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FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2016 | EDITION 71

THE PHILANTHRO-PHILES WHO'S FUNDING YOUR SCHOOLS?

Name	Schools Trust	How Much Donated
LORD JOHN NASH	(Not specified)	(Not specified)
LORD PHILIP HARRIS	SCHOOLS TRUST: HARRIS FEDERATION	HOW MUCH DONATED: NOT KNOWN
DAVID ROSS	SCHOOLS TRUST: DAVID ROSS EDUCATION TRUST	HOW MUCH DONATED: £4.3 MILLION IN PAST TWO YEARS
SIR THEODORE AGNEW	SCHOOLS TRUST: INSPIRATION TRUST	HOW MUCH DONATED: £148,000 IN 2015

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Failing academies left to get on with it

- › Seventy per cent of 'inadequate' academies not rebrokered
- › 'The good trusts are very picky about who they take over'

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

The government has failed to rebroker more than two-thirds of academies rated inadequate by Ofsted, seemingly shooting down ministers' claims their academies revolution enables swift intervention.

Education secretary Nicky Morgan has previously been critical of how failing local authority-maintained schools were "left

languishing" under councils.

One of the key weapons in her argument for supporting the government's academies programme is that the new system enables rapid improvement in failing schools, with the government able to hand struggling academies to new academy sponsors to drive improvement.

But figures obtained via a parliamentary question reveal the government has decided against intervention in 70 per cent of instances where an academy has been

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AMANDA SPIELMAN, OFSTED'S NEW CHIEF

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HEADTEACHERS' ROUNDTABLE | THINK TANK 2016

An Alternative White Paper

JULY 1, 2016 | 09:30 TO 16:00 | SHEFFIELD, ENGLAND - SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY



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EDITION 71

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NEWS

A point at a time: Carter's health check for growing trusts

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Growing academy trusts will have to show how they cope with failing schools and demonstrate an understanding of the strength and weaknesses of their provision to meet a new "health check".

When he appeared in front of the education select committee on Wednesday, Sir David Carter, the schools commissioner, set out the detail for only the first of five points of a check that trusts hoping to take on more schools will have to pass.

Although he admitted that Nicky Morgan's plan to prevent expansion in trusts that could not demonstrate a track record of improvement could prove "counter-intuitive", standards and improvement will be the first focus of the health check.

Carter told MPs that on top of a record of improvement, trusts would also have to show how they coped with failing schools, although they would not automatically be prevented from expanding if exam results of an Ofsted rating dipped in one of their schools.

"I'm not in the camp that says we should automatically stop that trust growing, but we need to understand what its plan is to improve that school," he said.

He warned that in some situations, "putting growth on pause" could deny some schools the opportunity to be helped by others near by.

Carter will also require a demonstration that trusts know "exactly how strong [their]



Together at last: Michael Wilshaw and David Carter

great schools are and how weak [their] weakest ones are".

Two prominent chains – E-ACT and Academies Enterprise Trust – have already been told they cannot continue to expand after fears were raised about their viability.

But Carter told the cross-party group of MPs he would not rule out trusts having as many as 60 schools, adding that trusts such as Reach2 could soon grow to that size.

The commissioner, who is yet to release details of the other four points of the check, said chains in which most schools had either not improved or got worse would not be given more schools.

He said the check needed to be "rigorous" around improvement, but admitted: "That could be counter-intuitive because actually what we need that trust to do is to take [those schools] there, but if they don't have a track record of improving schools [in another area] there would be a huge risk to doing that."

Carter's plan to focus on disadvantaged

pupils received the backing of Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw, who appeared alongside him at the hearing.

Wilshaw said he wanted to see the prospects of poorer children improve "at least in line with national expectations, and ... above that".

But he also questioned whether there were enough good school leaders to facilitate the conversion of large numbers of maintained schools into academies, especially when schools faced potential "rebrokering" if they failed within certain chains.

He said England had "one of the most autonomous systems in the world", but pointed to early findings of an Ofsted investigation seeking to find good trusts, which had only identified "half a dozen" so far.

Wilshaw said: "There are very mediocre trusts and the more rebrokering that's taking place, the more difficult David [Carter] will find it to find a really good trust to take [schools] on."

Teacher shortage now in Ofsted's remit

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Ofsted inspectors are judging schools on how well they are handling teacher shortages, with two schools rated as inadequate found to have too many vacancies.

Joanna Hall, deputy director for schools at Ofsted, told the commons education committee last week that inspectors would start asking leaders about teacher shortages as part of inspections.

But Schools Week has found the watchdog is already judging schools on how well they are coping with the recruitment crisis.

Teachers have criticised the practice, saying that they are doing their all to recruit staff and that the shortage is not their fault.

The disclosure comes after a scathing public accounts committee report last week found that the government had "no plan" to deal with teacher shortages.

The Department for Education was also criticised for a lack of "leadership or urgency" and was said to "not understand or show curiosity about shortages".

John Dexter, acting headteacher at Trinity school, in Nottingham, told Schools Week that many heads were "losing sleep" over recruitment.

"Heads are not trying to make excuses here, but is it fair to heavily criticise a

department where for a number of years recruitment to that subject or position, despite best efforts, has not yielded staff?"

Twickenham academy in west London was rated as inadequate last month, including in the "effectiveness of leadership and management" category. Under that heading Ofsted noted that the school "struggled to recruit the number of permanent teachers it needs".

The report added: "The management of temporary teachers does not place enough emphasis on maintaining the quality of teaching at a level that is at least good."

Worle community school, in Somerset, was also rated inadequate last month. It was told that it must "urgently improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that the amount of supply cover is kept to a minimum and that supply teachers have enough information, guidance and support to be able to teach effectively".

In the "quality of teaching, learning and assessment" category, which was rated inadequate, Ofsted said "many pupils are frustrated by the relatively high proportion of supply cover".

Micon Metcalfe (pictured), a school business director who also trains other education leaders, said she was "surprised" Ofsted was reporting on a school's recruitment struggles.

If supply teachers were affecting the quality of education then it was relevant to the judgment, but she added: "How far recruitment is within the control of school leaders is another matter."

Schools might now have to look at new ways of working, she said, including engaging with initiatives to get people into teaching and committing to training and developing student teachers.

Hall told the parliamentary committee that under Ofsted's new framework "one of the key questions inspectors might ask headteachers is about teacher supply".

She said this might include how many subjects had temporary cover and how that affected the schools. It would fall under Ofsted's leadership judgment.

"In terms of how you manage your workforce and deal with those particular issues, one would hope that all leaders and governors have a clear picture of impact of what they are facing.

"Certainly in terms of good leadership and good high-quality teaching, one would expect we could see evidence of that and how those subjects are taught, even if it is not a subject specialist."



NEWS

Red card for pupils' time off to watch Euro16

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

Schools can choose to end their day early for major sporting events, despite parent pressure prompting one head to U-turn on his decision to allow pupils to watch a Euro 2016 match.

Oasis Academy Lord's Hill, in Southampton, last week abandoned plans for pupils to leave school at lunchtime yesterday so they could watch England take on Wales, following heavy criticism from parents.

But the Department for Education (DfE) has told Schools Week all schools have, by law, the power to decide when the day should end. A department spokesperson said school leaders could decide how to structure their day.

However, guidance from the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) suggests that schools should only permit time off in "exceptional circumstances", such as for religious reasons or for bereavement.

The union stressed to Schools Week that major sporting tournaments, including the Euro 2016 football tournament, which kicked off last Friday, did not fall in that bracket.

In a statement explaining his U-turn, Ian Golding, principal at Oasis Academy Lord's Hill, said he took attendance



Wales' Gareth Bale and Slovakia's Patrik Hrosovsky (left) battle for the ball during a Euro 2016, Group B match at the Stade de Bordeaux

Picture by: Martin Rickett / PA Wire/Press Association Image

"extremely seriously".

"On reflection of the concerns", he said it was "more appropriate" for students to remain in class, with an option to watch a screening of the game during the last hour of the school day.

"National sporting events are a cause for celebration and enjoyment, and something that are, infrequently, suitable for students to experience during school time.

"As a community in which many of my

students have a real passion for football, I will show the game during the last hour of school time for those who wish to watch it so that they too can experience it together."

Parents angry about Golding's original decision to allow pupils time off for the game included Jon Platt, a father who won a high court ruling last month after refusing to pay a £120 fine for taking his daughter to Disney World during term

time. He accused the school of "hypocrisy".

But a department spokesperson said all schools have the autonomy to make decisions about the "content, structure and duration" of their school day.

She added: "We trust headteachers to decide how best to structure their school day to support their pupils' education."

The department also said that there were no "specific legal requirements" about how long the school day should be, but all maintained schools were required to be open to "educate their pupils" for at least 380 sessions (190 days) in each school year.

Academy trusts are also free to make changes to term and holiday dates and are not bound by the school day and school year regulations.

Golding's change of heart was welcomed by Russell Hobby, NAHT general secretary, who said: "During the school day, children should be at school.

"School leaders have the power to grant time off in exceptional circumstances. In our view, watching major sporting events does not really count as exceptional."

Hobby also urged school leaders to not "feel pressured" into allowing pupils and staff time off to watch sporting events.

"Many will want to mark sporting events in different ways, and we must trust school leaders to deliver what's best for pupils."

Pupil premium used to plug budget holes

BILLY CAMDEN
@BILLYCAMDEN

A growing number of schools are using their pupil premium cash to offset budget cuts elsewhere instead of using it to raise the attainment of disadvantaged students, new research shows.

A poll of more than 1,500 teachers, published today by the Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), found 6 per cent of teachers used the extra cash to plug funding holes. Last year 2 per cent of teachers said they used the premium elsewhere.

Pupil premium was set up by the government in 2011 as an additional pot to help schools to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and to "close the gap" between them and their peers.

Sir John Dunford (pictured), former pupil premium champion at the Department for Education (DfE), warned that it was a "dangerous strategy" for schools to not use the fund "legitimately", but said the finding was "not surprising" given the funding pressures they now faced.

Schools are required to publish details on their websites about how they spend their pupil premiums, and the impact it has on attainment.

But the EEF told Schools Week it is down to school leaders and governors to

decide how the cash is spent.

However, in the past Ofsted has criticised academy trusts for misusing it. Academy chain E-ACT, for example, top-sliced money from its pupil premium cash, to fund its central operations, until September 2013.

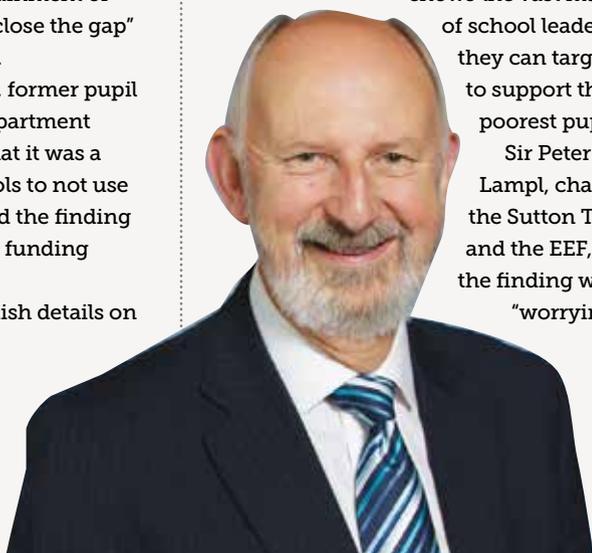
Ofsted said at the time it was "unclear how these deducted funds are being used to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils".

Dunford told Schools Week: "It is recognised good practice to ring-fence the pupil premium budget within the school budget in order to be able to track expenditure through to impact."

A DfE spokesperson said it trusted schools to use the money to "best meet the needs" of their pupils and was "pleased this report

shows the vast majority of school leaders feel they can target it to support their poorest pupils".

Sir Peter Lampl, chair of the Sutton Trust and the EEF, said the finding was "worrying".



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Structures
Retention & Recruitment**

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NEWS

£10m 'drop in the ocean' for Mandarin teaching

SOPHIE SCOTT
@SOPH_E_SCOTT

A £10 million investment in expanding the teaching of Mandarin could be better invested in language assistants and online courses, claims the former head of languages at CILT The National Centre for Languages.

George Osborne announced the £10 million funding in September, while on a trip to China, saying it would enable 5,000 more pupils to study the language by 2020. That's £2,000 per pupil.

Twenty schools have been recruited to start the Mandarin excellence programme in September, to be run by the UCL Institute of Education Confucius Institute. Each already has a track record of delivering the subject.

But Carmel O'Hagan, the former head of languages at CILT and recent teacher trainer, said she did not think the £10 million went far enough. "It is a drop in the ocean. It doesn't feel very strategic."

Budget cuts meant language assistants, who were "very useful" for supporting young people with learning a language, including Mandarin, were being dropped, she said.

Online technologies appear to be a cheaper alternative. An online Mandarin language course with Rosetta Stone costs £209.

The course provider does also offer Mandarin licences to 57 schools, but refused to provide information about how much schools paid.

O'Hagan thought the approach would be "a really good" idea if done alongside the widespread return of language assistants. "I think we need to look at that type of learning in these financially constrained times."

When asked in parliament how many Mandarin teachers were in England's schools, and the number of those training, Nick Gibb, the schools minister, said the department "cannot identify how many" specifically teach the subject.

But UCAS figures reveal that 20 people have conditional offers to start a Mandarin initial teacher training course in September, out of 150 applications. This is less than half the number who started in September 2015. The application rate also decreased by almost 50 per cent.

Last year, just 1 per cent of all pupils took a GCSE in Chinese, with the majority of those in private schools.

Gibb said in a parliamentary question: "This programme will ensure that there is a sufficient number of teachers for these [5,000] pupils."

Leora Cruddas, director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "We welcome the Mandarin programme because it is an investment in education and in a modern foreign language.

