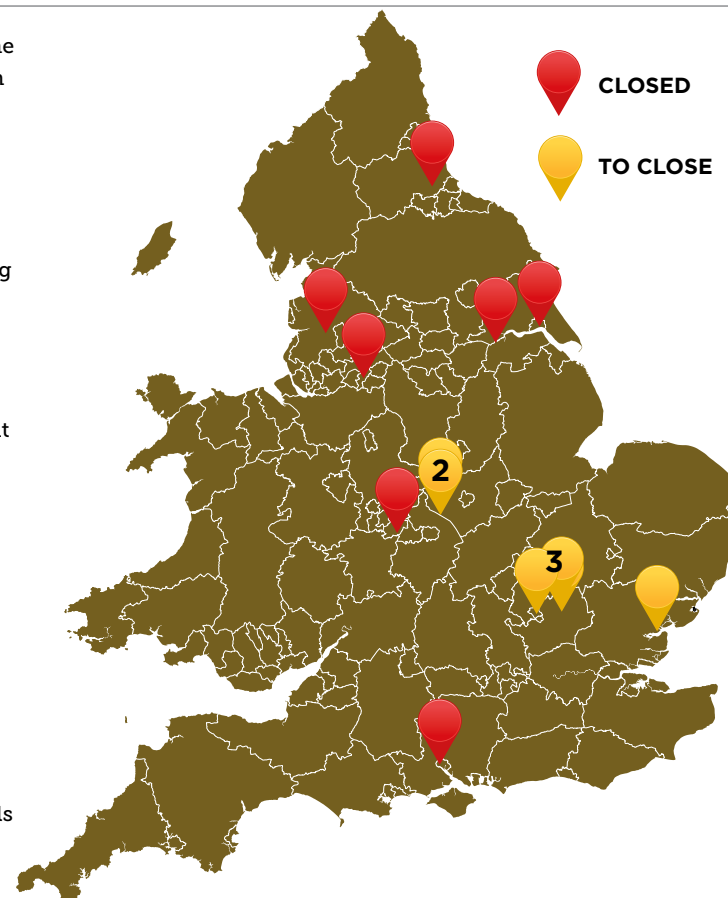
and that takes time. The pupils start at 14 which is not a traditional age of transition. We think it is absolutely the right age but it can be difficult to ask people to do something different."

Geoff Mulgan, co-founder of the studio school programme, remained adamant that the model works and fills a need.

"Some schools have struggled with recruitment, in common with many innovative schooling models over the centuries that went on to become part of the mainstream. But plenty of studio schools have done very well and shown how the challenges of recruiting at 14 can be overcome."

It has also been argued that pupils are instead opting to attend university technical colleges (UTCs), which cater for up to 800 students and which are sponsored by universities and employers.

Mr Nicoll and Edge Foundation chief



executive Alice Barnard said there was no evidence UTCs were competing with studio schools, as they were located in different parts of the country. Mr Nicoll said the two institutions "complemented" each other and Ms Barnard said curriculums were "quite distinct".

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## NEWS

## HOW THE NEW NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA WILL END INEQUALITIES

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

Education secretary Nicky Morgan has launched the first of two consultations that will shape an "historic" national funding formula.

Ms Morgan said the plans will end inequalities in the funding system that have resulted in some schools in some parts of the country receiving £2,000-per pupil more than others.

The consultation, which sets out the foundations for the formula's proposals, will run until April 17.

A second consultation, to be launched later in the year, will reveal how the factors will impact individual areas and schools.

*Schools Week* rounds up the main points from consultation one.

**What is the government proposing?**

School funding will be delivered by a national funding formula from next September. Funds will be given to local authorities to distribute for the first two years. They will be directly allocated to schools from 2019.

The formula will be made up of four building blocks: per-pupil costs, additional needs costs; school costs and geographic costs (these are covered in more detail on the next page).

**New formula will be eased in**

Transition to the "hard" national funding formula will be phased in over two years.

The government will use the new formula to create budgets for schools within each authority, before giving the cash to local authorities to hand out. Authorities can then reapportion based on a local funding formula, if they wish.

By 2018, local authorities will be required to pass on all of the funding allocated through the schools block to their local schools.

Authorities will also be given "greater flexibility" in setting a minimum funding guarantee to "reflect local circumstances".

**Limiting the impact on winners and losers**

The government has been clear there will be "winners and losers".

To smooth this it will continue a "minimum funding guarantee", which at present means schools can't lose more than 1.5 per cent of their funding per pupil, per year. (It will later become a national guarantee and could change. More details will be included in consultation two.)

The department is also proposing a cap on gains; the amount distributed to "gainers" will be balanced by the amount schools will be allowed to lose in a single year.

An "invest to save fund" will also be set up this year to help schools that lose out. It

will be available for schools to use how they wish, including for financial, legal and HR advice.

The document states that in "extreme cases" funds can go towards "the costs of restructuring a school's workforce" – essentially redundancies.

Jonathan Simons, head of education at think tank Policy Exchange, says he is struck by the explicit reference to redundancies, but says the pot of cash is "necessary and an important thing to do".

**The end of local authorities**

Arguably the biggest losers in the consultation are local authorities. The government states some will receive less cash in 2017, but they still have to set a formula so no school can lose more than the 1.5 per cent per pupil.

The consultation reads: "For losing authorities, this would leave them with very little room for manoeuvre."

One of the proposals to mitigate this is to allow authorities to set local minimum funding guarantees that allow for greater losses.

The government has also told councils to step back from running school improvement, and responsibilities such as behaviour support and insurance now rest with an individual school.

They can choose whether to buy the service in from the council or use an alternative provider.

The government has said it plans to provide funding to support the delivery of a new improvement strategy, which will be more school-led. This plan will be revealed in the white paper due before parliament in the coming weeks.

Local authorities will have most of their duties removed – leaving just three main ones. They will be expected to make sure there are enough school places available, ensure the needs of vulnerable pupils are met and act as a champion for parents.

The government is proposing to amend regulations so local authorities can retain some of their maintained school's dedicated schools grant to fund the duties they carry out for maintained schools.

**Factors left out**

The Department for Education (DfE) is proposing to use 11 of the 14 factors currently used in local funding formulae. Those not included are looked-after children, mobility and post-16.

**What next?**

The race is now on. There are rumours that the second consultation, which will run for six or seven weeks, will be published in May so the final details of the formula could be before Parliament by the end of June – before the summer recess.

But Natalie Perera, former DfE head of school funding reform, has said these timescales are "extraordinarily challenging".

## PLANS INCLUDE CASH PLEDGE FOR BELEAGUERED PFI SCHOOLS

Schools stuck with hefty private finance initiative contracts will be given extra funding under the new national formula after Nicky Morgan (pictured below) admitted her team of lawyers had failed to unpick the "watertight" deals.

In last week's edition, *Schools Week* revealed the toxic legacy of private finance initiative (PFI) contracts with firms who built new schools.

Potentially transformative management takeovers of cash-strapped failing schools hit the buffers as academy chains balked at taking on the 25-year contracts.

Many local authorities used a PFI factor in their funding formulas to pay for the deals, prompting concerns that this could be missed out under any new funding formula.

But the Department for Education (DfE) is proposing to allocate cash based on each local authority's historic PFI spend for the next two years.

There is no solution yet for when local authorities step away from overseeing funding in 2019.

The DfE has said, ideally,



it will look into individual contracts and try to draw up a more formulaic distribution.

But PFI costs vary significantly across different schools. This week's consultation therefore suggests local authorities or regional schools commissioners could distribute a pot of cash for PFI repayments. This would mean local knowledge of different conditions is retained.

In several investigations *Schools Week* has highlighted how some schools are being pushed into financial ruin because of their repayments – some of more than £1 million per year.

The education secretary on Saturday said: "We have had teams of lawyers looking at PFI contracts to see whether they can be changed or negotiated, unpicked.

They are, unfortunately, incredibly watertight, but I do appreciate the huge pressure that they put on different schools' budgets."

## REFORM OF HIGH-NEEDS FUNDING TO BE PHASED IN OVER FIVE YEARS

Proposals have gone out for consultation on high-needs funding for pupils with special educational needs, which will continue to be allocated to local authorities. The proposals are separate to the consultation on national fair funding.

The consultation document states that councils will continue to decide the pattern of provision for their area, consistent with their statutory responsibilities.

The Department for Education has built on recent research from the Isos Partnership to produce a set of factors that it thinks should be included in any new formula, including health, disability, low attainment and deprivation.

The document also states that "elements of the funding" will take into account councils having to provide the core funding for special schools. It says there is an "overwhelming case for reform" as the data used to decide funding is more than a decade out of date.

The government is proposing to phase in changes over five years to protect provision for youngsters and to give authorities time to adjust.

It says the breathing space will allow the department to carry out more research and evaluation.

Local authorities will be able to draw on capital funding to make necessary changes to "reshape their provision" and will be encouraged to share best practice and work together in regional hubs.

Claire Dorer, chief executive of the National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NASS), said the organisations could "see the sense" in local authorities retaining high-needs funding as they were responsible for individual pupils' combined education, health, and care plans.

"However, we know some authorities will see a big funding reduction. We have to ensure this does not translate into a reduced ability to meet needs."

Jarlath O'Brien (pictured), headteacher at Carwarden House Community School, said some special educational needs services, such as learning and language support are made up of local authority staff. "If this money was distributed to schools these services would cease to exist."







## THE FOUR BUILDING BLOCKS

*Schools Week* explains the ins and outs of the proposed building blocks

### PER-PUPIL COSTS

A core funding allocation per pupil will be the first building block. The level of funding will split into three different year groupings; basic funding for each primary pupil (key stage 1 and 2), key stage 3 pupil and key stage 4 pupil.

The groupings are the same as currently used by local authorities as part of the "basic entitlement funding".

The government says it does not want to increase complexity, but has maintained the separation between key stages 3 and 4 to reflect the added costs associated with key stage 4.

The document states: "We believe it is important that schools should have certainty about the minimum amount of funding each pupil will attract, and that their budgets will grow in line with pupil numbers."



### ADDITIONAL NEEDS

The government is proposing to split this cash distribution into three areas.

**1. Socio-economic deprivation.** This will be decided via a combination of pupil-level and area-level data, current and past free school meals status, and income deprivation.

**2. Low prior attainment.** Both primary and secondary schools will be allocated funding in this way. The government admits it will have to adjust secondary prior attainment for the new key stage 2 tests.

**3. English as an additional language (EAL).** The government says this can act as a short-term barrier to accessing education and is proposing funding for pupils who registered as EAL in the past three years (EAL3). The fund will be discretionary and there will be no requirement to spend a particular amount on specific pupils.



### SCHOOL COSTS

This will help schools meet the costs of premises and overheads. There are currently no mandatory school cost factors, but all local authorities use at least two.

**1. Lump sum and sparsity.** This is mainly to support small schools whose building costs account for a larger percentage of their overall spend. No figure is given for the lump sum, but local authorities currently give up to a maximum of £175,000.

**2. Other school costs.** This is a mixture of factors, including private finance initiative contracts, split sites and business rates. Cash would be given to local authorities to hand out, based on historic spend.

**3. Growth.** This factor aims to account for significant in-year growth in pupil numbers. This will be handed to local authorities for the time being. The DfE wants a way to target this funding from 2019.

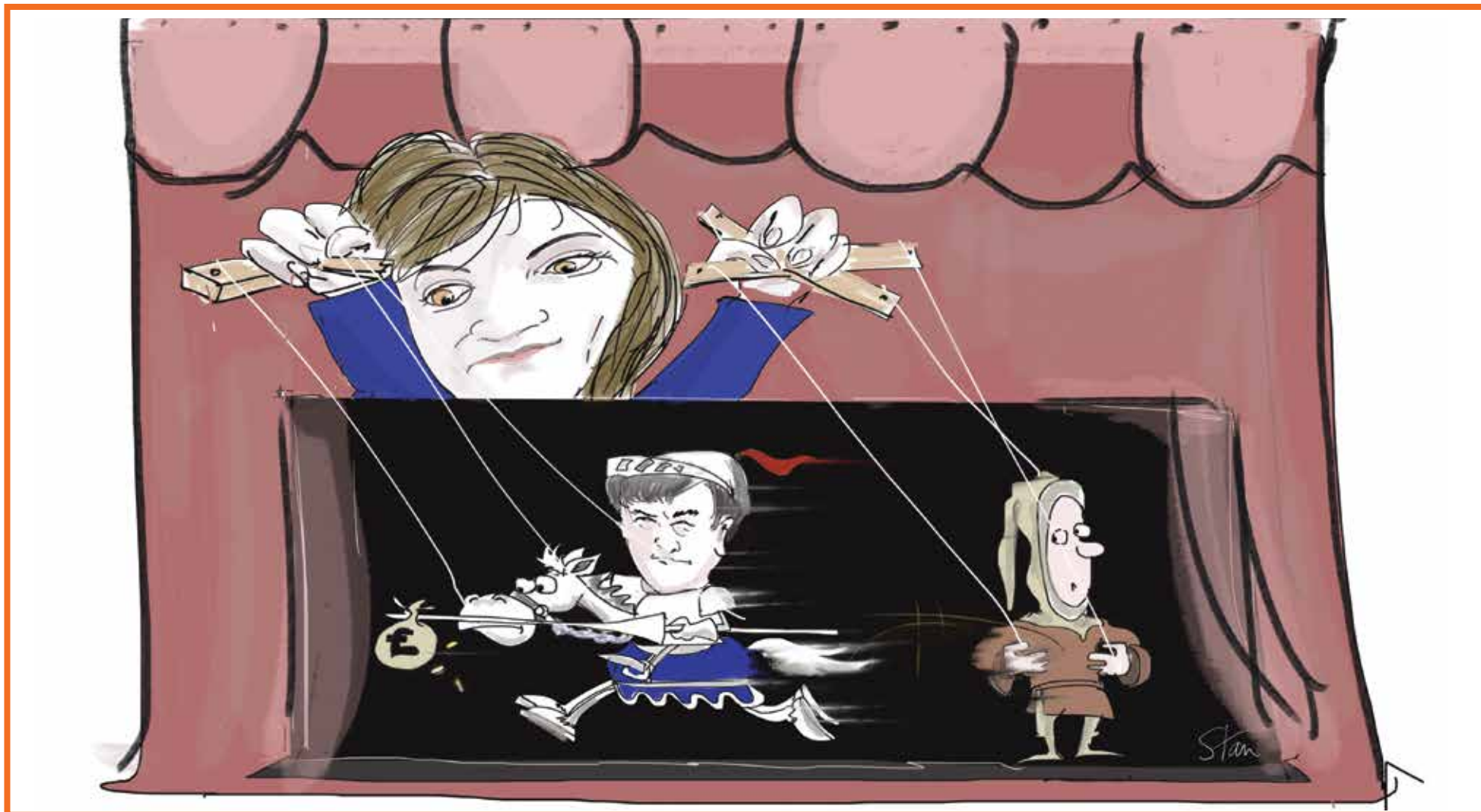


### GEOGRAPHIC COSTS

Each school's funding will be calculated by the formula, and then multiplied by an "area cost adjustment". No school will receive less than their individual funding, but schools in areas of higher costs – such as for staffing – will get extra cash (although the multiplier won't be applied to factors based on historic spend, such as rates and premises factors).



## NEWS



## EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

Conversations about money in education are difficult, tinged as they often are with a sense that real teachers are “here for the children” rather than their wallets.

But such conversations need to happen. People working in schools aren't saints. They are professionals swapping time for cash. It's perfectly possible to care deeply *and* want to get paid reasonably for doing a job well.

It was therefore a mild surprise when, last summer, I found myself sitting opposite a PR person employed by a large academy trust as they lengthily explained how the organisation would never ever comment on stories about CEO's pay. Apparently, they took a dim view of our writing a pay league table, as we did last year, and in this edition (see page 8). It was “below us” and “tabloid”, so they said, and instead we should be showing education in positive light: one that radiates community spirit and altruism. Which is all very well, until you remember that schools aren't there to make adults feel good about themselves for their charitable endeavours but exist to make sure children actually learn things. And that for as long as schools have finite amounts of cash, which will diminish in real terms between now and 2020, then every person who is paid more means or something (or someone) else is being cut.

This does not mean salary hikes for

CEOs are a bad thing. It is well-known that leader of Harris Foundation, Dan Moynihan, is paid around £400,000. Less well-known is that not a single one of Harris' schools has been rated less than good by Ofsted, no matter the difficulty they were in when taken over. If one believes you must pay to get great leaders, £400k may be the required price.

Where does the rate stop, though? Could CEO pay hit £1 million, while lunch supervisors remain on £7 per hour? At present there is no mechanism to stop it. Should there be?

At the other end of the scale, local authorities will also be having difficult conversations about money this week. In their case with staff who are facing a grim financial future given this week's national funding formula consultation.

The plan is that by 2020, almost every taxpayer penny apportioned for schools will be handed directly to their leaders to spend as they see fit. If local authorities want to continue providing services, particularly around school improvement, they must persuade schools they are the right place to buy from.

For many maintained schools, especially primaries, this future is scary. One reason why conversion to academy status has been slow for this group is because primary leaders, with small budgets, don't want to have to make

decisions about payroll software or insurance procurement, and many can't afford to purchase these items on their own rather than with other schools.

It is no surprise that Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, therefore suggested local authority staff should set up their own academy trusts. They could then continue using their local expertise, just so long as schools to sign up to become an academy, neatly completing the government's plan of a fully-academised system.

Sir David may be correct that he's not a ministerial puppet, but his knight in shining armour approach to school improvement does seem to be coming at the expense of local authorities.

There is a final difficult conversation to have about money this week. One that is squirmworthy for journalists, rather than school leaders, but still important.