"We are pleased that schools are signing up to the programme and would be happy to publicise it to our members if the organisers feel this would be helpful."

Trust chain looks for 88 job cuts

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

A curriculum restructure at seven secondary schools in Yorkshire and the Humber will lead to more than 88 jobs cuts as creative subjects are ditched in favour of a more academic focus, warns the National Union of Teachers (NUT).

As Schools Week went to press, the union planned to ballot staff at the schools over potential strike action following an announcement by the School Partnership Trust Academies.

Schools Week understands the trust is seeking to make voluntary redundancies in at least 85 posts – 48 teaching posts and 37 support staff – and a further three compulsory redundancies as it reduces the number of GCSEs that some pupils study.

It is believed that pupils wanting to study subjects such as music will have to opt in to after-school classes after the trust said children were studying too many subjects and schools were "overstaffed".

The shake-up, first reported by the *Yorkshire Post*, will require schools to prioritise academic subjects so they can perform better against the government's

new "Progress 8" performance measure.

The measure rates schools based on pupils' performance in the five English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects – English, maths, science, history or geography and languages – plus their three highest non-EBacc grades.

Subjects such as music can be included in Progress 8, but are less likely to be prioritised by schools that focus more on routes for pupils with subjects that can count across any of the eight slots, such as triple science or an extra humanities subject.

Emma Forrest, a union organiser involved in negotiations with the schools, said the trust's response to disappointing results had been to "focus completely on Progress 8 to the detriment of other subjects".

"It's hard to pin SPTA down in terms of the reasons for the restructure," she said. "They have always told us that this is about finances, and now suddenly it's not about finances. They have not mentioned over-staffing to us once."

The structural changes are similar to those used by Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT) – which recently received a slice of £5 million government funding to take over schools in the north of England.

OGAT announced in March it had formed a "landmark partnership" with SPTA, where it would be on hand to help the trust.

It was revealed last December that SPTA would be stripped of three schools in Nottinghamshire following fears they were isolated from the rest of the organisation.

In March, chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw name-checked the trust as one of several academy chains that had "manifested the same weaknesses" as the worst-performing local authorities.

An SPTA spokesperson said the trust had an in-year deficit of £3.2 million last year and was projecting a further in-year deficit of £6.8 million this year.

"We believe that students need a good grade in both English and maths to be successful in accessing the next level of education, training or employment," he said.

"These will be the priorities for our schools moving forward, alongside a broad and balanced curriculum."

The trust said it had identified three potential compulsory redundancies following work to "ensure that staffing structures reflect the academy and student needs".

The spokesperson added: "We recognise that the trade unions are trying to protect their members' jobs in a very difficult time, and we will continue to work with them supportively. However, the trust must take positive action to support and improve student outcomes and deliver value for money to parents and the wider community."

Leeds scraps free transport to parents' favoured school

SOPHIE SCOTT
@SOPH_E_SCOTT

Parents are considering transferring their children to a new school after a local authority tightened up rules around free transport to save costs – with a warning from the Local Government Association that more councils could follow suit.

East Keswick parish council has lodged a complaint with Leeds city council after the latter's decision to scrap free transport to Boston Spa secondary school.

Parents say they might move their children because they cannot afford the nearly £10 weekly transport costs.

The move from Leeds is the latest in a series by local authorities trying to save money as grants from the government are cut by up to 40 per cent.

Andrew Batty, chair of East Keswick, told Schools Week: "Nobody wants to see their children leaving their friends and their teachers, but this might now happen."

Leeds' decision means parents in the villages of both East Keswick and Bardsey will no longer get free transport to send their children to Boston Spa – rated good by Ofsted and historically the preferred choice in the area.

Instead they now only get free transport to Wetherby high school, a much smaller school rated as requires improvement.

Boston Spa and Wetherby are five miles from both villages, according to online mapping services. But Leeds says their new system shows that Wetherby is closer.

Batty, who said parents are now paying £9.50 a week to send their children to Boston Spa, added: "They [Leeds council] are trying to save money left, right and centre. It's unfair on the parents and means that some have considered pulling their children out of Boston Spa to go to Wetherby as it is such a burden on them financially."

Leeds council did not provide a comment, but pointed Schools Week to the agenda for its council executive next meeting on Wednesday.

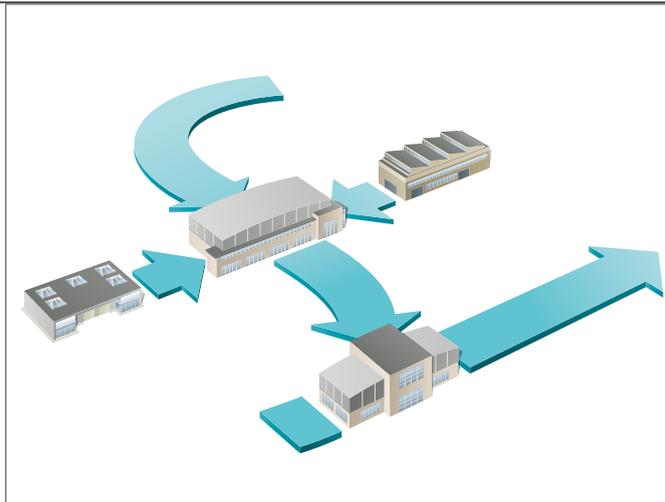
It read: "The implementation of the policy has to date contributed to the intended outcome of delivering a substantial reduction in discretionary spending, thus ensuring money is spent wisely."

Schools Week has previously reported similar decisions in North Yorkshire and Kent, which both axed free home-to-school transport for certain children.

Pupils are entitled to free transport to their "nearest" school. In most cases, this is within a three-mile radius.

However, for rural areas this distance is expanded to entitle them to transport to the closest school, and funded through "extended rights" grants from the government.

Leeds city council has seen its extended



rights grants cut from £241,000 in 2014-15, to £117,600 for 2016-17.

Nationally, there has been a 25 per cent decrease in funding, from £25 million to £18 million, in the same period.

Some local authorities have faced even larger cuts. Stoke-on-Trent, for example, has had an 82 per cent decrease in extended rights funding, down to just £38,000.

The Local Government Association told Schools Week that budget pressures meant that decisions like those in Leeds would become more frequent.

A spokesperson said: "Councils are working with schools and parents to provide the best possible home-to-school transport.

"However, they have experienced significant reductions in government funding that has meant having to make difficult decisions."

NEWS

Academy devotee takes over at Ofsted

SOPHIE SCOTT

@SOPH_E_SCOTT

Amanda Spielman, chair of Ofqual and a key figure in founding one of the country's largest academy chains, has been approved by the government as the next head of Ofsted.

Her appointment must now be accepted by the education select committee before she can take over from Sir Michael Wilshaw in January.

Schools Week understands she will meet with the cross-party group of MPs on June 29.

Spielman (pictured), as chair of the exams watchdog Ofqual, has most recently helped to oversee the implementation of the government's qualifications reform.

She is also education adviser at Ark academy trust, which she helped to set up and expand to now run more than 30 schools.

Nicky Morgan, the education secretary, said the 55-year-old Spielman had "extensive experience at the frontline of the education system, making her uniquely qualified to take up this important role".

However, last Friday's announcement has not been welcomed by unions, who are unhappy that she has never taught or held a leadership position in a school.

Kevin Courtney, acting general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "It is a sad indictment of this government's



attitude to education that they place such little value on the experience of teachers and headteachers, that they would not consider such a background necessary for the chief inspector's role."

In a profile interview with *Schools Week* in December 2014, Spielman, who started her career as an accountant at KPMG UK, said she considered teaching later on, but felt at 39 she was too old for the classroom.

Instead she completed a masters in comparative education at the Institute of Education.

Dr Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), said Spielman had a "record of agreeing with and implementing" government policy and would be "less troublesome" than Wilshaw.

However Becky Allen, head of research group Education Datalab, told *The Guardian* that the new Ofsted chief would bring an "analytical and evidence-based approach"

to making decisions, moving the watchdog away from being a "vehicle for a single-minded visionary to transform schools".

David Hoare, Ofsted's chair, said her "wider corporate background will bring a new perspective to Ofsted's work".

Spielman joined Ofqual in 2011. A year later she found herself caught up in the "GCSE fiasco" of 2012, when English GCSE results dipped dramatically after Ofqual pushed up grade boundaries to stop what would have been a dramatic increase in top grades.

The regulator fought a legal challenge against the changes, led by an alliance of pupils, unions, schools and councils, all the way to the High Court, which eventually ruled Ofqual had acted lawfully.

She was acting as interim chief executive of the regulator after Glenys Stacey stood down in February.

CURRICULUM VITAE

July 2011 – present chair Ofqual

June 2011 – present education adviser, Ark

2005 – 2012 Research and policy director, Ark

2002 – 2004 Consultant

1996 – 2000 Strategy director, Nomura International

1995 – 1996 Principal, Mercer Management Consulting (Boston)

1993 – 1995 Director, Bridgewater Business Analysis

1986 – 1992 Manager in corporate finance, Kleinwort Benson

1982 – 1986 Accountant, KPMG UK (formerly KMG Thomson McLintock)

First-choice secondary places stay stable

The proportion of children getting a place at their first-choice secondary school has remained stable, despite the number of applicants increasing to an eight-year high.

Department for Education figures released on Tuesday show 548,006 children applied for a year 7 place this September – the highest number since 2008 and 2.8 per cent up on last year.

But schools still managed to offer roughly the same amount of first preferences as last year (falling slightly from 84.2 to 84.1 per cent).

The number of children needing a secondary place is expected to increase 20 per cent over the next eight years, as the past decade's bulge in primary school children numbers makes its way through the system.

While the national picture looks stable, there are stark differences between local authorities in secondary place offers.

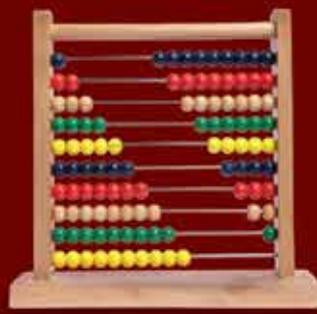
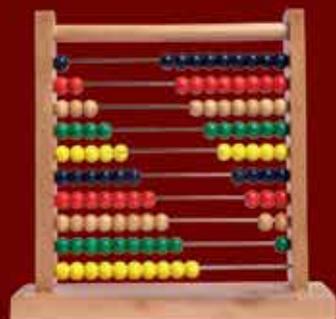
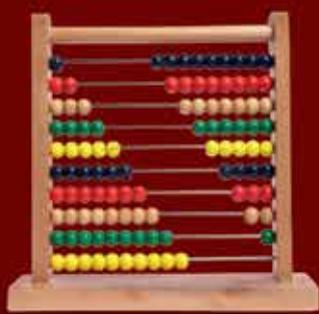
London has the lowest proportion of applicants receiving a first-choice offer (68.8 per cent) with children in the north east most likely to get into their first-choice school (91.8 per cent).

At primary level, the offer rates were slightly higher across the board, with 88.4 per cent of children getting into their first-choice school, up 0.6 percentage points on last year.

There were 641,572 primary applications this year, up 0.8 per cent on last year.

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NEWS

Tweeting law firm loses SEND contracts

A law firm representing local authorities (LAs) at tribunals on children with special needs has lost its contract with councils after it sent tweets "ridiculing" parents, writes *Sophie Scott*.

Baker Small, a Milton Keynes-based firm, used the social media site to joke about parents who "thought they had won" at a tribunal.

Tribunals are held when parents, or young people, disagree with decisions made by the LA about their special educational needs (SEND) provision, such as the content of an educational, health and care plan.

A tweet posted on the company's official feed, on Saturday, read: "Great ABA [applied behavioural analysis] Trib [tribunal] win this week . . . interesting to see how parents continue to persist with it. Funny thing is parents think they won :)".

Social media users said the tweet, and subsequent tweets, "ridiculed" parents.

At least eight councils have ended or are reviewing their contracts with Baker Small. The firm had council contracts totalling at least £1 million.

Tania Tirraoro, who runs the Special Needs Jungle blog, said: "[The user] erroneously thought other tweeters would also find ridiculing parents fighting for their disabled child's SEND provision, somehow amusing."

Government reforms in 2014 aimed to make the SEND system more "joined-up" and, in theory, lead to fewer disputes.

But Tirraoro questioned whether councils should still be permitted to spend taxpayer money "hiring expensive solicitors and barristers" as it could "undermine a system that has been changed to stop adversarial practice".

The company deleted the offending messages and "apologised unreservedly". Mark Small, managing director, said: "Full and appropriate action will be taken to address the matter."

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Most school business managers earn less than £40,000

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

Two-fifths of school business managers are managing budgets of more than £5 million, despite more than half earning less than £40,000 a year.

A survey of 1,158 business managers, bursars and finance directors by the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) has revealed those in charge of schools' finances are often paid less than other non-management level staff, despite presiding over budgets of tens of millions of pounds.

The union now warns that increasing pressure and stagnating pay could make business managers question the "moral purpose" of education and quit to take jobs in private finance.

Val Andrew (pictured), ASCL's business management expert, said business managers, who were often qualified accountants, could earn "completely different salaries" in the private sector.

"You do find school leaders, not necessarily just business managers, who will say 'I should be getting a pay rise, but I know the school can't afford it'.

"That would never happen in the private sector. It brings you back down to the moral purpose, to why we're working in the system, which is that we want the best for the young people."

A third of respondents to the survey said they managed budgets of between £5 million and £10 million, while a further

6 per cent looked after budgets of between £10 million and £20 million. About 1 per cent had responsibility for budgets of more than £20 million.

Despite being in charge of such huge sums, a quarter of respondents said they earned less than £30,000 a year, below the minimum pay for teachers in the upper pay range outside London.