There is no delicate way to put this, so here goes: teacher recruitment is costly and the education press plays a significant part in that. Advertisements are expensive, print ones especially, and when schools face mounting turnover, a decreased workforce, and limited budgets, the whole thing gets worse. Nicky Morgan therefore said she is “exploring” a national jobs vacancy website (see page 20) to cut out some of the cost. Honestly, I don't blame her. If

successful it would save tens of millions which could go back into classrooms. It is hard to argue with that.

This doesn't mean there won't be knock-on effects for the businesses that rely on the estimated £100 million spent on advertising. It also may not work. Past endeavours have been tried and failed and that could happen again here too. But I also know it's the right thing for her team to consider it and I am committed to us impartially reporting their attempt to try, without fear or favour to our own position as a newspaper which benefits from such advertising.

Grown-up conversations about money in schools are possible. We must simply remember that money isn't the root of all evil. It's more akin to the water that helps the flowers grow. Sadly, we are facing a drought. Together we need to figure out how best to use the few drops left.



## COMMENT

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**'Setting targets does nothing good for pupils – it can even make things worse'****Ben Ball, Birmingham**

Having taken statistics many years ago I learned not to trust them. On a large enough sample statistics are self-prophesising, on a practical level (that is, school, classroom) they are nonsensical. How many statistics issued give the standard deviation? Some of us can remember Kenneth Baker saying he wanted every school leaver to have an above average level of literacy.

**Headteacher scraps 'mad' year 11 revision classes to protect pupil mental health****Kate Emma Bradley, Abu Dhabi**

This is a very topical issue in my school. I am a huge advocate of John Tomsett and agree with pretty much everything he writes. However, the entire essence of this is a requirement that there is a culture shift from "results" to "excellent teaching". For the shift to take place – and have a positive impact on results – you need a governing body that stands behind you when the results take a dip in year 1 and possibly year 2, and you need a steady body of staff that continue to stay with the vision (even when they get anxious towards the end of the teaching time). Unfortunately, not all schools have this.

**Paul Hammond, Luton**

Accurate diagnosis of student weaknesses means that support is only required where understanding is weak. That is often just a fraction of the syllabus. A target group of students – such as pupil premium – working on these focus topics is much less work and far more impactful.

**Richard Harrison, Surrey**

We moved away from the free-for-all of intervention sessions, where departments would be chasing the same students and extended the school day for year 11. They now get more teaching time in all subjects over a longer period and this has eliminated the need for last-minute intervention. It has worked wonders and decreased stress levels all round.

**Scott Williams, Staffordshire**

An interesting read. I can see both sides, but ultimately I think the problem with interventions is that they become a free-for-all. Targeted intervention can be useful, but it does need to be targeted.

I do sympathise though, well-being is affected, I see so many kids suffering. It needs to be a whole school approach. If most subjects do it and yours doesn't, it may come back to bite you.

**RSCs and councils ask schools for 'impossible' primary assessment predictions****Paul Hopkins, Hull**

It seems that even the regional schools commissioners and local authorities are not aware of this ever changing and ever "updated" new primary assessment system so rashly introduced. (If I were a real cynic I would say it is for the purpose of commercial providers offering 'off the shelf' assessment schema.)

The only honest thing for the DfE to do this year would be to treat the entire cohort as a pilot and not publish any results. We would have to cope with a way of getting suitable information to the secondary schools but this could also be a moment to start to treat assessment as it should be treated . . . for the improvement of the individual child . . . and keep it separate from monitoring and tracking, and very separate from its current use as a schools comparator.

**Who will pick up the tab for PFI?****Victoria Jaquiss, Leeds**

Well it is an ill wind, is it not, that blows to halt academisation. And it must be a factor that "struggling" schools with their inevitably less money for teaching assistants (etc) would find life difficult. It must be unbearable.

As a peripatetic teacher I frequently visit schools built with PFI and, while they are expensive to repay, they were built on the cheap. Science colleagues have talked to me with dismay about inappropriate storage for equipment. Music rooms are OK as long as you buy nice gleaming electronic keyboards from the nice gleaming keyboard selling factories. Heavens help those of us who recognise the benefits of a steel pan, or a few djembes!

And I could write a book on the "flexible space". This is the hall, dining hall, sports hall, dance hall, drama hall, music room, which can only be used for the one when it is not used for the other. I love sliding on disintegrating cauliflower as I set up some steel pans.

PFI was a scam from the start, bleeding schools dry.

**'Setting targets does nothing good for pupils – it can even make things worse'****Alex Ford @apf102**

Real agency for pupils means that targets become demotivating . . . especially when they are too high. Sadly this conversation plays out over and over with little sign of change.

**Huge sixth form classes will affect A-level results, heads warn****David James @Dai\_James1942**

Rule that only GCSEs taken in year 11 count in league tables does more damage by compressing courses into 14 months.

**Headteacher scraps 'mad' year 11 revision classes to protect pupil mental health**

## REPLY OF THE WEEK

**Pam Smith, Manchester**

**A great idea and refreshing to read about sensible expectations of teachers and children. However, to refer to "pupil premium students" is telling in that the children are still only valued for what they bring in terms of results. When we can finally look at year 11 children as "scientist" or "musician" or "comedian" or whatever instead of as an "A" or "borderline C", etc, then we will start to really turn mental health around in schools.**

REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES  
A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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## PROFILE

## SHARON HODGSON

“MAGGIE THATCHER’S  
WIN HAD A  
DIRECT IMPACT  
ON ME”

ANN MCGAURAN  
@ANNMCGAURAN

Sharon Hodgson, shadow children’s minister

Sitting in her parliamentary office more than ten years after first becoming an MP, what would Sharon Hodgson tell her 15-year-old self?

She becomes emotional as she considers those earlier times. Her mother Joan and her father separated when she was 7, divorcing three years later.

“When my father ran off with another woman, my mother had me, a four-year-old and a two-year-old (her brothers Paul and Peter). We were left impoverished really. No time is a good time to be left with three young kids, but in the Seventies I was the only kid in my class with divorced parents. I remember the shame of it all.”

Her father “disappeared off the face of the Earth” and the family home was repossessed. Hodgson, her mother and brothers, moved into badly heated social housing. She received free school meals – and school trips were something for other kids.

Through sobs, she finally answers the question: “I’d say you’re going to have such a great life.”

She has been on quite a journey since leaving school in the north east at 16 with eight O-levels.

Her role as shadow children’s minister, which followed Jeremy Corbyn’s election as Labour leader, covers special educational needs (SEN), safeguarding, child protection, fostering and adoption.

Looking back, she remembers being “ambitious” at 21. Working as a payroll and accounts clerk at Tyneside Safety Glass, she joined the company a few months after leaving school. “I remember thinking I was in a good job, I had a car, I was dressed smartly for work every day.”

But she knew there was something missing. “My friends had all gone off to university. My best friend (from school) Rachel had gone to Oxford. I lost touch with them all – really because I wanted to.” Her friends were a reminder of what she knew she had been so very capable of achieving.

Hodgson says she “got” how politics could impact on people early on.

Born in 1966, she was 15 when Margaret Thatcher became prime minister in 1981. She grew up in a matriarchal household. “My dad’s gone, there’s my mam, my nana and me and my two little brothers . . . My nana was a huge part of my life.

“The women were constantly saying ‘she might be a woman but it will be terrible if the Tories and Margaret Thatcher got in’. Then I saw the results of it. My cousin was a secretary married to a bricklayer and they had a baby. I

would babysit every Saturday night. But then they said ‘if the Tories get in we’re emigrating’.

“So Maggie Thatcher won, they emigrated, and I lost my little job. It had a direct impact on me. I saw everybody losing their jobs and not able to get work.”

Hodgson loved school. “I was top of the class at junior school. I was in the top set at senior school. I liked thinking I was clever and capable.”

She giggles when she remembers the marching jazz band she and her extended family – including her grandmother who collected the money – were all involved in when she was growing up. She was the mascot, aged 5. She says they went on mad bus trips that would definitely not get the go-ahead from health and safety these days.

She stayed on at school to do A-levels. “They (her mother and grandmother) thought I would always leave school and get a job.”

There was pressure – “not so much from my mam but from my nana, who would say ‘what are you still doing at school? – you should be working. You’ve got all these qualifications.’” She left after the first term of her A-level course.

Her economics teacher put up a fight. “He said ‘Sharon what in the world are you doing?’ I lied. I said I’d enrolled at Gateshead College. He must have been able to tell I wasn’t telling the truth.”

She might have stayed if circumstances had been different: “If Nana had been fully available to look after us my mam could have worked – but my mam’s sister Ella, who had kidney failure, had two little boys and poor nana was between the both of us having to help with

two families that were having difficult times for different reasons.”

Her mother, now 71, got a job as a full-time carer once her children were older and worked her way up to become a care manager.

When Hodgson was 22, she met her husband Alan at church, marrying two years later. Their two children – Joseph, 22 and Emily, 20 – are both at university.

She says she started to get “really actively political” when she was getting ready to go back to work after her second child.

“I was at home with the kids and it was a very political time . . . [former Labour leader] John Smith died and Tony Blair became leader, Nelson Mandela was released in South Africa and became president. I became fascinated by all of that.

“Alan called it my postnatal depression period. But I wasn’t depressed at all. My happiest time ever was when I was at home with the two kids. I look back and think it was idyllic.”

She discovered the parliamentary news channel and joined Labour. She was “never just a paper member . . . I loved knocking on doors and talking to people”. She was a volunteer for the party during the 1997 general election.

Having applied for, and got, a job as a Labour organiser in 1999, she became a Labour link co-ordinator for the



## IT'S A PERSONAL THING

### What are your hobbies outside politics?

I don't really have any as politics was my hobby and now it's also my job! I love going to the cinema and West End musicals when I get the chance, which is only during the parliamentary recess even though I work in London.

### How do you spend time with your family?

Both my kids are at university and my favourite pastime when they are home is cooking their favourite meals. I love nothing more than when we're all sat around the table catching up.

### What was your favourite subject at school – and who was your best teacher?

Maths and Mr Ridley.

### Your house is on fire! What two things do you rescue?

My kids if they are home. If not, then my husband and dog. If it has to be non-living things it would be my handbag as it has most of what I need in it.

### What was your favourite childhood toy?

I can't remember. The only thing I've kept long term is my mace from my jazz band days.

### If you could go back to any period of history, when would it be?

If it has to be a historical period then I really can't pick one as I wouldn't want to live in this country pre-welfare state or pre-women's equality and suffrage. As I can't imagine life would have been easy for a working-class girl from Gateshead!



With husband Alan, and children Emily and Joseph



In Venice with Emily and Joseph



With Alan on their wedding day



On the beach, with her mother and grandmother



The five-year-old jazz band mascot

public service union Unison in 2002. The sitting MP back in Gateshead East and Washington West announced she was standing down ahead of the 2005 general election. Hodgson was selected and won. In 2010 she also won the newly created Washington and Sunderland West seat. She has been a whip and held positions on several key parliamentary committees since, including chairing the all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on art, craft and design in education.

Seeing her in action there, she's a passionate advocate for the importance of these subjects to students and the economy.

The results of the latest National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD) survey report 2015-16 show that up to 44 per cent of teachers over all key stages say that time allocated to art and design has decreased in the past five years.

Hodgson said ahead of the APPG meeting how vital it is that art and design teachers get the recognition and support they deserve from policymakers and the government "so that they can educate future generations with the creativity, talent and skills to drive our economy in the 21st century".

Hodgson seems happy in her work – but in a parallel life I believe she would have made a wonderful headteacher. She's warm, droll, and compassionate. But not a walkover. The very best sort of headteacher you could get.

## Curriculum vitae

### Education

Alexander Road Infants' School, Gateshead

Whitehall Road Junior School

Greenwell Junior High School

Heathfield Senior High School

Newcastle College

### Career

1982–88 Payroll/account clerk, Tyneside Safety Glass

1988–92 Northern Rock Building Society, Gosforth

1992–94 Payroll administrator, Burgess Microswitch

1998–99 Administrator, Total Learning Challenge

1999–2002 Labour party organiser

2002–05 Labour link co-ordinator, Unison

2005–10 MP for Gateshead East and Washington West

2010–present MP for Washington and Sunderland West



## ROS MCMULLEN

Founding member of the Headteachers' Roundtable and former executive principal

# Thoughts from the frontline

**Former executive principal Ros McMullen sets out her vision of what a school-led system now needs. In the first of a two-part series, she says it is time to think about how to join the social policy agenda with the education reform agenda, and to unleash the best school leaders to operate as community leaders**

Systems have a tendency to heal themselves, which is one reason why managing fundamental change in any organisation, large or small, is incredibly difficult. People do not like change as it creates uncertainty: they look for reassurance and attempt to make sense of change through the prism of what they already know. Leaders who are serious about creating real change therefore need to make certain that any changes work together to prevent the system from simply returning to the old, and, perhaps even more importantly, need to create a commitment for the change from staff at all levels who will be have to implement and sell the changes. This takes time.

While this seems self-evident it does not fit the pattern of the term of office for an education secretary, and I suspect this is why we often hear that "creating chaos" was Michael Gove's aim and that "coherence comes at the end". The problem is that coherence still isn't coming. I'm not even spotting it on the horizon. What I do see are excellent people, some of them good friends and long-term colleagues, desperately trying to bring coherence in the middle of a series of serious policy collisions. Meanwhile, we are receiving evidence from all over the place that the system is "healing itself" in terms of what it has always outputted; whether that is to do with the performance of the disadvantaged, entrance to Oxbridge or the prevalence of ex-public school graduates obtaining the plum jobs.

So where are we now? We have been hearing for a long time that there has rarely been so much agreement politically about what we want our education system to do. It seems this has come about as the "left" largely accepted that providing a one-size education system that fits all will not provide the opportunity for equality, and the "right" developed a desire to "close the gap" between the achievements of the advantaged and the disadvantaged. What a great opportunity this new found common purpose presented us with! So what has gone so wrong?

Unfortunately, the new found common purpose has become so stuck in ideology and personal whim that, instead of developing coherent solutions, blame and entrenchment have become endemic. The left have retreated into old arguments about who should run schools and democratic accountability and, for the past eight years, have missed almost every opportunity to add sensible alternatives to the debate. Meanwhile, the right have been unable to wake up to the fact that the outputs from the system are not solely the fault of practitioners ("the blob").

Policymakers want to talk to people who agree with them; it is nice and comforting. But over 15 years of headship I learned that talking to those who didn't agree with me enhanced my ability to make more effective decisions.

If, as all politicians are now saying, our priority is to "close the gap" perhaps it is time for us to take a serious look at what causes the gap. Far from the popular myth that grammar schools provide marvellous social mobility, we know the middle classes filled them and expansion in the middle class post-war was driven by the economy, not by grammar schools. We have learned that by putting all state-educated children in one type of comprehensive school, the middle classes fill the top sets and still do better. And we have also learned that families who can afford to pay for privilege get a return on their investment. There are exceptions, but they are indeed exceptions.

It is, therefore, not sensible to say that what we call schools or how we structure the system makes the most impact: it is the aspiration and culture of a family that is the single biggest determinant of how children succeed in schools. This is why many poor immigrant and refugee children succeed.

The cycle of under-aspiration and poverty in the indigenous white underclass needs to be tackled and if the history of education reform and policy teaches us nothing else, we really ought to have learned this by now. A government wishing to achieve a step change in education needs to fully understand that the school system is not standalone and that meddling with its structures, accountability frameworks and control will not close the gap unless aligned with other serious social policy initiatives. A large part of our current problem is that not only has this not been understood, but many other social policy initiatives are working in direct opposition to the stated aims of education policy reform.

Parking that on one side, we can also see that much of the education policy post-Blair is also making things worse.

Breaking up the traditional local authority (LA) model for delivering education has proved successful in some ways, particularly for schools where failure had not been addressed for many years. There is no doubt that some of the early academies have been incredibly successful with many growing into successful chains.

## Instead of developing solutions, blame and entrenchment have become endemic

How that early academy policy evolved, however, has caused significant problems. The stated desire to make every school an academy left local authorities in an even worse state and not every school is an academy. Moreover, there is now a whole raft of schools that successful academy chains do not wish to take on because "this school will not fit our model". I have sympathy with the chains that say that, as accountability pressure is a driver to protect your own business, stick with what can be done easily and successfully. With diminished LA structures, however, the regional school commissioners and headteacher boards (who largely consist of those who have led "outstanding" schools) are simply not be able to deal with supporting the problematic leftover schools.

The desire to academise quickly led to some chains growing nationally without any vision or structure: many were like the worst kinds of LA without even the advantage of being local. Rebrokering these academies, although necessary now, is a distracting and expensive problem that should never have happened.

Along with most school leaders I welcomed the autonomy that leading an early academy provided and I was privileged to work as a

national leader of education for the National College. The subsequent loss of the college and the development of teaching school alliances have led to a lack of national co-ordination. Teaching schools are too thinly spread and have too much to do. The best struggle to serve in an atmosphere of concern over loss of status and finance; the worst behave like an exclusive members' club.

The autonomy to do what is right for your own community, to be entrepreneurial and innovative, has been so eroded over the years that I now believe that I had more autonomy as an LA headteacher in 2000 than I did as an academy principal in 2013. This is deeply disappointing for those of us who signed up to the autonomy agenda and to a school-led system. The over-regulatory, scrutiny pressures that have followed the expansion of academies mitigate completely the entrepreneurial and innovative culture. Now the definition of successful is about teaching what central government wants you to teach in the way they want you to teach it.