Another 28 per cent earned between £30,000 and £40,000, less than most leading practitioners would earn outside the capital.

About 22 per cent said they earned between £40,000 and £50,000, while 24 per cent fell into the £50,000 to £75,000 bracket.

Just 1 per cent of respondents said they earned more than £75,000 a year.

The survey also found that just a third of respondents had a degree – although half had certificates in school business management.

The lack of qualifications was said to be a driver behind the National Association of School Business Managers (NASBM) launching professional standards in November.

Stephen Morales, chief executive of NASBM, said the standards would help to offer more continuing professional development and provide a framework for development of qualifications.

The drive for skilled-up finance staff comes as many schools feel the pinch of a budget squeeze – with flat funding and rising costs.

Peter Lauener, chief executive of the



Education Funding Agency, last year urged schools to place the same importance on balancing their budgets as achieving educational attainment.

But the ASCL survey found that just under 50 per cent of respondents now worked more than 45 hours a week.

Sixty-one per cent of school finance professionals also said they did not feel they earned a fair salary, up from 52 per cent in 2014.

Andrew said the environment for business managers was changing: "There is that potential. Using the health service as an example, look what's happened with the junior doctors, they have been pushed to breaking point and many of them have had to make that very difficult decision about going on strike. Heaven forbid that should happen in education, but it's a real danger."

DfE fails to rebroker 70 per cent of failing academies

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

rated inadequate.

A total of 277 academies were rated as inadequate from 2010 to 2015, but just 84 have been rebrokered.

Labour said the figures showed the government was a soft touch with academies and questioned whether there were enough good academy sponsors in the system to takeover failing schools.

Lucy Powell, Labour's shadow education secretary, said: "These figures show that the government must be just as demanding on failing academies as on other types of schools so that children are not let down."

"The government fixation that one type of school is better than another is not stacked up by evidence; academies can seriously underperform too."

In 2014-15, 92 academies were rated inadequate; 69 of those faced no intervention (75 per cent).

That figure was slightly less in 2013-14, with 61 of 94 failing academies escaping intervention (65 per cent).

Powell added: "Rather than focusing, yet again, on another wave of academisation, ministers need to urgently address underperformance in schools, including academies."

"They should also recognise that there simply aren't enough good and outstanding sponsors to take on the number of schools they are talking about."

Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw echoed her view at an education select committee hearing on Wednesday.

Wilshaw said there were "very mediocre trusts and the more rebrokering that's taking place, the more difficult David [Carter, the national schools commissioner] will find it to find a really good trust to take [schools] on."

Carter admitted the availability of good and outstanding schools and trusts to take on failing schools was a "challenge".

Despite expressing a belief there were enough good leaders in the system able to "step up" and run additional schools, he admitted they were "not evenly spread".

Mary Bousted, general secretary of the teachers' union, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), said while there also isn't enough academy trusts to take over schools, "the good ones are very picky about which academies they take over."

"All trusts have a limited capacity."

She added that the figures show that challenges faced by local authorities are the same challenges now being faced by the government and trusts. "The whole argument [for academies] has been blown apart."



Lucy Powell

The figures come as the rebrokering of two schools in the Sandhill multi-academy trust seems to have hit the buffers.

The trust was told in December by Jennifer Bexon-Smith, regional schools commissioner (RSC) for the east Midlands and Humber, it "lacks the capacity" to continue and would be wound up.

However, nearly six months later, the trust is still running both schools. The Department for Education (DfE) would not say what the hold-up was, but said the RSC was continuing to work on ensuring there was a "smooth transfer" to a new trust.

A DfE spokesperson said it would "not accept low standards in any school, and where students are not getting the high quality education they deserve, will intervene."

"RSCs seek to rebroker academies that are judged inadequate, unless the existing sponsor has capacity to improve the school and can show evidence of improvement."

Academic year	Number of academies rated inadequate	Number of academies not re-brokered to another academy sponsor	Per cent not re-brokered
2010/11	5	4	80
2011/12	27	21	78
2012/13	45	28	62
2013/14	94	61	65
2014/15	92	69	75
Sept - Dec 2015	14	10	81
Total	277	193	70



THE RISE (AND RISE) OF THE PHILANTHRO-PHILES

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

Tens of millions of pounds in charitable donations are poured into schools every year from the pockets of multi-millionaires.

But where does this cash go and what impact does it make? What influence do charitable donations bring? And have they created an uneven playing field in school funding?

A *Schools Week* investigation delves into school finances and questions education leaders to establish whether charitable cash from philanthropists is now propping up our education system

Nearly £20 million in charitable donations has been handed over to just 12 academy trusts in the past two years, a *Schools Week* analysis of annual accounts has found.

However, there were huge variations between trusts, with the largest donations, unsurprisingly, going to the chains founded by wealthy donors who were some of the first to invest in the academies programme.

The largest donation by some way was from the Absolute Return for Kids (Ark) charity to the trust it sponsors, Ark Schools.

Ark, set up to distribute donations from hedge fund financiers to improve the life chances of disadvantaged children across the world, donated £3.6 million to Ark Schools in 2015, on top of £4.7 million in 2014.

Put into perspective, the money given

to Ark's 34 schools was more than the combined voluntary donations for Academies Enterprise Trust, School Learning Partnership and the Kemnal Academy Trust (three of the country's largest trusts running 150 schools between them).

The David Ross Education Trust, which runs 33 schools, received £4.2 million in the past two years from its sponsor, the David Ross Foundation. The charity was set up by philanthropist David Ross, the co-founder of Carphone Warehouse, who is reportedly friends with prime minister David Cameron and former London mayor Boris Johnson.

Alan Howard, the co-founder of one of the world's richest hedge funds, donated £5 million to the United Learning trust, which runs 42 schools.

Howard, estimated to be worth \$1.6 billion, is a former director of the Conservative Friends of Israel and now lives in Geneva, Switzerland.

Cameron described his donation as one of the most generous to schools ever in the UK.

The cash is now held in the United Learning Partnership Fund, which donated £2.2 million to United Learning last year.

Harris Federation, which runs 37 schools in and around London, is sponsored by Lord Philip Harris, who founded the country's largest flooring retailer, Carpetright.

It is not possible from the trust's 2014-15 accounts to see whether Harris donated money in the past academic year, although they do show the trust benefited from a £400,000 donation. Its source is not known.

When approached for comment, the trust said it did not comment on sources of charitable donations, but that Harris had contributed significantly, both "financially and personally", in supporting initiatives at the trust.

Other notable contributions found by *Schools Week* include £148,000 from Sir Theodore Agnew to the Inspiration Trust, which he founded and which he now chairs.

A total of £40,000 was from personal funds and another £100,000 from the Public Interest Foundation, a grant-making charity set up by Agnew, alongside Clare Agnew and David Tibble. The latter is also a trustee at Inspiration.

Where does this cash go and is it making a difference?

The cash normally goes towards funding initiatives and activities for pupils – examples found by *Schools Week* include sending youngsters to the Caribbean or to perform opera across the country.

Allan Hickie (pictured), an academies specialist from accountancy firm UHY Hacker, says large donations from sponsors are normally classed as "restricted income", meaning they should not be used to fund "core activities", such as paying wages.

For example, United Learning funds partnerships with independent schools, described on the trust's website as "among the most prestigious in the country".

Teachers from United Learning academies meet with peers from the independent schools to share expertise, a Russell Group university entrance project has been set up, sports ambassadors have spoken with more than 4,100 pupils, and there is a national focus on music and performing arts.

This last project includes a paid-for music and performing arts lead, an ambassador programme with composer Alexander

L'Estrange and a partnership with the English Pocket Opera Company in which pupils perform to international audiences, including a tour to New York last year.

A £500,000 charitable donation from the David Ross Foundation last year went on enrichment programmes for pupils at the trust's schools, which serve some of the country's most deprived areas.

These programmes include an outdoor adventure trip to Canada, sending two pupils to the Nasa-backed space camp in Alabama, and plans for students to visit the Caribbean island of St Vincent to support a water aid project.

Sport, one of Ross's passions, also plays an important part of the trust's offering (Boris Johnson nominated him to sit on the board of the London organising committee for the 2012 Olympics).

A spokesperson for Ark said it raised funds to supplement its core finances and to offer a "better educational experience for the children we serve."

"This is especially important for us, as our schools are all non-selective, and located in economically disadvantaged communities."

The spokesperson said the additional cash allowed the trust to offer better learning materials, music lessons and enrichment opportunities.

The money is undoubtedly filtering through to change the lives of some of the poorest pupils in the country – offering them life chances that would not be possible without the donations.

But is it creating an uneven schools system?



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

PHILANTHRO-PHILES

UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD?

In 2014, Ark was rated by the Department for Education as the highest performing large multi-academy trust on student progress measures.

It is regularly cited by ministers as a leading light of its academies programme and is regarded as one of the country's most successful sponsors.

But does Ark's additional charitable millions give it an unfair leg up on schools without wealthy backers?

The £3.6 million received by Ark last year works out at nearly £106,000 for each school that it runs.

This is at a time of squeezed school budgets, with funding for extracurricular activities among the first to be chopped.

Janet Downs, a state school campaigner, says: "It's inequitable. State education is supposed to be equal for all."

Downs also raises the issue of charitable donations from

parents. School leaders in affluent areas are able to call on support from wealthier parents to provide funding for better facilities, unlike leaders in less advantaged schools, where "parents aren't in a position to help financially".

Parent donations are classified in annual accounts under the "donations" section in "voluntary income" – however, other sums such as legacy donations, can be included in this figure.

Examples of large donations found in our analysis include the London Oratory, the top Catholic school in Fulham, west London, attended by Tony Blair's children. Donations totalled £152,648 for 2015.

Of that, £63,370 is classed as "scholarship donations". This appears to be donations linked to the school's Schola Cantorum, a programme that provides pupils with a choral education and that has close links to the University of Oxford.



Christine Bayliss



Toby Young

The school did not respond when approached by *Schools Week*.

Another school, previously featured in *Schools Week* after unlawfully asking parents for donations, is the Grey Coat Hospital School, in Westminster.

Attended by the daughters of prime minister David Cameron and former education secretary Michael Gove, the school recorded voluntary income of "private fund donations and legacies" of £104,000 last year. In 2014, that figure was £249,000.

The West London Free School, in Hammersmith, headed by Toby Young, also made headlines in 2014 after reportedly securing almost £70,000 from parental donations in the two years since its opening.

Annual accounts show its trust, the West London Free School Academy Trust, received a healthy £42,268 of donations in 2015.

Allan Hickie, of UHY Hacker, says the difference between parental donations and large sums from sponsors is that

parental cash can go in "unrestricted funds", which means it can be spent on core costs, such as new buildings.

He says he has recently dealt with academies that want to hire professional fundraisers to expand their charitable activities and encourage more parents to donate.

Christine Bayliss, an academy trust founder and former civil servant at the Department for Education, says there is already a "huge uneven playing field in every town and city in the maintained sector. "As a governor of a maintained school in a deprived community... we were always at a disadvantage to the school on the other side of town with lots of middle-class parents who raised lots of extra cash for their school."

Cash from multi-millionaires is one way to rebalance donations. "At least Lord Nash sponsors a school that serves a disadvantaged community in Pimlico (in central London) and I guess that if he's giving them additional charitable donations that'll be a lot more than it got from its parents/community as a failing maintained school," she said.

MONEY IS GOLDEN, BUT SHOULD THEIR SILENCE ALSO BE?

So what motivates successful business people to hand over cash to schools? *Schools Week* approached a number of the trusts in our investigation in an attempt to ask benefactors directly.

Lord John Nash's Future academy trust did not respond to repeated requests for an interview. Ark said it could not provide either its chief executive or any trustee for interview.

The Harris Federation said it did not comment on sources of charitable income. Inspiration Trust said Agnew did not want to contribute to our piece.

A search of articles already in the public domain reveal further insights, though.

On the Harris Federation's website, Lord

Harris says he set up the trust because he wanted children in London to have a better education than he did.

Harris left school in his early teens to help to run the family business after the death of his father.

He says: "I want every child that comes through the door of a Harris academy to leave having grown as an individual, having enjoyed their education and being well-placed for a successful and happy life."

In an article in *The Jewish Chronicle*, Lord Stanley Fink (at Ark) says his charitable approach comes from his parents who had the philosophy of "if you were approached by somebody you knew or a cause you had a connection with, it wasn't a question of

'yes' or 'no', but of 'how much?'"

He told the publication: "If you are fortunate to be able to pay high-rate tax, then you can afford to give a bit more to charity. How much more is a matter for one's own conscience."

Angela Kail, head of the funders team at the charity think-tank New Philanthropy Capital and author of a recent report into education charities, told *Schools Week* that most people give because they are asked.

"The primary motivation is to make a difference. Education is seen as the silver bullet – it is giving people life chances and social mobility."

However, Tamasin Cave, book author and founder of the Spinwatch website,

says education is going the same way as the NHS with "more outsourcing to the private sector".

She splits donors into three categories: those motivated by the idea of giving back to society, those driven by prejudices (specifically that the private sector will do a better job of running schools), and those who see privatisation as a "commercial opportunity, now or in the future."

"There needs to be far greater scrutiny over whose money is propping up the school system and why."



WHO ARE THEY?

LORD JOHN NASH SCHOOLS TRUST: FUTURE ACADEMIES HOW MUCH DONATED: £2 MILLION TO SUPPORT WORK OF THE TRUST'S ACADEMIES

DONATION VEHICLE: Future charity, where Nash is chair of trustees
BACKGROUND: A barrister-turned-venture capitalist who set up private equity firm Sovereign Capital, which invests in companies in healthcare and education.

Through Future charity, which sponsors inner-city projects, Nash and his wife Caroline, a stockbroker, in 2008 were chosen to sponsor Pimlico academy, an inner London secondary. Nash pledged £2 million to support the trust, and according to charity accounts, donated £315,000 as part of that pledge in 2013, and another £250,000 in 2014.