There are communities where we can identify, as a result of poverty, endemic under-aspiration. We need to attack the cause using the expertise of school leaders who have proven track records of success within such communities. This means giving such school leaders:

- the freedom to address their exact context
- the ability and resource to commission and direct the local support services
- the ability and resource to develop local support services to tackle the problems impacting most seriously on aspiration
- a national network of support which is enabling rather than controlling
- a partnership with academics in order that all policy development is researched and analysed.

This will not be cheap but the alternatives are expensive: now and in the long term. And, of course, accountability poses problems. I'll consider some of the accountability and control issues next week.

**Ros McMullen is an experienced LA head, academy principal, executive principal and chief executive. She is now the managing director of RMCeducation ([www.RMCeducation.com](http://www.RMCeducation.com)) and, as a founding member of @HeadsRoundtable, continues to work on the core group**

### Five areas need to be given priority if schools-led system is to become a reality

English schools have a large measure of autonomy compared with many other countries. But this is qualified by some of the most important determinants of what happens in schools sitting with the Department for Education. The control of the curriculum, qualifications, accountability and inspection means that while in some ways schools have considerably more freedom than they did 30 years ago, it may not feel that way.

I was acutely conscious of this as a minister. One seemingly modest decision made on the basis of a 10-page submission on school accountability could send secondary schools scuttling to alter their curriculum and communicating with parents and pupils on subject choices. And, until recently, oversight of thousands of academy schools was concentrated in a building in Westminster, and was most definitely not school-led.

We still rely heavily on a voluntary and sometimes rather amateur governance model, where there must be a real question over whether quality is high enough to entrust improvement and challenge to the school, without outside oversight and challenge.

Ofsted is an independent and necessary external inspection service, but it is one that may risk driving schools to large volumes of compliance-type activities, which run the



## DAVID LAWS

Former schools minister

### Reality rather than rhetoric

risk of quashing innovation and originality. And we have Ofsted moving cautiously into what can look like school improvement work – which brings significant risks and is not always consistent with a school-led model of improvement.

### Self-improving school systems do not make themselves

Our school funding model and our inspection system heavily incentivise schools to focus on their own quality and interests, rather than working with other schools to drive system-wide improvements in leadership.

Finally, in breaking down the power of local authorities, promoting the spread of academy schools, and reducing the

influence of organisations such as the National College, we are in danger of boosting autonomy while creating not a self-improving school system but a collection of 24,000 largely independent and self-focused schools, without the necessary glue to hold them together and to drive progress.

So, what do we need to do if the schools-led system is to become a reality, rather than departmental rhetoric?

First, the country would benefit from reviewing the role of central government and local government in education. It is right that ministers have influence over a core national curriculum and an accountability framework, but they should avoid excessive interference over what periods of history or particular works of literature are studied, and avoid a pace of change that risks errors and is inefficient for students and schools.

Second, we need to continue reflecting on Ofsted and how to deliver good external inspection. I would certainly not remove the inspectorate function, and I would be reticent even to remove the outstanding

grade – a move championed by some. We do want to recognise those schools that do better than “good”, and I think there are limits on our ability to rely on data alone. But Ofsted must not lead to a narrow focus by schools on compliance issues rather than inspiring and challenging teaching.

Next, government must understand that self-improving school systems do not just make themselves. Remove central and local government roles and you create space rather than guaranteeing change.

Fourth, what national or regional institutions are needed to make a school-led system work, and how can we ensure they will be high quality and not merely some lowest common denominator? Who will train and even help deploy the next generation of school leadership? Can this be left to 24,000 autonomous schools?

Finally, what protections must be put in place to ensure a school-led system does not become an excuse for a cosy and unchallenging consensus, which in some areas amounts to a conspiracy against the interests of parents and pupils?

**David Laws was schools minister from 2012-2015. He is now executive chairman of the CentreForum Education think-tank.**

*This is an extract from the book 'Self-Improving Schools: The Journey to Excellence', published by John Catt Educational*

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## REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS  
OF THE WEEK

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



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

One of the things I love about blogs is the opportunity to read posts that stimulate (ideally) polite, respectful and committed debate.

For my selection this week I have chosen four, by three different authors, on educational technology. It is a complex and contested area; reading these posts is helping me to develop better-informed views on the role ed tech can play in education, with potential challenges and suggested strategies for addressing them.

**Beyond banning – what are schools to do about social media?**  
@josepicardoSHS

Picardo suggests that this particular genie is fully out of the bottle; social media has transformed the way we communicate and interact, and not addressing this in schools (and at home) is naive and disingenuous. "Students entering secondary education in the past five years would not have known life before social media." Furthermore, he asks us to consider how, in schools and as parents, we are modelling responsible and appropriate use of social media. He concludes: "Let's not forget that, despite the many dystopian predictions, people have always managed to integrate technology in their lives with overwhelmingly positive results. Sure, there will be challenges as well as opportunities. This is why children need our guidance."

**Why the behaviour argument against mobile devices in schools is flawed**  
@josepicardoSHS

In this post, Picardo says why the blanket banning of mobiles in school may be

short-sighted. He begins by referring to recent research from the London School of Economics (LSE) that suggests pupils in schools that ban mobiles achieve better results than those in schools where mobiles are not banned. He presents the alternative view that, as long as mobile use in schools is planned and carefully considered, properly structured and controlled, it can be a significant asset rather than a disruption. Mobile phones are now part of our lives and, where school pupils are concerned, "forcing students to enter an alternative reality every morning where the mobile internet doesn't exist is probably not the answer". He advocates "a strict behaviour policy... high expectations with clear rules and sanctions" rather than a blanket ban.

**Why we don't allow mobiles in school**  
@chrishildrew

New head Hildrew explains why phones are banned in his school. He begins by explaining how much he values his own phone, while recognising that it can be "a huge productivity vacuum" and, if he wants to get anything done, he needs to ensure it is turned off and, preferably, in a different room. Given his conviction that, where mobiles are concerned, "the distraction factor far outweighs the benefit", his school has decided on a ban. He also cites the LSE research as additional evidence to support his rationale, and references other studies to strengthen the claim that learning requires full attention and the absence of distractions – and that the use of mobile devices can be addictive and bring with it related safeguarding issues.

**Only disconnect**  
@stephanootis

Finally, this blogger reflects on an anticipated week without technology – "from Monday 00:01 to Friday 15:30 no technology for teaching, planning, conversing with staff, research; in short, anything to do with school, education, teachers or teaching must be offline" – and what she envisages she might learn from this experiment. Considering how her professional life will change during this tech-free week leads her to examine why and how she normally uses technology in and out of the classroom and what the advantages might be of "connecting" without it. As she says: "I am resolved to be more present." She relishes the thought of spending more time with real books, of focusing on teaching and learning rather than on an email tsunami, of communicating with colleagues face to face rather than electronically. She concludes: "Over and out :-)\*in eight minutes that will be a real smile\*"

## BOOK REVIEW

**Ticked Off**

**Author** Harry Fletcher-Wood

**Publisher** Crown House Publishing

**ISBN-10** 1785830104

**ISBN-13** 978-1785830105

**Reviewer** Alex Weatherall,  
teacher of physics and  
computer science



About halfway through Fletcher-Wood's new book *Ticked Off: Checklists for Teachers, Students, School Leaders*, I stopped reading. I flicked through to the end and noticed that the conclusion was half a page. This concerned me. The author had just spent just eight pages in his introduction explaining what the book's premise was, the rationale behind using checklists in school and how to use the checklists that were to follow. The rest of the book contained the lists.

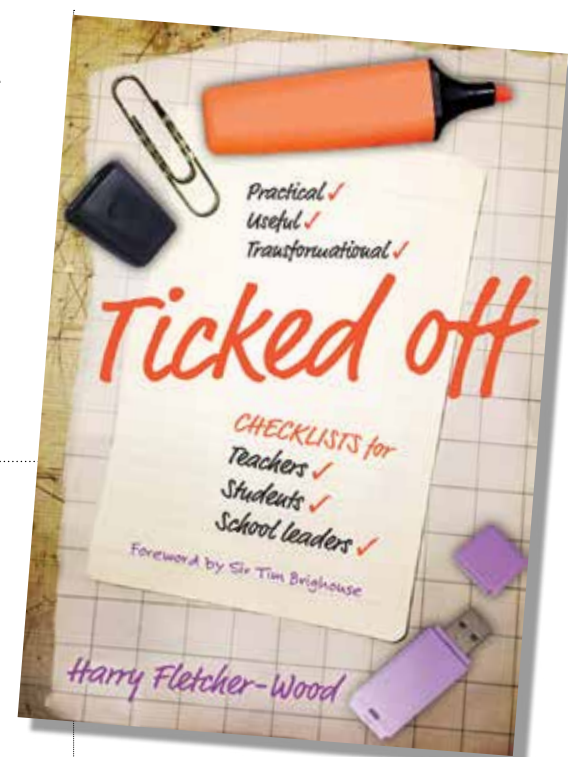
He did mention Atul Gawande's *The Checklist Manifesto*, which I'd read a few years ago, and I was looking forward to a good read about how checklists had been used, tried, and tested in schools. When I thought that this wasn't on offer, I re-read Gawande's book to remind myself about the reasoning behind using checklists. Once that need was satiated, I continued with Fletcher-Wood's book and felt happier for it. For this book contains a goldmine of ideas that will help me day to day.