Nash was also appointed by then education secretary Michael Gove as a non-executive director at the Department for Education in

2010 to advise how "government departments can be run in the most effective and business-like way".

He was made a life peer in January 2013 so he could become a junior schools minister – responsibilities include academies and free schools, school capital and school governance. His peerage was criticised at the time after it was reported that he and his wife had donated nearly £300,000 to the Conservative party. Future Academies now runs four schools.



LORD PHILIP HARRIS SCHOOLS TRUST: HARRIS FEDERATION HOW MUCH DONATED: NOT KNOWN

BACKGROUND: Harris took over his family's carpet business at the age of 15 before setting up Carpetright, now one of the country's largest floor covering companies with more than 450 outlets.

After becoming one of the first philanthropists to set up a city technology college in 1990, Harris began sponsoring schools through the Harris Federation.

The trust now runs 37 schools, many of them failing, in and around London. Of the 25 federation schools inspected so far, all have been rated either good or outstanding.

Reports from 2014 said he had donated more than £3 million to the Conservative party. Harris and his family are said to donate 20 per cent

of their earnings to charities, including Great Ormond Street Hospital, Prostate Cancer UK and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.



IS EDUCATION HEADING TOWARDS PRIVATISATION?

It was widely reported in 2013 that former education secretary Michael Gove was considering privatising academies, although no proposals were acted on.

Ian Comfort, chief executive of the country's largest academy chain Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), says: "Is there a position in the future where the private sector could make money out of academies? The government has said no. I would say it may become an option."

Frank Green, the former national schools commissioner, says the rise of business people in schools and their focus on the "bottom line" is "one of the most important things you can bring to a [school



Ian Comfort

governance] board.

"Generally, looking at how headteachers spend their money and why is a good thing

for the system."

He also praises the links and capacity that directors of chains such as Ark have to other wealthy people who can donate to change children's lives.

Another concern regularly cited is the seeming rise in outsourcing of services.

A recent investigation in *The Observer* newspaper looked at the Bright Tribe academy trust, which the paper reported had paid nearly £3 million to businesses associated with the trust's founder, venture capitalist Michael Dwan.

A spokesperson for Dwan told *The Observer* while he is aware "some will seek to find ulterior motives for his actions", he

is involved to "promote better outcomes for our children".

While it may not be a factor in motivation to donate, many academy sponsors have also received honours for their services to education. Ark's Paul Marshall was knighted in the Queen's Birthday honours this month – one of several academy leaders to get a gong.



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >

DAVID ROSS

SCHOOLS TRUST: DAVID ROSS EDUCATION TRUST
HOW MUCH DONATED: £4.3 MILLION IN PAST TWO YEARS

DONATION VEHICLE: David Ross Foundation

BACKGROUND: David Ross qualified as an accountant before co-founding mobile phone firm Carphone Warehouse in 1991.

He is reportedly a friend of David Cameron and Boris Johnson – the latter nominating him for a place of the board of the organising committee of the 2012 London Olympics.

In 2008, he resigned from several high profile roles after it emerged he had used a large chunk of his shares in the businesses, such as National Express, as security against personal loans without telling the companies.

He was also chairman of the family business Cosalt, a marine safety and leisure company in Grimsby, before it went into administration in 2013.

Ross set up the David Ross Foundation in 2006, which now sponsors 33 academies under the David Ross Education Trust. The schools are based across Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire.

Ross was in the running to become Ofsted chief inspector in 2014, but missed out after conflict of interest concerns, including that he had donated £220,000 to the Conservatives.



SIR THEODORE AGNEW

SCHOOLS TRUST: INSPIRATION TRUST
HOW MUCH DONATED: £148,000 IN 2015

DONATION VEHICLE: Personal funds/the Public Interest Foundation

BACKGROUND: Agnew built his fortune via a string of companies – including, according to the *Eastern Daily Press*, running a business cleaning flats in Australia that had been used as brothels.

After moving back to the UK, Agnew founded business outsourcing firm Town & Country Assistance, which went on to have annual revenues of £40 million. He reportedly pioneered outsourcing to India.

He sponsored Norfolk school Greenacre primary before founding the Inspiration Trust in 2012. It now sponsors 13 schools across Norfolk.

Agnew was also non-executive director of the Department for Education, before moving over to

the same role at the Ministry of Justice last year.



LORD STANLEY FINK

SCHOOLS TRUST: ARK SCHOOLS
HOW MUCH DONATED: £2 MILLION

BACKGROUND: The multi-millionaire hedge fund manager is a former treasurer of the Conservative party and, with donations of more than £3 million, reportedly one of the top 20 biggest donors to the party.

According to a profile on the Philanthropy Impact website, his largest gift was £2 million to Absolute Return for Kids (Ark) to sponsor the Burlington Danes City Academy, in west London.

Fink, who is said to give 30 per cent of his annual income to charity, also sits on the board of Ark and the schools trust it sponsors, Ark Schools. Annual fundraising dinners by Ark reportedly raise up to £15 million. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge attended the charity's 10th anniversary gala dinner.

Former Labour Party leader Ed Miliband claimed in the House of Commons in 2015 that Fink had sought to avoid UK tax.

Fink responded by reportedly telling the London Evening Standard he did take "vanilla" tax avoidance measures, adding: "The expression tax avoidance is so wide that everyone does tax avoidance at some level."



ALAN HOWARD

SCHOOLS TRUST: UNITED LEARNING
HOW MUCH DONATED: £5 MILLION

DONATION VEHICLE: Alan Howard Foundation

BACKGROUND: Howard donated £5 million to United Learning in 2014 – dubbed by prime minister David Cameron as "one of the most generous this country has seen to a schools organisation".

Howard's charitable foundation reportedly aims to support charities that support Jewish causes – with a particular focus on Holocaust education and Israeli film.

He is worth an estimated £1.6 billion and was listed as one of the 40 highest-earning hedge fund managers.

Howard is also a former director of the Conservative Friends of Israel group and now lives in Geneva, in Switzerland.

He has reportedly donated £116,000 to the Conservatives.



PHILANTHRO-PHILES

SHOULD CASH BRING INFLUENCE?

The academies programme has pushed education up the philanthropy agenda, says Angela Kail of think tank New Philanthropy Capital.

Many academy sponsors featured here pledged their cash in the early days of the programme when the Labour government asked benefactors to stump up at least £2 million per school.

But cash also brought power. Lord Nash, for example, alongside his wife Caroline, are members of the academy trust they set up, which means they have control over setting its strategic vision and the power to appoint or remove trustees.

Nash is also chair of directors, and his wife a director alongside five others. This allows them to challenge and monitor school performance and manage the trust's finances.

Caroline Nash is also in charge of the trust's curriculum.

Nash was made a life peer in 2013 so he could become a junior schools minister under former education secretary Michael Gove.

Most of the directors of Ark Schools



Paul Marshall

are from the hedge fund industry and are sponsors of Ark charity.

Lord Fink is a director, as is the newly knighted Paul Marshall, a hedge fund manager reportedly worth £300 million. The Liberal Democrat donor was appointed as a lead non-executive director at the DfE in 2013.

The other directors are Ron Bellor and Gerard Griffin (both hedge fund



managers), Paul Dunning and Anthony Williams (both formerly of investment bank Goldman Sachs), Neil Woods (partner at professional services firm Deloitte) and Lucy Heller (chief executive of Ark and former joint managing director of News International's former education subsidiary, TSL Education).

They set the overarching strategy of the trust, approving its annual budget and making major decisions on expenditure. They delegate functions to the local governing bodies for each academy, but four of the directors also serve as chairs of an individual governing body.

David Ross is also a member and director of the trust he founded and was also appointed chair of trustees at the New Schools Network in April this year, the influential charity working with free school founders to help

them to win approval for their bids.

Ian Comfort of AET says that money is not the reason benefactors support the academy movement. "People who set up a trust have a big impact on how it's run – whether they have put money in or not."

The influence of hedge funders, with other business professionals, into the running of schools follows a drive by the government.

Michael Gove appointed four new board members to join the DfE in 2010. One was a headteacher, Sue John, the other three were Nash, Agnew and lawyer Anthony Salz, an executive vice-chairman of Rothschild, one of the world's largest investment banks.

Gove said at the time they would help the department to run in the most "effective and business-like way, by drawing on the experience of what works outside government".

This ethos is also now sought in school governance. Nash said in 2010: "The best businesses have a skilful board of directors keeping them on the right path. I want to see the same approach in schools."

THE SILENT INVESTORS

Only certain people are attracted to the "influence element" of donations, according to Kail.

She said: "There are an awful lot of people who are quietly giving money to local schools with no interest in joining the board, let alone making radical changes."

For example, the Private Equity Foundation (PEF) takes donations, normally from wealthy backers, and invests in other charities that fit its "venture philanthropy" model.

This means taking concepts and techniques from venture capital and applying them for a social, rather than financial, return.

In January, the charity gave £100,000 to the Dixons trust, which runs schools in some of the most deprived areas of Bradford. The cash was to fund "ongoing strategic and operational support" so it could grow to take on more schools.

Andy Ratcliffe, chief executive of the charity Impetus-PEF, says: "Donors are attracted by the charity's pledge to develop high-impact services that produce clear and measurable, life-changing support."

This seems a popular view. On the Philanthropy Impact website Lord Fink of Ark says: "I look for efficiency, projects that affect

many lives at low cost. I like to invest in what I call 'transformational' charities."

Impetus-PEF also offers donors the chance to give shares, which means the gift will, according to its website, be "exempt from capital gains tax, and you can also reduce your taxable income by the market value of the shares".

A spokesperson for the charity said these tax benefits apply when supporting any charity in the UK, adding: "We haven't actually received many donations in the form of shares, but it's pretty common for other charities."

IS THIS FUNDING NOW PROPPING UP THE EDUCATION SYSTEM?

Funding is now one of the biggest issues that headteachers face. Ian Comfort of Academies Enterprise Trust says, for instance, that schools can no longer rely on government funding as a single source of income. "If they do, they will run into financial difficulty. The pressure on budgets is huge. You have to look at other sources of income – which might be charitable donations."

He says AET, which does not benefit from a wealthy backer, hires out its school premises and leisure facilities to make an income stream.

But sponsors with benefactors will, he says, be facing the same pressure in terms of how they allocate their resources. However, charitable donations allow them to put more money into enrichment opportunities, something that he backs.

At think tank Policy Exchange, Jonathan

Simons, head of education, says charitable donations do make it a "little bit easier for schools that have the cash to handle the budget squeeze".

He says the extra money allows some schools to offer provision that private schools more commonly offer – such as extra technology, new buildings and additional sports equipment.

But this is not an original aim of the academies programme, which Labour introduced when school budgets were rising year-on-year.

Simons says the original money sought by government from sponsors was for new buildings – and to show their commitment.

But one academy chain source says the Department for Education has been clear that trusts must become sustainable and not rely on their sponsor's cash.

The source says his trust's sponsor wanted to create a "capital pot" that its schools could make bids for.

However, this was pooh-poohed by the department, and instead the pot was set up as an interest-free loan that schools must pay back over 15 years.

The DfE declined to comment when asked to confirm this by *Schools Week*.

Many of the academy chains are also clear their aim is to become self-sustainable.

A spokesperson for Ark Schools says its business plan is to be "entirely financially self-sustainable in the future, but in the meantime we are lucky to have the support of Ark to help us to support our schools".

Comfort is adamant that charitable donations do not make school funding unfair; "it's the way it is."

That money is going directly to children and young people and we don't want to stop that. I just wish we [AET] were in that position."



Jonathan Simons

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

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SHOULD WE GO OR SHOULD WE STAY?

Next week there will be an election on the European Union. As a former citizenship teacher, I can tell you life will be easier for those citizenship teachers still out there if the country votes to leave. Pupils hate learning about the EU, teachers hate teaching it. It's abstract, and far away, and difficult to explain. So is the Second World War. So is respiration. Both are still important to teach, though, and so is the EU. Like or loathe it, the impact on daily life is as huge – even if as invisible – as the war and the oxygen in our lungs.

At *Schools Week* we've always taken a decidedly apolitical line. What matters is that people have information from which they can make their own choices.

Our approach to the upcoming referendum has been no different. In recent weeks we looked dispassionately at issues such as teacher visas and the need for more foreign language teachers, many of whom are coming from within Europe. Teacher trainee figures are, for the first time, looking vaguely healthy this year, partly because of a 5 per cent increase from teachers living outside Britain but within the EU.

What I wanted to present this week was a reasoned thought on what

would happen in education under either scenario. For the Remain camp we have a thoughtful article from Amy Finch, a lead researcher at the right-leaning think-tank Reform. For Leave, we struggled. We contacted academics, fact-checkers, think-tanks, political experts. No one wanted to comment. Why? It's not clear. People were on holiday, they only knew about economic implications, there was no one with "sufficient expertise" to comment.

So herein lies the rub for *Schools Week*. How can we present a series of options when we don't know what will happen next?

There are some obvious points to be made.

Fewer people coming from the EU means fewer children in school. If Leave wins, and free movement of people is stopped (not a certainty, but let's assume), then the additional pressure on schools from migration will no doubt reduce. But so will the number of people moving here with the language skills we need for teaching. And if allowances are made to let teachers in (again, not a certainty, but let's assume) those teachers will likely bring their children – and so the numbers continue.

Job losses will hit certain areas

hard, and schools almost always feel the repercussions. If trade becomes difficult because of pulling out of the EU, then some businesses will move. It doesn't need to be many.

The town where I grew up had a couple of call centres and a factory. One of those folding would tip it over the edge. If you think teaching teenagers is rough, try teaching ones who are watching their parents' livelihoods fall apart.

On the positive side, I'm told fewer restrictions on working hours and employment can mean schools will become more innovative. But even this rankles. It sounds an awful lot like that innovation involves teachers and support staff working more hours and having fewer protections.

There's also the fact that Boris Johnson and Michael Gove are seen as the leading lights in the Leave campaign. Should they be victorious, political wisdom so far is saying one or the other would take over the Conservative party

leadership. If you think Michael Gove was a solid education secretary, then this might push you towards Leave. It would be a short-term move, though. As someone recently pointed out, a problem for South Africa is that it wrote its new political rules around the assumption that Nelson Mandela would live forever. Likewise, too many schools falter after realising their entire system was predicated on a charismatic headteacher and none is now available.

Ultimately, you don't need *Schools Week* to tell you how to vote. Every other national newspaper, plus the noisy drinker in the pub, will tell you that. But I am sorry we can't tell you more about what this referendum means for schools and, because of that, I'm pretty nervous.

Gove doesn't engender a great deal of faith, either. His behaviour as education secretary with regards to the rules of democracy – his use of terror laws to pass legislation, his flagrant breaching of information rules – makes me think he shouldn't be trusted with untrammelled sovereignty.

But the noisy bloke in the pub might be worth asking for a second opinion.



READERS' REPLY



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If we join a MAT, will we lose our individual identity?

Ian Taylor, Bristol



What about the option of not joining a multi-academy trust at all if you want to keep your identity and very existence as a school? When you are in a MAT your school loses all separate identity. It becomes like a branch of Tesco. A branch of Tesco has no power to join Waitrose or have its own budget. If your school has a financial surplus at the end of the year, it can be given to another school in the MAT. The budget belongs to the MAT, not to your school.

It is a one-way street. You can join another MAT if the trust chief executive or education secretary decides to transfer you. And forget about speaking the truth about what is really happening in your MAT. This is definitely not on the table. If you are lucky you might get a payoff through a gagging agreement.

Jane Eades, London



I notice that there is no mention about terms and conditions of employment of teachers and what the process will be for recognising existing service.

It is also right to point out that whatever decision a school may make about joining a specific MAT, the secretary of state can take the school away from that MAT and give it to another one.

A school would also need to check how much the MAT takes in top slicing and what that covers. Although this may be less than the local authority, it is also likely not to offer the same services.

Schools deemed by Ofsted to be "inadequate" or "requiring improvement" are better served by the local authority than they are by a MAT, given that community schools improve faster than academies.

What is going on with deputy RSCs?



Andrew Gladstone-Heighton,
Newcastle upon Tyne

Is this just the DfE re-creating local authorities' resource in their own image?



Quirky Teacher @iQuirky_Teacher

No money to pay exhausted teachers a bit more, but plenty sloshing about to pay this lot to swan about.

Charles Wright @CharlesWright57

Job creation in bureaucracy. Any estimates of jobs that could be lost under all-academy plan?

Ofqual promises new guidance on pupils' right to challenge grades

Facebook - Lynne Holland

We need transparency. We need people actually qualified to mark and parity between the exam boards. Our young people should not have their futures at risk because of incompetence.



@eleonorasfalcon

How about they fix the quality of marking so appeals and re-marks aren't necessary?

TA standards "nothing to do with us", says Gibb – as unions publish report

Facebook – Lisa Marie

Maybe there is secrecy over the teaching assistant standards because they'd have to give us a proper pay structure, similar to that of teachers, whereas right now we tend to be "cheap labour"?

Facebook – Tanya Sokoloff de Diaz

The government wants nothing to do with this because it leads to raising salaries! I mean, how dreadful would that be? Paying people better for their professional commitment AND offering the status of recognised standards!

Inquiry submissions reveal how academy chains want to be inspected



Karen McCormack @mccormackehu

"A peer review system would be preferred" by multi-academy trusts – why would a school-based Ofsted Inspection not work?

@IanMearnsMP

Many good local authorities have engaged in peer review for years, but that did not exempt them from the inspection regime.

Nikos Prokopiou @NikosProkopiou5

If only all schools had a say in how they wanted to be inspected!

Are we heading towards a HExit?



Kevin Pascoe @KevinPascoe

When you see what this government is doing to teachers and schools in England, I thank God I am in Wales.

Schools seek Russell group graduates for £12,000 TA jobs – others need not apply

REPLY OF THE WEEK

David Barry, London

 **The continuing increase in the cost of housing in London – which makes renting even in shared accommodation dearer and the prospect of getting a place on your own remote for any starting teacher – is shaping up to cause a general recruitment crisis. Unless, of course, that problem is "solved" by the national funding formula prompting such cuts in London that teachers are laid off rather than recruited anyway.**

REPLY OF THE WEEK
RECEIVES A SCHOOLS
WEEK MUG!



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

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

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PROFILE

EMMA BRECKENRIDGE

“MATCHED-ABILITY TEACHING WORKS HERE. I WON’T BE CHANGING IT”

LAURA MCINERNEY

@MISS_MCINERNEY

Emma Breckenridge, headteacher of Kingfisher Hall primary academy and Enfield Heights academy, north London

In the first months of 1985, *EastEnders* started, Gorbachev was elected, and Band Aid spent five weeks at No 1 with *Do They Know It's Christmas?*

It was also the year that Emma Breckenridge, headteacher of two outstanding primary schools in north London, was born.

If your first thought is that superheads are getting younger and that you are getting much older, then spare a thought for how Sir Steve Lancashire – head of the vast Reach2 academy chain – must feel. He taught Breckenridge when she was in year 4.

“Being taught by him was a laugh a minute,” she says, as we hide from a gigantic thunderstorm in her airy office at Kingfisher Hall free school in Enfield. “He’s a funny guy anyway and I love maths, but he made maths so fun. Everything was game-based, it always felt like we were playing. There was a lot of competition in his classrooms, it was always ‘let’s do it against the time!’ It was paced, it was energy... it was goldfish as pets. All the little things that make schools brilliant happened in that classroom.”

The answer reveals Breckenridge’s characteristic enthusiasm – and her love of lists. Listening to her talk is like being repeatedly punched with affection.

The Cuckoo Hall academy trust in which she works has had difficult times. Served with a financial notice last year, it had been investigated by the Education Funding Agency for allegations of bullying and staff harassment. Some processes were found not to have been followed at one school in the trust (not the ones Breckenridge leads), although the bullying allegations were deemed unfounded.

Amid these difficulties, both Kingfisher Hall and Enfield Heights gained an outstanding rating from Ofsted. The latter is particularly significant as it was a takeover from CfBT academy trust who relinquished the free school after it received a requires improvement rating in 2014.

“For Enfield Heights, the turnaround was about bringing in an almost entire new team to a very small school community who were very, very close and making them believe in us through results. We could stand there and say, ‘Oh, we’re great – look at me, I’m from down the road and I’ve been a deputy and we got an outstanding Ofsted, I’m marvellous.’

“But people don’t believe that. People want to see lots of time on the playground. Lots of time investing in people. Being in the classrooms myself. I’m a firm believer that if you go into a new school, get into the classrooms. Don’t take someone else’s word for it, go in, see with your own eyes.

“Having that pace, that vision, that very clear direction, they all come with challenges along the way, but keeping

your head high and remembering why you’re there is what keeps you on track.”

That phrase “remembering why you’re there” is repeated often in the hours I spend at Kingfisher Hall. It’s a new building, beautifully designed, split across two levels, and Breckenridge is clear about the purpose behind every flooring choice, every wall position, every window. “We chose to have the classroom windows only overlooking green spaces because many of our pupils don’t have a garden,” she says.

Her journey to becoming a teacher began at the University of Leeds, where she studied education and social policy. Inspired by her mother who worked as an advocate for children’s charities, she didn’t do a teaching undergraduate degree as she wanted to keep “the door open”. But the more she learned about education, the more she felt it was for her.

She completed her PGCE at Leeds with two school placements: one in an “upper-class” village school and other in a tough school in Dewsbury. “It was hard, but I loved every minute of it, because even on the nights you go home crying and thinking you can’t do it anymore, you know you are making a difference.”

Moving back to London to be near her family, she took her first job at Cuckoo Hall school, which later became Cuckoo Hall academy. After five years of teaching she applied to become a senior leader at Kingfisher which Cuckoo Hall, now an academy trust, was opening as a free school. Rising to deputy, she then went to Enfield Heights, and now oversees both.

She credits her background in dance and drama with giving her “natural” performance skills, which are helpful, though not necessary, in the classroom. “You don’t have to be a performer to be a great teacher – we’ve got many teachers that are not showy and dancing around – but I can’t resist it ... at Christmas, year 3 were preparing for their performance and I went and poked my nose in, until the teachers told me to get out of the way.”

What was she doing? “Giving the sheep some guidance on how to be more sheep-like,” she says, doing a fairly good sheep impressions as she says it.

Controversially, the school uses “matched-ability teaching”. It’s a phrase Breckenridge uses a number of times and is something the rest of us would recognise as “setting”.

Under the model, pupils are assessed each half term and then grouped for maths and English, depending on their current ability. Pupils from across the year groups are pooled: older ones sitting with younger ones as needed. As the school fills to capacity the plan is to have children from across all year groups to continue blending.

Breckenridge insists the model works well. “It means that progress is rapid, achievement is excellent, children get more one-to-one assistance, they get more time, targets are sharper and learning more focused.”

It also works for teachers, she says, as it means they get an opportunity to teach across age ranges, and can deliver to top sets in the subjects they feel most comfortable with.

The idea that 11-year-olds sit with 5-year-olds is controversial, with many secondary schools now eschewing setting even within year groups. But Breckenridge is nonchalant: “For us, in this area and in the school I work in, it’s an approach that really, really works

GE



IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What is your favourite book?

Adult book? Corny, but *Pride and Prejudice*; I can spend a lazy Sunday watching the BBC version, all nine hours of it! It's feelgood. If it were a children's book, I love the Lemony Snicket collection. I've had many a happy hour grossing out year 3 children with those books.

If you could live in any historical period, when would it be?

The Stone Age. Just because it was a simple life, wasn't it? Lots of meat. And plants.

Can you describe a phone call that changed your life?

When I was at university the phone call from my brother to say that he and his partner were having a baby. They now have two. I am an auntie to two marvellous girls and they have enhanced our whole family.

Where is your favourite place to go on holiday?

I have just come back from my mum and dad's timeshare in Antigua. We were all there last week. It was lovely. Being there on the beach, no distractions, quality family time. Rest. Good food. Early nights. Love it.

What is the best career advice you ever received?

Don't take things personally. And keep smiling. You have to remember why you are here – it will make you smile.

and it has been validated by Ofsted. So I won't be changing to have 30 children of the same age in the classroom for maths and English, because I don't think these children will succeed in the same way as they do at the moment."

She exhales and looks ready for the next question. This is the end of that conversation.

With decades in the sector stretching ahead, her future possibilities are clearly huge. She has considered becoming a trust chief executive one day, and laughs when the role of Ofsted chief is mentioned: would she go for it when an opening rolls around again in five years' time?

"Never say never to anything," she says, "I'm not one to turn down opportunities if they are the right thing for me to do at the time and if I am the right person for it. If it wasn't in the best interests of a trust for me to be CEO, I wouldn't do it. If it was, then absolutely, I would step up because that's my nature.

"With Ofsted, if it was the right thing for me at that point in my life, I wouldn't say no. I love being in schools and having children around me. Being able to step into an early years' classroom on a bad day is... wonderful. Within five minutes you can turn a day upside down and you can remember why you're here."

A month after Breckenridge was born, Whitney Houston released a song with the first line "I believe the children are our future". It's worth remembering that those children become headteachers quicker than we might expect.

Have you sub

The image shows three devices displaying the Schools Week website. The desktop monitor in the background shows the full website layout with a navigation menu, a search bar, and several news articles. The tablet on the left shows a mobile-optimized version of the site. The smartphone on the right shows a further optimized mobile view. An orange starburst graphic at the bottom center contains the text "SCHOOLS WEEK SUBSCRIBERS RECEIVE:".

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OPINION



AMY FINCH

Head of education at think tank Reform

Business as usual . . . but not at the DfE

What would a Remain vote mean for the Department for Education and schools? *Schools Week* asked Amy Finch for her predictions

In the event of Remain, it will be business as usual for most of the government. The prime minister will continue to drive his “life chances” strategy, and the chancellor will push forward on his “devolution revolution”. But business is pretty unusual at the Department for Education right now.

Nicky Morgan has just embarked on a reform programme even more radical than her predecessor’s. It has divided the Commons, but not neatly between party lines. The recent concession on full academisation has only just kept her own party’s rebellion at bay.

To neutralise resistance to her reforms, Morgan will need to resolve two tensions. The first is about parental involvement in education. Removing the requirement for parent governors was the second-most controversial issue of the education white paper. It led Lucy Powell, the shadow education secretary, to claim that parents’ voices were being relegated. That is a criticism that any Conservative politician would hate to hear, even more so from the left.

Some Conservatives have a similar concern, believing academy chains too big and corporate to accommodate parents’ demands. Where is the innovative, small-scale, parent-led approach that free schools have pioneered? To them, free schools have an easily communicable role for parents in the setting-up of new schools. However, free schools have been assigned to fix other problems, such as lack of school places, rather than specifically as a means to engage parents. Even Powell has said: “[The] government’s original concept of a free school is all but dead. The Tories have all but abandoned the concept of parent-led schools.”

Re-establishing free schools as a means to involve parents and challenge existing schools could help Morgan to brush these criticisms aside. Yet there are other ways to enhance the parent voice. The education white paper floated the idea of parents petitioning regional school commissioners (RSCs) for their child’s academy to change chain, but this could result in destructive rather than constructive parental involvement. Giving parents more democratic control over who presides on the academy or academy chain governing body, or in the election of RSCs, could be one way to involve parents more.