I am not the most organised of people. I forget things, especially when under stress. We're not talking of life or death situations that can occur in the operating room, or the skyscraper site, or the pilot's cockpit. Just the usual things – like remembering after a full day's teaching to set the detention for the student who misbehaved in lesson one, or effectively reflecting on difficult lessons.

These things matter in school, and when you are running on empty at the end of a term, or preparing for an Ofsted visit, or simply planning effective lessons after the witching hour (which for me is about 8pm), having a good checklist to hand can really help.

So to the checklists themselves. Fletcher-Wood has collected just under 50, some designed by him and others collated from schools he has visited. These are grouped into checklists for students, teaching, teachers, school leaders and life. A few examples are: How to plan an essay; Am I ready to start the lesson; How should I read research; How can I keep staff happy.

Each is accompanied by examples, some more basic than others, and a pause



point. This is where you review/do/read/check your list and act upon it. It is the important anchor that makes sure the checklist is actually doing its job.

The author summarises the findings reported in *The Checklist Manifesto* that explain why this is so: in the operating room a particular person (the nurse) is given responsibility for the list. In the classroom, you have to make space for following the list yourself. The pause point is that space.

The book has a section at the end where Fletcher-Wood discusses the process and reasoning behind designing a checklist and how you can write your own effectively. For those that see checklists as a way of de-professionalising teachers, reducing all they do down to a set of things to tick off, this is where this book potentially falls short. I advise teachers who are put off the idea of referring to a checklist to read *The Checklist Manifesto* as an accompaniment to this book. It provides the backbone to the idea and some more weight to the lists that Fletcher-Wood has collated.

I have just one more gripe but this is not down to the contents of the book itself, though it does impact on how the reader perceives them. The publisher has made the decision, perhaps with the author, to use a font that looks hand-written. The problem is, while this works for the lists themselves, this font is also used for every heading, except the title, which uses a different handwritten font! Perhaps I'm fussy, but I found the typesetting distracting.

That said, this is a book that I will refer to again and again. It is full of great ideas and stimuli to help make me a more productive and organised teacher. It is well worth your time and money.



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## EMMA KNIGHTS

Chief executive, National Governors' Association

### OUR MONTHLY GOVERNORS' CORNER

# The quiet revolution

**The multi academy trust is now the most common form of school governance. Should governors embrace the change or make more fuss as they lose their decision-making powers?**

A school governance revolution, arguably as fundamental as devolving local management to schools after the Education Reform Act 1988, is going on largely unnoticed in England. The changes didn't need a special clause in an act of parliament, they began slowly after the Academies Act 2010, not really gathering any sort of momentum for a couple of years. However, now we are likely to see it becoming the most common form of school

governance. It is the rise of the multi-academy trust (MAT).

At the end of 2015, one-quarter of state funded schools in England were academies, and of those, 59 per cent were in MATs. This is a growing percentage: 81 per cent of academies that opened in the 2014/15 academic year did so as part of a MAT, up from 73 per cent in 2013/14. Eleven MATs have more than 30 schools, covering 8 per cent of academies – and will be the ones that you probably have heard of.

A further 11 per cent of academies are in middle-sized MATs of 10-29 schools, leaving 39 per cent in small MATs of fewer than 10 schools, a number that is likely to rise, especially once the government's white

paper is published. However, the advantages for pupils of being part of a group of schools must be spelt out to win the hearts and minds of more governing bodies.

## This revolution does not involve barricades

This revolution does not involve barricades, rather the least revolutionary vehicle possible – the scheme of delegation (SoD). And this is no doubt why this very fundamental change has been largely under the radar; until recently you had to be a governance geek to understand the significance of the SoD.

When a standalone school joins a MAT, its governing board had to hand its power to the trust's board of trustees. A local governing body (LGB) at academy level may continue to exist, but it is now a committee of the MAT board with a role decided by that overarching board and documented in the SoD. At any point the MAT board can amend its SoD – and add to or take away responsibilities from that local governing body. Boards of trustees in MATs do need to get better at spelling out clearly the role of any academy level committee in the SoD, and the National Governors' Association (NGA) can help them do it.

At NGA, we are not fond of LGB members being called governors, as this suggests they

have the same sort of role as governors in a maintained school, when few have. We have read a large number of SoDs and, by and large, LGBs (or the more aptly named academy advisory councils) tend to have monitoring duties and a community engagement role. Few are left with decision-making powers, some of which are delegated by the MAT board to the executive, the employed leaders of the trust. For example, performance management of heads is most appropriately carried out by their line manager, who may come with a variety of titles – executive head, chief executive or possibly education director.

Given that this seems to be the beginning of the end of decision-making by "governors" at school level, should the NGA be shouting about this? We are half way through nine regional discussions to gauge our members' views, and so far most say that if joining a group of schools improves the offer to and outcomes for pupils, then we shouldn't be precious about trying to maintain what has become our traditional role.

Another element of governance is "how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered". Academy level committees can have an extremely important role in ensuring that the voices of parents, pupils, staff and the wider community are heard by the executive leadership and the board of trustees, and that reports are made to them. The challenge to those that govern at academy level is to embrace this role, rather than mourn what has gone before.



# A week in Westminster

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

## THURSDAY:

Sue Baldwin, the Education Funding Agency's academies and maintained group director, this morning told a Westminster Education Forum seminar that she hadn't seen a final draft of the national funding formula proposals.

Given that the proposals were laid before parliament the following Monday, and previewed in the press on Sunday, we are left wondering whether Ms Baldwin was kept at arms' length for a reason – or if the plans were being tinkered with until the last minute.

Either way, speculation that the delay related to the London mayoral elections, due in May, was roundly dismissed by the Department for Education (DfE) as "irresponsible".

We couldn't help but notice that when the national funding proposals did finally emerge (see pages 8-9), they will happen in two parts. The more controversial section – which will reveal the winners and losers – will come after the election. Could it be because London schools

will be in the loser list? We, irresponsibly, believe so.

## FRIDAY:

At the ASCL conference. See page 20-21.

## SATURDAY:

Nicky Morgan announced today that she is looking into a government teacher recruitment website. Ripples of concern for *Schools Week* ran over Twitter with people asking if we could survive. Like Gloria Gaynor, we are sure we can. But it will be a challenge. The recruitment advertising market for teachers is worth around £100 million. Good for schools, a potentially scary time for anyone relying on the income.

## MONDAY:

Soon-to-depart DfE head honcho Chris Wormald faced the public accounts committee today.

Asked when he will be taking up his new appointment as permanent secretary at the Department of Health

(DH), Wormald said he didn't "quite" know because it "partly" depended on recruiting a replacement at the DfE. "The current permanent secretary at the DH leaves, I think, at the end of April, so it certainly won't be before then."

Committee chair Meg Hillier asked if "there will be a permanent secretary at the DfE in time for you to leave and to make sure there is no gap".

Wormald: "Uh, I can't assure you because I am not running the recruitment. I certainly hope."

Hillier: "We do too."

## TUESDAY:

International Women's Day! And equalities minister Nicky Morgan (because being education secretary isn't enough) was rumbled after newspapers revealed the DfE's female staff were, on average, paid £2 per hour less than their male staff...

## WEDNESDAY:

...but fear not, in another parliamentary committee Chris Wormald (still head DfE

honcho until the end of April, remember) said this was because there is an over-representation of men at board level in the department. PHEW. THAT MAKES IT ALL BETTER.

Wormald practically sweated cheese when he was asked to reflect on his five years at the DfE: "I've loved my time in the department and I'm proud of all my staff," before explaining how, every day, what has really mattered to him was how every decision civil servants make has to be boiled down to how it impacts the interaction between pupils and teachers. Tell us Chris, exactly how does the shift in accounting procedures – as discussed by the committee he appeared at for two hours – change Friday afternoon interactions with year 7?

Vomit-inducing clichés aside, though, there are several things Wormald has done extremely well including moving towards consolidated accounts and stopping the places shortage becoming a disaster. Kudos for those.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEKLIVE FOR TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



# AND GROWING PAINS



Carol Jones,  
ASCL's leadership  
and teacher  
professionalism  
specialist

Chief inspector  
Sir Michael  
Wilshaw



## 'TRUSTS WILL HAVE TO GROW AGAIN'

About 1,000 new multi-academy trusts will be created by 2020 with smaller chains having to grow to accommodate more schools, Sir David Carter (pictured below) warned as he explained his plans to carry out a "health check" of trusts before they could expand.

The national schools commissioner, who told ASCL delegates that the growth of the academies programme would need to be managed, outlined proposals for a four-tier hierarchy of trusts ranging from those with up to five schools to "system leaders" with 30 or more.

Speaking at a seminar, he said the plan was partly based on lessons learned from the past.