The second and related tension to be resolved is around local control of schools. Across other public services, such as health, social care, criminal justice and welfare, the government is moving towards greater devolution. About £6 billion has been given to Greater Manchester to integrate health and social care. There are plans to pilot the government’s disability employment services, the health and work programme, in ten local councils. In education, however, the vision is that local councils will no longer be involved in either funding or providing schools.

Many welcome the split between

The Opposition could have more in common with the chancellor than Morgan does

“purchaser” and “provider” in schools, pointing to the conflicts of interest created by an organisation that both runs and is accountable for delivering something. Yet there is an inconsistency between the current schools policy and the approach taken by many other departments, driven by the chancellor’s devolution revolution. RSCs, unlike commissioners in the NHS, do not have formal commissioning powers, such as routine budgets and contracts with schools. The Labour party has said it would like local government to have control of school place planning, admissions and the building of new schools. This could give the Opposition more in common with the chancellor than Morgan does.

Rebooting parental involvement and redesigning the role of local government will be key to the politics of reform following a vote to Remain. Some may not think it is necessary from a policy perspective. Parents maintain the ultimate arbiters of school quality through choice and competition, albeit with limitations on both sides, it could be argued. Some central power has already been given to RSCs, one could add. But these policies are too nuanced to counteract the splashes hitting the headlines after the white paper. Solutions to both these issues will be necessary to make Morgan’s school reforms possible and keep enough people on side.



TANIA TIRRAORO

Chief executive, Special Needs Jungle, Trustee, Genetic Alliance UK

Why most parents don’t go to SEND tribunals

Law firm Baker Small was criticised in many media this week for boasting about defeating parents of children with special needs in tribunals. But their behaviour is not isolated, says Tania Tirraoro – it is illustrative of broader cultural attitudes

The Children and Families Act 2014 was supposed to transform parents’ experience of getting help for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Many of us also hoped it would help to change the mind-set from “parents are pests” to “parents know their children best” – the latter statement is even included in the new SEND code of practice.

But even now, there are still far too many people in schools and local authorities who lack the necessary training in both the mechanics and the ethos of the new system. As a result, there has been chaos, with transfers of children’s statements of SEN to the new education, health and care plan (EHCP) taking months longer than the deadline of 20 weeks.

It’s the lack of culture change that’s a particular problem. This was all too evident over the weekend in a series of gloating tweets from Baker Small, a law firm, ridiculing parents of a disabled child over their apparent loss of an appeal at a SEND tribunal. The firm holds more than £1 million worth of contracts representing a number of local authorities at the tribunal, defending their decisions about SEND provision.

Watching it unfold on Twitter was a surreal experience and a revealing one. The apparent anti-parent stance is not an aberration; it is sadly still all too common even after almost two years of the new rules.

Going to the SEND tribunal is not something parents do lightly. It’s a stressful, frightening experience, particularly when the local authority (LA) has brought in a lawyer and the parent cannot afford representation. Therefore, many may choose not to appeal because life with a disabled child – or children – is difficult enough, without making enemies of the school and the LA, which parents fear may rebound on the way their child is treated. Only the most fearless or the ones who can afford a lawyer go ahead, unless you are lucky enough to find free advocacy.

One of the things the new system brought in was independent supporters to help

parents from the moment they apply for an EHCP to the final decision. However, there aren’t enough of them, and the support does not extend to an appeal. Parents then have to find their own support, either from a lawyer, a paid advocate or from a charity such as IPSEA, SOSSEN or, if the child has autism, from the National Autistic Society.

For the local authority, however, if they’ve shelled out money to a law firm and somebody appeals, it’s easy just to hand the case over. Not every LA does this – some send their own tribunal officers to the appeal and now, more cases have an informal telephone hearing to help to resolve certain issues.

The changes were supposed to stop things ever getting this far. However, while the Children and Families Act contains the broad principles, it left the detail to be filled in by the new SEND code of practice (CoP) and regulations. But the CoP leaves far too much detail to be figured out by local authorities and schools.

At this point, you’re relying on the will of

Transfers of statements to the new plans are taking months rather than weeks

an LA to meet the spirit of the law and the expertise of each individual special needs co-ordinator to be able to interpret the CoP for the good of the child. It all comes down to training, and there simply hasn’t been enough of it.

But when parents are routinely misinformed, while schools and LAs still deny the existence of a child’s SEND, despite evidence to the contrary, while academies remain reluctant to take on children with SEND and while far too many new EHCPs do not sufficiently quantify or specify support as is required by law, then the tribunal is where more families will end up.

Without understanding – and embracing – the principle that the new system puts the child and family at the centre of the process, it will have been a colossal waste of the half a billion pounds it has so far cost.

Two grades, three categories, central data analysis and no aggregation. Go on Amanda Spielman, urges Matt Hood, what do you say to that?

We have a new Ofsted chief inspector agreed by Number 10 and awaiting sign-off. Hurray. But what should Amanda Spielman do on day one? Ofsted has already made big improvements in the quality and consistency of their inspection teams. But there's more to do.

If it was me, what would be the first order of business?

Get rid of four grades and replace them with two – compliant and not compliant

It's not Ofsted's job to provide headteachers with "outstanding" logos to fly above their schools. Nor do I think Ofsted can reliably distinguish between good and outstanding schools.

By continuing with the divisive good/outstanding approach Ofsted will damage behaviour and hamper innovation. I want people to worry about being compliant but I don't want them to stop innovating because they worry about not being "outstanding". Ofsted should think food hygiene inspector not Michelin star-awarding food critic.

Replace the existing four categories in Ofsted judgments with three new ones – strategy, implementation and safety – and inspect each differently

The current categories don't capture the two



MATT HOOD

Assistant headteacher, Heysham high school, Lancashire

If I were chief inspector, day one would look like this

pillars of good leadership: having a good plan and making it happen. By looking at themed categories it's not always clear what aspect of leadership you're looking at.

In a perfect world the first part of an inspection – booked a week in advance – would focus on strategy and implementation.

Strategy would involve a select committee-style submission of evidence (the school improvement plan) followed by a Q&A with the leadership team. The question would be simple: "does the school know itself and have a credible long-term plan to continue to improve?" If the plan is credible, the school is compliant.

To test implementation, inspectors would explore lines of enquiry from the school strategy (maybe six – half chosen by the school and half chosen by the inspectors). The question would change to: "does the inspection team have confidence that the school can implement its plan? Is the school actually doing what it says it is doing?" If it

can demonstrate the capacity to implement then the school is compliant.

Safety, meanwhile, should be separated from strategy and inspected on a no-notice basis.

Separate data judgments and give them to a national team of specialists, and judge them as compliant/non-compliant

Understanding school data is difficult. I regularly see school leaders and inspectors making statements about progress and attainment that lack even a basic understanding of statistical significance, correlation, causation or standard deviation. Training every inspector to be an analyst is neither possible nor necessary.

Taking data judgments out of the hands of inspectors and giving each school a compliant/non-complaint rating on their data linked to contextual floor targets (that is, a standard below which schools should never fall relative to its intake) makes more sense.

Make judgments on strategy, implementation, safety and data distinct; do not give a single overall grade

By keeping the four judgments separate and discussing them separately, you'd immediately jump to a more nuanced discussion about what a multi-academy trust/local authority (MAT/LA) might need to do next.

It would also give regional school commissioners (RSCs) a clear idea of what support the MAT/LA should be providing, and clarify exactly under what circumstances a change in school sponsor would be required.

For example, if a school had compliant data and strategy, but was struggling with implementation, an MAT/LA should provide implementation support. Only where a school was non-compliant across multiple categories over time would a change of sponsor be required.

Safety is different: any school found non-compliant in this would risk being taken over unless rapid improvements were made, regardless of other factors.

Under this approach, improving schools are given space if they are compliant with strategy, implementation and safety – even if their data is not (yet) compliant. Coasting schools would be challenged on their lack of strategy even if their data and safety was compliant.

And poor leaderships who talk the talk on strategy but fail miserably when it comes to implementing plans would be called out.

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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS
OF THE WEEK

To view individual blogs visit
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Our blog reviewer of the week is Emma Mattinson-Hardy, former primary school teacher and union organiser @emmaannhardy

Sitting here the day after the Northern Rocks conference, I realise that it is possible to be both exhausted and exhilarated. The weekend has left me in a more optimistic mood about the power the profession has to unite and force progress. In this age of austerity, the challenges our students are facing have never been greater and nor has the need for united action to ensure everyone gets the support and help they need.

We might be down but we are never out
@KilkennyChris

Our conference began on Saturday with a speech from Chris Kilkenny, a man who grew up in poverty in Edinburgh. His speech has stayed with me; that nagging sense of injustice and unfairness that I feel when I read or see increasing numbers of harsh, unforgiving behaviour policy has become louder.

"I was now starting to find school hard. Not academically as I was smart enough, but my ability to concentrate was being affected, I had so many things on my mind 24/7 – how would my mum be when I got home? Were my brothers OK in their foster placement? Who would be waiting for me at the gates after school? I was starting to struggle in classes and get into trouble for being disruptive. Yet still nobody would ask how I felt or if I was OK.

"To them I was just a disruptive student."
With this call for help at the end of this blog, I ask you, can we ever give up on children? "If you come across a young person who is struggling or is acting out, always remember; they might be down but, with your help, THEY ARE NEVER OUT!"

The phonics check: what does it prove?
@ReclaimSchools

During a conference debate on Saturday the phonics test was used as an example of a specific test for a very specific thing, a child's ability to decode words. In this blog the author argues that it is merely a test of a child's age. In a time where schools face crushing funding cuts, we should be challenging and questioning the money, emphasis and time spent on such a test.

"It turns out that August-born children are twice as likely to fail as September-born. In fact, a third of children born in August are being failed, when they are simply not old enough ... the pass rate worsens gradually by month of birth, from the oldest to the youngest. Overall, the data suggests that a third of the children who fail would have passed if they had been born in September."

Does it matter that the new Ofsted chief has never taught?
@aieshasmall

With all the problems in education, should we be concerned that the new chief inspector Amanda Spielman has never taught? During a Northern Rocks debate, most panellists expressed concern that she did not have an educational background. "To be honest, I don't know. Maybe, maybe not," says this blog. "Sir Michael Wilshaw, the outgoing chief inspector, had extensive experience as a teacher and headteacher (40-plus and 20-plus respectively) but he wasn't exactly the teachers' champion." What do you think?

Northern Rocks 2016
@DebraKidd

In this blog Debra recounts the birth of Northern Rocks, "In the autumn of 2013, Emma and I were having a Twitter chat.

'Did you go to Southampton today?' she asked

'I couldn't – it's so far and I've already been to two events in London this year. We should do something in the north.'

'Let's do it!' she said. And Northern Rocks was born."

I was a part-time infant teacher and Debra was teaching in a secondary school. Northern Rocks happened because of the support and encouragement shown by the wider teaching community. Because of that support, of people giving up their time free, it happened again this year.

"If there's one thing I want people to take from Northern Rocks, it is to replace any feeling of defeat and resignation with a feeling of collective power. "It's a reminder that teaching is first and foremost, an altruistic profession, full to the brim of people trying to build a better world."

BOOK REVIEW

The Class: Living and Learning in the Digital Age

Written by Sonia Livingstone and Julian Sefton-Green

Published by NYU Press

ISBN-10 1479824240

ISBN-13 978-1479824243

Reviewed by Naomi Ward, education consultant and English and media teacher



How do young people really feel about the future? How do they construct identities at home, at school and online? What's it like growing up in a hyper-connected yet individualistic world? What does it mean to young people "to be educated"? *The Class* explores these questions and more in a wide-ranging research project

exploring what it's like growing up in world mediated by digital technology.

As an experienced media studies teacher, I have been involved in classroom-based research about how young people construct digital identities. And in my academic reading, I have found that adults often focus on their own fear of this unknown space: we worry about privacy, self-esteem and the effects on the brain.

In contrast, once they find their "digital feet" young people join communities, develop friendships around interests, experiment with creativity and are able to reflect on how their online and off-line identities are different. So I was hopeful that this book would foreground the voices of the students and avoid citing our familiar anxieties.

Thankfully, this is the case. Sefton-Green and Livingstone immerse themselves in the school and home lives of 28 year 9 students at a London comprehensive, giving them to a rounded impression of each individual. As teachers, we know relatively little about most of our students' home lives; as parents, we know how difficult it is to glean details about the school day from monosyllables.

The angle I found most interesting was the idea of connection. We are more connected to each other than ever before. However, there is also disconnection, in the context of an individualised society where the future is uncertain and traditional communities are fragmenting.

In my generation – the 40-something

parent – we tend to view young people as "digital-natives", primed to exploit global networks both socially and professionally. As a teacher, I am aware of the capabilities of technology to blend or flip learning and the potential dissolution of the boundary between home and school.

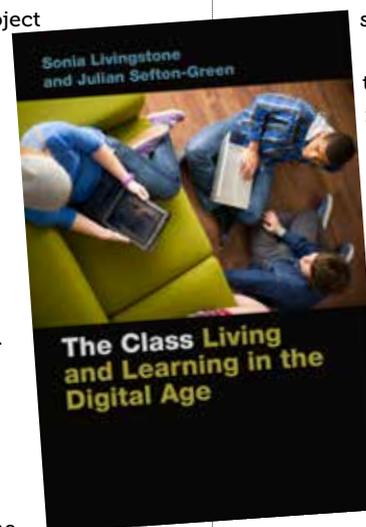
However, the research concludes that there were "failings" in the school's ability to connect with students once they were out of school. There is the usual one-way text and email communication, but no dialogue that might connect learning at home with learning at school. One reason for this is that the young people were determined to keep home and school life separate. The researchers wonder if school would be enhanced if teachers knew more about young people's considerable talents. Yet they conclude that a degree of disconnection is healthy, as the young people seek to preserve a sense of privacy and identity separate from school life.

Overall, the book concludes that young people, school and family remain conservative in a time of uncertainty. Parents are anxious; students are generally optimistic about the future.

Despite these findings, the researchers are hopeful that there is scope for a progressive approach to schooling and learning, which connects young people's experience in a more holistic, satisfying way. While I agree with the

motivation behind this recommendation, I feel that the present climate in education does not encourage progressive thinking. Teachers and leaders have to prioritise academic achievement above all else. If results decline, then schools can face the upheaval of new leadership, more scrutiny and the associated pressure. There is a touch of naivety here, which teachers might pick up on.

I can imagine this book could become required reading for academic studies in youth culture and identity. Teachers may find it rewarding, but at 300 pages, an executive summary would be fine. I did enjoy its rich insight into the lives of the young people, its rounded view of their experience and the inclusion of their voices in transcripts. I would welcome a return to these students' lives in two years and see how their world view and passions have evolved.



NEXT WEEK
The Power Paradox
By Dacher Keltner
Reviewed by Ian Comfort

What have you been working on?

I've been talking to teachers who are working to provide informal science teaching for students in extra-curricular clubs. I wanted to understand their motivation and their struggle.

From a broader perspective, my aim is to look at education policy and try to find how it plays out in teachers' day-to-day experience. The policy here was the neo-liberal, market-driven nature of education, and how that impacted on five science clubs.

A recent Wellcome Trust Science Learning+ study suggested informal learning is an incredibly powerful experience. However, the very nature of informal learning raises a whole load of challenges for schools regarding attainment metrics.

How did you research this?

I conducted interviews and lesson observations with five teachers, working in three challenging state secondary schools.

Informal learning was classified as sessions before school, at breaks, lunchtimes and after school, that were not assessed, did not follow a set curriculum, were non-compulsory and were open to all students.

However, they could not be linked to exam preparation, contain coursework catch-up, be offered to a specific cohort,

RESEARCH CORNER

Q&A

ANDREW CLAPHAM

Principal lecturer in education,
Nottingham Trent University



The battle for informal learning

be compulsory or have assessment as an integral part.

The teachers were all asked to use a series called the periodic table of videos – created by chemists from the University of Nottingham – a powerful learning tool about the joy and wonder of science.

What did you find?

One major finding is that there is a real conflict between the formal and the informal curriculum, the former being based on high exam grades and

marketable outcomes.

Informal learning is rather about creating curiosity and understanding the world: you get an answer, rather than *the* answer. Science is about: "How does that work? Let's try again."

I found teachers who were committed to helping students to learn about the world, but who were under pressure to turn science clubs into revision clubs. These were after-school clubs, where the kids had chosen to come along, but even in that setting, the pressure was on to turn it into a

performance-based activity.

What's important to their students is to use science as a means to understand the world. However, when teachers are given a narrow, exam-focused remit, they are under incredible stress and don't have the time for half a class to get it wrong.

And since it's hard to assess informal learning, it's also hard for teachers to argue for its value.

For example, one teacher took the class to a perfume counter in a department store, to smell fragrances. They then went back to school and tried to analyse the composition of perfume. It's impossible to quantify the additional value of that excursion.

What would be your take-home message?

The study, although small-scale, signals to leaders and policymakers the crucial nature of informal learning. Moreover, informal settings can be a powerful context for students to access an understanding of science in context – understanding that does not necessarily lend itself to being "captured" by the performance metrics predominantly used to evidence learning.

Enacting informal science learning: exploring the battle for informal learning was published in the British Journal of Educational Studies



A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

Beleaguered teacher training providers are likely to welcome the news today that they will soon be finding out how they will be allocated places for 2017-18.

The National College for Teaching and Leadership announced the new methodology will be out in the "coming weeks". No specific date, but I think it's safe to assume it won't be before all the EU referendum stuff dies down.

FRIDAY:

News came on the wire today that Amanda Spielman is Nicky Morgan's preferred candidate for the head of Ofsted, when Sir Michael Wilshaw toddles off at the end of the year (more on page 5).

The Department for Education (DfE) spent £25,000 on a headhunting mission to recruit the new chief inspector. Seeing as her name was already on the expected candidate list months ago, we wonder if the DfE could have saved itself a bit of cash?

Later in the evening we found out who received a Queen's Birthday honour (see pages 24 and 25) . . . aaaaand we get to reveal the winners of our honours game...

Did you enter? Well, if you did, you didn't win. Not a single prediction was correct.

However, as we are such warm and lovely folk we nevertheless dipped our hands into a raffle bucket and Karen Wespeiser and Robert Hooper will still receive a mug.

MONDAY:

For a department that includes equalities in its remit, the DfE has a worrying record when it comes to the pay of its black and minority ethnic (BME) employees.

Figures obtained from a parliamentary question lodged by Greg Mulholland, Lib Dem MP for Leeds, revealed that, on average, the DfE's non-BME staff earned almost 14 per cent more than BME colleagues.

The average hourly earnings of BME employees in 2015 was £19.32, compared with £22 for others. The gap has also widened by 23p since 2014.

TUESDAY:

Browsing our Twitter feed, WiW noticed a new friend in the *Schools Week* club: the DfE's new permanent secretary Jonathan Slater. *Week in Westminster wave* He's following many edu nerds and politicians, but also chef Jamie Oliver and a woman from *The Only Way is Essex*. We hopes he will pay more attention to *Schools Week's* Twitter feed than TOWIE's when pondering debates around education.

Another day, another crossing of wires between organisations. This time it's Ofsted and the DfE.

Jane Millward, a senior inspector at Ofsted, told the women and equalities committee today that sexism will be included in new statutory government guidance for schools.

But a thorough check of the "Keeping Children Safe in Education" document, published in May, revealed no mention of sexism or sexual discrimination. The government later confirmed it has no plans to include it because it's "not a safeguarding issue".

WEDNESDAY:

Speaking of divisions between the DfE and Ofsted, despite their best efforts to maintain a level of civility during their joint grilling by MPs, education's two top knights Sir David Carter, national schools commissioner, and Sir Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted chief inspector, couldn't resist the opportunity to snipe at each other from their respective ideological horses.

Lefty Labour MP Ian Mearns, clearly unable to resist an opportunity to stir things up, played the court jester and insisted on hearing Carter's view on comments by Wilshaw that regional commissioners were "faceless bureaucrats".

Deflecting the criticism, Carter mused that parents probably wouldn't have the foggiest idea about the identities of Ofsted's top team either, and said he didn't feel a lack of visibility for his team made them "faceless". That's OK then.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEET FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS

NORTHERN ROCKS

More than 500 teachers gathered in Leeds last Saturday for the third Northern Rocks conference.

Started in 2014 by teachers Debra Kidd and Emma Ann Mattinson, the event aspires to let teachers "reclaim their profession", while discussing thorny issues, attending practical workshops and – most importantly – to drag key education influencers who spend all their time in

London up to the north for at least one day.

Headline speaker Amanda Spielman, chief of Ofqual, pulled out hours before the event after the revelation she would be the next Ofsted chief inspector.

Schools Week editor Laura McInerney stepped in to her shoes and attempted a defence of testing, while senior reporter Alix Robertson took a spin around the workshops

EBACC IS 'DRIVING' SUBJECT COMBINATIONS

ALIX ROBERTSON
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Year 9 pupils are being channelled into subject choices depending on their learner profiles and after being handed specially tailored option books, delegates at this year's Northern Rocks heard.

Jarlath O'Brien, headteacher at Carwarden House community school for children with special needs, in Camberley, Surrey, raised the issue during a breakout session.

He said he had heard that some year 9 pupils in mainstream education were being handed "differentiated option booklets", and asked if other delegates had experienced this.

He explained: "So one student gets [a booklet] with GCSE history in it, but another student won't – while someone else will get one with a vocational curriculum in it and another student will get one that will lead them on to A-levels."

The implication was that some schools were tailoring the subject combinations depending on the ability of pupils, which provoked an audience member into responding that "it's driven by the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)".

Schools are now incentivised to ensure pupils study a set of subjects that includes maths, English, science, a modern foreign language and either geography or history. New performance measures will look at a pupils' best eight GCSE grades, but at least five must be in these EBacc subjects – with many schools focusing pupils on them to gain a maximum score.

The audience member added: "It cuts down the number of arts subject they can take or the quantity in which they can take them."

The woman said her daughter's school had pushed her to be in a particular academic

stream in which she would not be able to take art and drama GCSEs.

O'Brien told *Schools Week* that the use of differentiated options booklets – which he had heard called streamed option booklets – was not unusual.

He had been interested in learning more during his workshop dedicated to inclusion in education, because of his limited first-hand experience of student subject choices within mainstream schools.

"I call this [the use of differentiated option booklets] a Henry Ford policy – you can choose any GCSE you want as long as it's geography, for example.

"I challenge the motives. I made the point in the talk that people should not underestimate the power of the accountability and performance culture to influence the behaviour of headteachers.

"Why, for example, close off GCSE history to some students? What is the risk to the student? If they enjoy it and want to study it, then what's the problem?"

He added the same issue could apply to students considered more academic who may be discouraged from studying a vocational subject, or "something considered soft", such as media studies.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We want all pupils to study the subjects that give them the best start in life and help to keep their options open for progress to further study and work.

"All state schools must provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the cultural development of pupils.

"We expect schools to advise their students appropriately on which subjects to choose for GCSE, tailoring them to the needs and interests of that particular pupil."



Conference scenes, clockwise from above: Carwarden House head Jarlath O'Brien; (from left) *Schools Week* editor Laura McInerney, Northern Rocks founder Emma Ann Mattinson and NUT acting general secretary Kevin Courtney; Sameena Choudry from Equitable Education; Laura McInerney; primary head Rachel Orr



2016



FOCUS ON WHITE PUPILS HIDES ETHNIC MINORITY UNDER-ACHIEVEMENT

LAURA MCINERNEY
@MISS_MCINERNEY

Under-performing ethnic minority groups have become lost among headlines claiming that white working-class pupils are worse off, an education adviser explained.

White pupils from low-income families are the group with the lowest GCSE scores in England, admitted Sameena Choudry, founder of Equitable Education, but focusing on the group is “crude” and inappropriately “lumps pupils together” who should be separated.

In an impassioned session, Choudry – whose organisation offers consultancy on reducing achievement gaps between ethnic groups – presented data showing that the image of white students

as those inevitably furthest behind is more complicated.

Across the country, black Caribbean students had a GCSE pass rate more than 15 percentage points lower than white groups. When stripping out just white pupils on free school meals, and comparing those with black students on free school meals, then white pupils do worse – however, Choudry pointed out that free school meal rates are almost twice as high among black pupils than white.

Language groups also mattered even more than ethnicity.

“When we talk about black African pupils – who do we mean? When you look at Igbo language speakers, they are doing much better than the average. But if you are a Portuguese speaker of black heritage then you’re not doing well at all.”

Data from the national pupil database



shows that pupils who speak Igbo [one of four official Nigerian languages] have a GCSE pass rate 18 percentage points higher than the national average; black Portuguese speakers have a rate less than half the national average.

Choudry said that the focus on white pupils receiving free school meals was important – “their attainment is poor and as a society we should be ashamed of that” – but she questioned media headlines that claimed that these pupils were “working class”.

“More than half of people asked will say they are working class, but the number on free school meals is much smaller,” she said.

She directed particular ire at Ofsted’s annual report, which highlighted the issue of white pupils and has been discussed repeatedly by Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector, in speeches and commentaries over recent months.

“I look at the data and EAL [English as an additional language] pupils in Yorkshire and the Humber are significantly under-performing. That is what I see. I didn’t see it in the Ofsted annual report, though. Why is that?”

“It is very irresponsible in the way it [the data] is put in the annual reports. The Ofsted annual report should be absolutely impartial and should not be twisted to look the way headlines look.”

White pupils are specifically mentioned

four times in the 2014-15 Ofsted annual report. There is no mention of children with English as an additional language.

While pupils with EAL as a national group have higher GCSE results than those who speak English as a first language, the picture is highly influenced by the high number in the capital. EAL pupils in every region outside London have worse outcomes than their regional peers.

Choudry called for the government to release more data, and collect more refined information, so that researchers could better understand how black and minority ethnic students are achieving within education.

“The information that we have is very crude and it’s hard to find a lot of it. The Department for Education is not publishing this. It is charities, such as the Bell Foundation, and academics, on their own time – there is no funding – who are having to do this analysis.”

From October schools will be asked to provide more information on pupils who have English as an additional language, but Choudry is concerned that with “no training, no support” and levels “broadly based on the Welsh language system” the information will be “messy and inaccurate”.

Still, she said, “it will be better than the EAL/not-EAL label which is what we have at the minute . . . and it doesn’t tell us anything”.

CELEBRATING THE QUEEN'S B

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

Academy trust leaders have again topped the Queen's birthday honours list, with Ark chair Paul Marshall and Twyford church schools trust head Alice Hudson receiving a knighthood and damehood.

Of the 18 people with links to the school sector to receive the top honours, including CBEs and OBEs, seven are either heads, chairs or trust chief executives.

About 10 per cent of the 1,149 honours handed out in this round were for services to education, and of those, almost half were given to people with links to schools.

KNIGHTS AND DAMES

Paul Marshall, who also chairs the think tank CentreForum, and Alice Hudson, a former English and religious education teacher and headteacher who now heads the Twyford Church of England academies trust, were both nominated for services to education, with Marshall's services to philanthropy also recognised.

Hudson, a University of Oxford graduate, was head at Twyford Church of England high school in Acton, west London, for 11 years and now leads the academy trust that shares its name. The trust also includes the William Perkin Church of England high school, and is currently in talks to open a free school in Ealing, both in west London.