"We do have examples of trusts that have grown too fast," he said. "My challenge is we are probably going to need some of our trusts to grow again. The three to six-academy trusts will struggle to be sustainable. We need them to grow, to 10, to 15, to 20."

Sir David also described a shift in the nature of free school applications, hinting at an increase in bids to open alternative provision (AP) free schools in wave 11, which closed last week.

The proportion of AP bids has remained fairly

stable, making up 14.3 per cent of applications in wave 7, 12.6 per cent in wave 8 and 13.1 per cent in wave 9. Wave 10 appears to be an anomaly, with just one bid out of 42 for AP.

Sir David said he felt the increase was due in part to people "recognising that those provisions are not tight enough in their communities and they want to take a close look at that".

He also spoke of his desire to see council education staff set up and run multi-academy trusts, but said conversations would have to happen "quite soon", with primary schools that looked to local authorities for support facing a change in that relationship as a result of forced academisation.

"If the emphasis is on changing that relationship in the future, then where does that support come from? They've got a great relationship with those people. I certainly think that the people who are currently employed by local authorities might choose to become sponsors and set up trusts themselves. I would welcome that conversation."

The fact that councils can no longer open new schools is the subject of a long-running campaign by the Local Government Association, which has warned that there aren't enough "viable" academy chains to take on extra schools.



# School Bulletin



## Two decades of raising the roof



Children in the Young Voices choir come together to celebrate its 20th anniversary

**Y**oung Voices, which stages the largest children's choir concerts in the world, has completed a marathon of 20 arena dates up and down the country with more than 130,000 school children to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

The group, which gives primary pupils the chance to perform all styles of music including folk, pop, rock and classical, travelled to venues including London's O2 and the Manchester Arena.

Blue Peter representatives visited the Sheffield and Birmingham dates, and a "fantastic" gala for Nordoff Robbins, a

music therapy charity, was staged.

Throughout the year, teachers and pupils practise dance routines and learn songs in their music lessons before they come together for a show at their local arena.

In the past, children have performed with artists such as Alexandra Burke, Joss Stone, and Gary Barlow, as well as raising more than £1 million for children's charities.

Ben Lewis, managing director of Young Voices, says: "Twenty arena dates to mark our anniversary is such an achievement and shows that we are making a real difference to the children and schools."



England football star Nathaniel Clyne joins pupils at St Mary's West Derby Church of England School, Liverpool, for a lunchtime kick-about to launch National Playground Football Day

## Who needs goalposts?

**S**choolchildren used their jumpers for goalposts to mark an inaugural National Playground Football Day last week.

Organised by League Cup sponsor Capital One, the day celebrates the "long-standing British tradition" of playground football.

Internationals Nathaniel Clyne and Fran Kirby showed their support with a lunchtime kickabout with pupils from St Mary's West Derby Church of England School, Liverpool, and St Andrew's Primary School, Surrey.

"My earliest memories of kicking a ball are

with my mates at school... and I'm still close with them today," Clyne said.

Fran added: "Getting back out on the playground reminded me how much fun and significant those moments are growing up – those epic last goals right before the bell goes, the passion to play whatever the weather."

Evoking memories of "next goal wins" and "Wembley doubles", the day aims to encourage pupils to get outside for a lunchtime game as well as promote the benefits of regular exercise.

## Mohammed scoops the top prize FEATURED

**F**ollowing a day watching an international fixture and interviewing the stars of the England rugby side, 13-year-old Mohammed Haris won the CBRE Young Rugby Reporter of the Year award.

The aspiring journalist from Abraham Moss Community School in Manchester competed against three other finalists at the RBS Six Nations England V Ireland match at Twickenham.

The year 7 pupil, alongside Ibrahim Shafiq, Sylwek Milewski and Joe Hunter, attended the game at the end of February.

They began the day with a behind-the-scenes tour of the stadium and interviewed other young CBRE All Schools students, before watching the match from a corporate box.

After the game the finalists interviewed England rugby squad members Dylan Hartley, Jamie George, Jonathan Joseph and injured player Dave Attwood.

They asked how the match went, what their tactics were, how they worked together as a team and what their hopes were for the rest of the RBS Six Nations.

A spokesperson for CBRE, a property firm, said Mohammed won because of his "enthusiasm and dynamic approach".

He will now spend a day with a top journalist as well take back a £250 cash prize for his school's English department.

"It's been really exciting," he says.



Winning reporter Mohammed Haris interviews England international Dave Attwood

"There are no words that can describe it. I got to meet players, speak to them, get their autographs, and I even got a free goodie bag and a programme. It's been a dream come true."

The four finalists were selected from more than 400 schools, two from each age category between years 7 and 8, and 9 and 10, after submitting a short piece on film or print explaining how rugby has had an impact on their school and them personally.

Twelve-year-old Ibrahim Shafiq, also from Abraham Moss Community School, who had never watched a live rugby match, says his favourite moment was the

England win with a final score of 21-10.

Sylwek Milewski, 13, from Lyng Hall School in Coventry, says: "I've never experienced anything like this before. I enjoyed it a lot, watching the game, celebrating the tries, touring the stadium. We cheered and screamed. It was very special to me. I don't think it can get any better than this."

Joe Hunter, a year 9 pupil from St Edmunds Catholic School in Canterbury, said the day was "remarkable. I can't explain how much I have enjoyed it. It's taught me that to be a good team you've got to rely on each other. I'm very lucky to have been here."



## SPECIALIST CENTRE OPENS IN MAY

**E**arly Excellence plans to open a specialist early years centre in London in May.

The provider of early years' pedagogy, provision and practice says the centre will offer high-level professional development and consultancy through workshops, training and high-profile speaker events.

Founder and director Liz Marsden (pictured), says: "Opening a centre in London will allow us to work more closely with the thousands of schools in the south of England who want to partner with us.

"We are creating an innovative space for practitioners to get the best support and advice from our highly experienced staff and other leading thinkers from around the world."

Early Excellence, which more than half of England's primary schools have chosen to deliver the controversial baseline reception tests, opened its first centre in Huddersfield, where it is based, in 2000.

A spokesperson says demand for its services from schools in the south drove its decision to open a centre in the capital.

# MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

**N**ick Hall, the East Midlands regional director at Teach First, next month takes over as leader of excellence in teaching at The Education Fellowship where he plans to develop, implement and evaluate teaching and learning initiatives and strategies throughout the fellowship's 26 academies.

"I will be looking to put some meat on to the bones of improving and developing teaching and learning," he says.

"It is very much about identifying what the pupils in our academies need and understanding exactly how we can have a coherent teaching and learning policy to create consistent standards across the academies."

Mr Hall says he is also "desperate" to make a sense of "individuality" in classrooms and at school level.

He plans to spend the summer term in classrooms talking to teachers, leaders and pupils "so that I can make some really educated and informed decisions about where the best practice is, what needs to be developed and enhanced, and what needs to be shuffled out".

He says he is excited about taking his experience and expertise, mostly gained in Nottingham and Derby, to a new area in the East Midlands.



Nick Hall

Mr Hall has a degree in English from Sheffield Hallam University and a masters in critical theory from Nottingham.

He qualified as a teacher in 2000 and spent 11 years in the classroom before joining Teach First in 2011.

**Mei Lim** will be the new headteacher of Weyfield Primary Academy in Guildford after Easter.

Ms Lim already works at the school, which is part of The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT), and says her main priority will be to continue and build on the school's improvement.

Weyfield was rated inadequate in every category and went into special measures two years ago. In November last year it was rated good in every category and achieved its highest ever results last summer.

Ms Lim says she will focus on "improving



Mei Lim

the life chances of every child" by "creating vision and confidence.

"For this we have introduced the international primary curriculum. My goals are therefore to form that vision to enable children to participate and improve society.

"It is about mainstreaming our policy against that programme, so we encourage the children to fundraise and participate in the local community and engage with parents. Our outreach work and building on partnerships is vital."

Ms Lim studied ancient and modern history at the University of Oxford before training with Teach First.

She then worked in London secondary schools for six years before completing a



Graeme Smith

masters in public policy in Berlin, focusing on social and education policy.

Ms Lim started as a deputy at Weyfield in 2014.

**Graeme Smith** moves from the headship of Alfriston School in Buckinghamshire to take over as principal of Derby Moor Community Sports College in June.

He says his main goal will be to ensure the school is focused on the "bigger picture – that belief that every student can succeed.

"It's important that all members of the school community work together to achieve this. I believe in building a culture where staff are valued and empowered to make this aim a reality."

He is also keen to build and move forward the "strong foundations" established between members of the school community.

Mr Smith has a computing and management degree from Loughborough University and completed his PGCE at Keele in 2001.

He has taught in a mix of primary and secondary schools since 2002.

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

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## HEADTEACHER WANTED

Salary £54,246 (L14) to £69,034 (L24)  
WILDRIDINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL, Bracknell

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| <b>T</b> OGETHER     | Work together to be a responsible, respectful and trusting school community. |

# Be the BEST that you can be!

Wildridings is currently rated as a 'Good' school with 440 pupils altogether including our Nursery.

The Governors of Wildridings Primary School are seeking to appoint an inspirational, creative and dedicated Headteacher with the resilience, leadership skills and strategic experience to nurture our children and staff on the next stage of our journey.

**We are looking for a Headteacher who:**

- Is passionate about all children achieving their **BEST**
- Will inspire our children to be lifelong learners
- Will empower staff to achieve their **BEST** and the **BEST** for all children
- Will work with all stakeholders to further develop this thriving school
- Is nurturing towards pupils, staff, parents and the wider community
- Has excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Is calm and has a good sense of humour.

**We can offer you:**

- Children who are enthusiastic, enjoy learning and are proud of their school and their achievements
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- A forward thinking and supportive Governing Body
- A spacious, well-resourced and vibrant school site including a part time nurture room, Nursery and Inclusion Team
- An exciting and challenging opportunity to lead school improvement
- Parents who are keen to further develop working relationships with the school.

If you are ready for the next challenge in your career, please come and visit us where you will be warmly welcomed. To make an appointment, please contact Liz Price, Office Manager, on 01344 425483 or email [secretary@office.wildridings.bracknell-forest.sch.uk](mailto:secretary@office.wildridings.bracknell-forest.sch.uk)

An application pack and application form can be downloaded from [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/jobs). Completed applications should be emailed to [Hayley.chapple@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.chapple@bracknell-forest.gov.uk). CVs will not be accepted.

**Closing date: Tuesday 19 April 2016 (noon) • Interviews: Wednesday 27 April 2016**

*Wildridings Primary School is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people.*

WILDRIDINGS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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# DLD COLLEGE LONDON

## Deputy Principal (Welfare & Boarding) London SE1 from 1st August 2016

DLD College is recruiting a Deputy Principal (Welfare & Boarding). They will be a member of the Executive Leadership Team and provide vision, leadership and management for the college, specifically pertaining to the pastoral needs of all students. DLD College is an independent boarding college situated in the heart of London overlooking Westminster and the river Thames. There are around 500 students from 40 different countries.

### ABOUT THE ALPHA PLUS GROUP

DLD was founded in 1931 and is part of the Alpha Plus Group of schools and colleges. DLD College aims to maintain a 'gold standard' of educational quality. Classes are small, enabling students and teachers to focus upon the most effective ways of learning. The College offers exceptional teaching accommodation and resources.

### A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

We have a fantastic track record of supporting students to achieve the A-Level, BTECs (Level 3 & 4) and GCSE results they need, enabling them to move onto university courses of their choice. We also offer a successful International Foundation Programme together with Pre-sessional Programmes.

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DLD College is an equal opportunities employer and values diversity. DLD College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners and expect all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks as well as providing proof of your right to work in the UK.

### PERSON SPECIFICATION

#### Professional Qualification

- Teaching qualification/QTS
- Higher Degree
- Recent participation in continuing professional development
- Background in counselling/ psychology is desirable.

#### Professional Experience

- Successful residential experience at a senior management level
- Recent successful experience in the post 16 phase, either in a college or school context
- Recent successful experience of working in partnership with another educational institution or external agency
- Recent experience of managing students from a variety of cultures

#### Specialist Knowledge and Understanding

- Understanding of current reforms in 14-19 curriculum
- Knowledge of current behavioural issues
- Keen awareness of the impact of mental health on adolescence behaviour and performance.
- Knowledge of how external agencies work in partnership for safeguarding and child protection matters. E.g. Social Services

#### Personal Qualities and Skills

- Clear strategic thinking
- High level interpersonal skills
- The ability to show empathy
- The ability to remain calm and sensible under pressure and in a crisis
- Persuasive communication skills
- Strength and judgement for decision-making
- Flexible, inclusive and pragmatic management style
- Imagination and vision
- Energy, stamina and a sense of humour

#### To apply:

Please download the application form by visiting [www.dldcollege.co.uk](http://www.dldcollege.co.uk) and clicking on vacant posts. Application forms to be emailed to Sarah Richmond and Maria Gomez: [sarah.richmond@dld.org](mailto:sarah.richmond@dld.org); [maria.gomez@dld.org](mailto:maria.gomez@dld.org)

Closing date for applications: 18th March 2016 at noon



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The RSA combines thought leadership with civic innovation to further human progress. Building on our 250 year history as a beacon for enlightenment values, the RSA is currently at an exciting period in its history. We provide platforms for leading experts through the UK's most ambitious free public lecture series, our projects generate new models for tackling the social challenges of today and we are building on our network of over 27,000 Fellows around the world – these are achievers and influencers from every field with a real commitment to progressive and social change.

### How to apply

For more information and to apply for this position please visit [www.thersa.org/about-us/Jobs/](http://www.thersa.org/about-us/Jobs/). The closing date for receipt of applications is **Midnight on Monday 14 March 2016**. Interviews are expected to take place on **Wednesday 23 and or Thursday 24 March 2016**. Please note that we are unable to accept late or incomplete applications.

The RSA is committed to being an equal opportunities employer.

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## Micklands Primary School

Micklands Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks RG4 6LU  
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Headteacher: Mrs Sharon Jones



## HEADTEACHER

Leadership Scale L20 – L27 (£61,623 – £72,419 pa)

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Required for September 2016

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This is an exciting time for the right person to join Micklands Primary.

Are you a Headteacher or experienced Deputy Headteacher with a strong track record of leadership?

Can you demonstrate having inspired high-quality teaching and learning within a creative curriculum and a strong commitment to maintaining and raising standards?

Do you have the energy and imagination to lead us in the next stage of our development?

Our new Headteacher will lead a successful and popular inclusive primary school, in an attractive location with spacious grounds.

### The successful candidate will benefit from:

- pupils with outstanding and very positive attitudes to learning
- innovative and dedicated staff
- supportive parents who work in partnership with the school
- a Governing Body that is highly committed to working closely with school leaders

Visits to the school are encouraged. Please contact the School Office on 0118 937 5500 or [office@micklands.reading.sch.uk](mailto:office@micklands.reading.sch.uk).

For an informal discussion, please contact: **Sharon Jones**, Headteacher on **0118 937 5500** or **Polly Schofield**, Chair of Governors on **07908 548864**.

Please do not send a CV, as for the purpose of Equal Opportunities, we can only accept Reading Borough Council application forms.

**Application forms are available from [recruitment@reading.gov.uk](mailto:recruitment@reading.gov.uk) or 0118 937 2625.**

**Closing date: Noon, Monday 4 April 2016**

**Interviews: 12 and 13 April 2016**

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share that commitment. Successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and all other relevant pre-employment checks.



# PRINCIPAL - FULL-TIME COMPETITIVE SALARY + HEALTHCARE

**CLOSING DATE: 14/03/2016 AT 23:00**

**INTERVIEWS: 21/03/2016**

Due to an internal transfer an exciting opportunity has arisen at Tree Tops Primary Academy for a talented leader who is looking to use their energy and vision to make a real impact and build on the success the Academy has achieved to date. This is a great headship opportunity within a multi-academy trust that gives its schools 'earned autonomy' whilst providing support and collaboration to help it succeed.

We feel that this role would particularly suit a talented Deputy or an established Headteacher that is seeking to work within a school that wants to build on its recent success and someone who is keen to develop a long-term career within one of the most successful multi-academy trusts in the region.

The successful candidate will be fortunate to take over the leadership of a school at an exciting time in its development on the path to being a good school with outstanding features.

This is a great opportunity for someone to demonstrate that they can make a real difference to a school for the benefit of the students and the wider community.

## THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE WILL BE:

- An enthusiastic and energetic Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher with a proven track record of success within the primary setting.
- A motivational and aspirational leader with high expectations of all staff.
- Excellent knowledge of the new primary curriculum and associated assessment.
- Confident, inspirational, able to communicate and deliver a clear vision for the school.
- Committed to developing our children to reach their full potential regardless of background or circumstance.
- Approachable and willing to work with staff across the Trust and Governors to implement strategies to move the school forward.
- Able to develop and establish excellent relationships with the community and other stakeholders.

## IN RETURN WE CAN OFFER:

- A competitive salary with private healthcare and an opportunity to earn a bonus based on performance.
- Excellent opportunities to develop your leadership skills within Tree Tops Primary Academy and Leigh Academies Trust.
- The opportunity to join a rapidly progressing academy and make a difference to pupil progress and attainment with the support of a dedicated senior leadership team
- Opportunities to work closely with other Primary Leaders within Leigh Academies Trust to share best practice and innovation.



## APPLICATION PROCESS

Naturally we are seeking to appoint the best possible candidate and therefore the application process will reflect our desire to undertake all necessary measures to achieve this. Applicants should apply by visiting [www.treetopsprimaryacademy.org.uk/](http://www.treetopsprimaryacademy.org.uk/).

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## SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

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|  | 5 |   | 7 |   |   |   | 9 | 6 |
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Difficulty:  
**EASY**

### Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

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



What's the caption? tweet a caption @schoolsweek



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