Marshall, who also graduated from

Oxford, is the co-founder and chair of Marshall Wace, a large hedge fund group. He previously worked for the former Liberal Democrat

leader Charles Kennedy, and in 2004 co-authored the party's *Orange Book* with David Laws, who went on to become schools minister in the coalition government.

As the lead non-executive board member



Paul Marshall



Alice Hudson

at the Department for Education, Marshall is one of five people with direct links to the department who have received honours in this round.

CBE

Charity boss Tony Sewell, who chaired a review of London schools for former mayor Boris Johnson, talks of his "total commitment" to disadvantaged young people.

Sewell receives a CBE as do Birmingham education boss Colin Diamond and Malcolm Trobe, the interim general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders.

Sewell began his career in London as a teacher before he became a teacher-trainer at Kingston and Leeds universities. In 2012, Johnson appointed him to chair an inquiry into London schools. Its report, published in 2013, led to the establishment of the £24 million London Schools Excellence Fund.

Sewell told *Schools Week* that his charity, Generating Genius, which works with disadvantaged pupils to get



Tony Sewell

them into STEM careers, had been successful where others failed because it offered "five years of total commitment".

"People are not really making this long-term commitment to children," he said. "We need to engage with young people right through from the age of 12 all the way to university. Most projects and programmes I see are one-off interventions, they touch-base lightly."



Colin Diamond

Diamond, a former Ofsted inspector and associate headteacher in the east end of London, said he was "very proud" to receive the CBE.

Trobe, a former head of Malmesbury School in Wiltshire, said it was a "great privilege" to represent an organisation whose members worked so hard to provide "an excellent education for millions of young people".

OBE

School leaders Debbie Rogan and Pauline Hagen are among those recognised with OBEs.

Rogan, chief executive of the Essex-based HEARTS academy trust, is a national leader of education, pupil premium reviewer, Ofsted inspector and a member of the east of England regional schools commissioner headteacher board and Essex Schools Forum.

She told *Schools Week* it was "an honour and a privilege" to serve all her trust's children, "in particular the most vulnerable", adding: "We will continue to work hard and do our best for each and every one of them."

"I am very happy to receive this award and recognition of the hard work and dedication that I and all of the staff, governors and parents in the HEARTS community commit to our pupils each day, and to pupils beyond our own organisation."

Rogan became a headteacher in 2003, running the Wickford Church of England school, which was rated as outstanding by Ofsted in 2007 and became an academy in 2011, eventually going on to sponsor several other schools in the region.

Hagen has been principal of New College Pontefract, a sixth-form free school, since 2011, and is also a national leader of education. She has also overseen the establishment of the New Collaborative Teaching School Alliance.

She said she was "proud and grateful" for the recognition of her work.

"Over the course of a career in education, I have been reminded daily of just how important it is to focus relentlessly on the needs of every individual



Debbie Rogan



Pauline Hagen

learner, because educational success genuinely transforms the quality of their lives and those of the societies and communities they live in," she said.

BIRTHDAY HONOURS



MBE

Several key government civil servants working on the academies programme will receive MBEs, including Val McGregor, an education adviser for academies and free schools at the Department for Education (DfE).

McGregor has worked in education for nearly 40 years, initially as a teacher and then a leader of London inner-city schools, before becoming an English and literacy adviser for four councils.

Since 2001, she has held a range of national senior leadership roles, including senior English director and national director for inclusion. She has been in an advisory role at the DfE since 2006.

Lara Newman, who advises the Education Funding Agency on property for free schools, also receives an MBE.

But it is not just government staff who have been recognised.

John Cornally, executive head at Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic college in Altrincham, who also received the award, described his 11 years in post as "incredibly happy and deeply fulfilling".

In a letter to parents, he said: "I am



Val McGregor

grateful for the privilege to lead such an outstanding school with wonderful staff, children and governors.

"I want to say a big thank you to all our parents for your incredible support over our time together."

BEM

For more than 25 years, Myra Brodie has kept children in the Leicestershire town of Market Harborough safe on their way to and from school.

Liverpool-born Brodie, 62, part of the county council's patrol team and a classroom volunteer at Little Bowden primary school, said she was "delighted" and "shocked" when she was told about her inclusion in the honours list.

Reflecting on her long years of service, Brodie told *Schools Week* it was "most alarming" when she saw the children of those who she helped across Market Harborough's roads decades ago going to school themselves, but said she still loved the job more than 25 years on.

"It does make me feel a bit old, but I have been known to enjoy it.

It's the job satisfaction, when you see the little tots crossing over," she said.

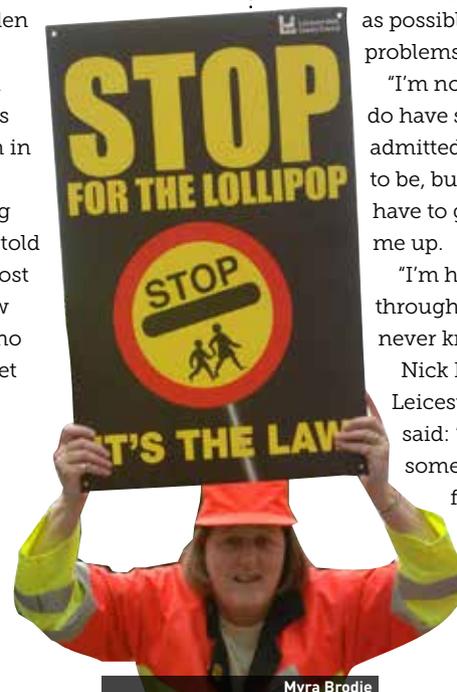
"I like to think we are still needed. There are all these cutbacks everywhere at the moment, but we are still keeping children safe."

Brodie plans to carry on as long as possible, despite ongoing health problems.

"I'm not as strong as I was, and I do have some mobility issues," she admitted. "I'm not as fit as I used to be, but I want to carry on until I have to give it up or until it gives me up.

"I'm hoping I don't lose my job through all these cuts, but you never know."

Nick Rushton, leader of Leicestershire county council, said: "We are proud to have someone like Myra working for the county council and pleased that she has been given the recognition that her work so richly deserves."



Myra Brodie

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST - 2016

KNIGHTS

Paul Marshall

Chair, Ark Schools and lead non-executive board member, Department for Education

DAMES

Alice Hudson

Executive headteacher, Twyford Church of England academies trust

CBE

Colin Diamond

Executive director of education, Birmingham City Council

Elizabeth Horne

Chief executive, Horizons specialist academies trust, Stockton

Dr Tony Sewell

Founder, Generating Genius and member, London Schools Excellence Fund expert advisory group

Dr John Stephens

Deputy director for teaching schools and school improvement, National College for Teaching and Leadership

Malcolm Trobe

Interim general secretary, Association of School and College Leaders

Patricia Walters

Former headteacher, Holte Visual and Performing Arts college, Birmingham

Janet Woods

Director of secondary academies (north), United Learning Trust

OBE

Julian Appleyard

Principal, Rochdale sixth form college

Kevin Boyle

Headteacher, Oaklands school, Winsford, and Cheshire branch secretary, National Association of Head Teachers

Andrew Brown

Headteacher, West View primary school, Hartlepool

Andrew Burns

Executive principal, the Redhill academy trust, Nottinghamshire

Pauline Hagen

Principal, North East Wakefield college, Pontefract

Richard Hill

Former headteacher, Colnbrook special school, Hertfordshire

Estelle MacDonald

Chief executive, Hull Collaborative academy trust and Hull Collaborative teaching school alliance

Deborah Rogan

Executive headteacher, The Wickford CofE school and chief executive, HEARTS multi-academy trust, Essex

Professor Alice Rogers

Governor, King's Maths school, south London, and emeritus professor of mathematics, King's College, London

Deborah Weston

Associate senior leadership team member, Mulberry school for girls, London

MBE

Adrian Bowater

Member, academies finance and assurance steering group, Education Funding Agency and director of finance, Walsall Academy

Andrew Child

Chair of governors, High Storrs school, Sheffield

Peter Chisholm

Deputy headteacher, Warden Park School, Cuckfield, West Sussex

John Cornally

Executive headteacher, Blessed Thomas Holford catholic college, Altrincham

Marion Cornick

Founder, The Loddon school, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Hampshire

Freda Griffin

Head of care of residential provision, Horizons specialist academy

Simon Griffiths

Headteacher, Lindens primary school, Streetly, West Midlands

Iffat Hameed

Teacher, King Edward VII school, Sheffield

Alan Jerome

Life president, Bradford grammar school and former vice-chair of corporation, Bradford College

Marian Lee

Teacher, Gordon primary school, Greenwich, south London

Valerie McGregor

Education adviser for academies and free schools, Department for Education

Matthew Miller

National leader of governance and chair of governors, Highlands School, Enfield, west London

Andrew Morris

Teacher, Westcroft sports and applied learning college, Wolverhampton, and founder, Timken Vocational Training Centre and Sunbeam Enterprises

Lara Newman

Property adviser on free schools, Education Funding Agency

Ann Noble

Former headteacher, Tydeman centre, The Malling school, Kent

Jane Owens

Chair of governors, Weatherhead high school, Wirral

Robert Palmer

Chair of governors, St Mary's CE primary school, Moss Side, Manchester

Simon Potter

Play producer at Wimbledon College, south west London

Cherry Reynolds

Assistant headteacher and SEN co-ordinator, Codsall community high school, Staffordshire

Jacqueline Smith

Executive headteacher, Upland special school, Swindon

Steven White

Education and sports volunteer, Leicestershire

Ariana Yakas

Chair of governors, Kingsway community trust, Greater Manchester

BEM

Myra Brodie

School crossing patrol, Market Harborough

Diana Burdett

School secretary, The Grove infant and nursery school, Harpenden

Anthony Elvin

Teaching assistant, Archbishop Sentamu academy, Hull

Mari Heywood

Vice-chair of governors, Abbey Gate college, Chester

Jean Johnson

Volunteer, Belmont Cheveley Park primary school, Durham

Shaminder Rai

Chief of governors, Nishkam high school, Birmingham

John Wallace

Governor, The Latimer primary school, Leicestershire

Paul Yeates

Former chair of governors and volunteer, Lingfield Notre Dame school, Surrey

School Bulletin



A student from RSA Academy Arrow Vale in Worcestershire at Twickenham
Inset: Primary school pupils celebrate rugby at Twickenham stadium

Rugby award for 100 schools

One hundred schools from across the country have been handed a personalised plaque by England rugby player Jonny May at Twickenham to celebrate their engagement with the sport.

Representatives from the schools were presented with their awards during an England v Wales match at the end of last month.

The ceremony marked the "positive impact" of rugby to more than 130,000 new students through the CBRE All Schools programme.

The scheme, developed by England Rugby, provides state secondary schools

with a "bespoke" three-year delivery plan and package of funding, resources and support, to help "embed" rugby as a school sport.

Since taking part, the participating schools have seen increased confidence, teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship, says a spokesperson for property agent CBRE.

Ciaran Bird, CBRE managing director, added: "Thanks to the persistence and passion of the teachers and coaches, 100 schools are able to provide more children opportunities to learn and develop through the skills and ethos gained through rugby."

Toolkit for migrant parents



The launch of the Migrant Toolkit. From left: authors Magdalena Lopez Rodriguez, Professor Louise Ryan and Alessio D'Angelo

A toolkit designed to support newly arrived migrant parents put their children through the UK school system has been launched by academics at Middlesex University.

The resource is aimed at schools, local authorities and organisations working with migrant families, and highlights the "many differences" that migrant parents will have to adapt to.

This includes earlier school start times, informal lessons, children being placed in classes according to age not attainment, and a ban on physical punishment.

Professor Louise Ryan, lead author of the toolkit, says: "UK parents often find it stressful finding school places for their children so for migrant families, whose first language is not English, the experience can be very daunting.

"It's essential that all children settle into school as seamlessly as possible, so we hope that our guide will help migrant parents adapt to a new life and get the best start for their children."

Parents can also use the resource directly. Go to: mdxmigration.wordpress.com/migrantschools/

Time travel tops the bill in Harrogate

FEATURED

One of the country's largest children's literacy sessions was put on at Harrogate's Royal Hall with the help of children's author Jason Beresford.

More than 500 pupils from 20 schools took part in The Big Write, organised by Pobble, a global literacy initiative for sharing primary students' writing, and Harrogate International Festivals.

The 8 to 11-year-olds had to write short stories around the theme of time travel.

Beresford, author of *The Fabulous Four Fish Fingers*, *Frozen Fish Fingers* and *Fish Fingers vs Nuggets* about a gang of superhero kids, lent his expertise to help the children.

Anna Whiteley, a Pobble teacher, says it was the "most exciting" event by the group to date.

"Writing is crucial not just in terms of developing literacy but also in allowing children to express themselves. It also boosts confidence."

Pobble was launched globally by a group of teachers in Yorkshire last year with the aim of building children's confidence in writing.

The four founders developed the programme to allow teachers to share and showcase pupil work on an "online classroom wall".

Work from The Big Write will now be published and shared on Pobble.com.

Whiteley adds: "This is what Pobble



More than 500 students in Harrogate's Royal Hall for The Big Write



A teacher from Kirkby Malzeard primary school with students taking part in The Big Write

is all about – engaging young minds and giving children a platform to share their fantastic writing."

Gemma Rowland, operations manager at Harrogate International Festivals, says the event further cemented Harrogate on the "literacy map".

"It's important to us that we use our platform to engage and inspire young people in the district as part of our

educational work."

Jon Smith, Pobble chief executive, says it was "amazing" to be able to "energise" so many young people.

"Children are getting that awesome piece of work they've just carefully written published and shared with the world... which could not be more exciting. And for teachers, we're building a global library of ideas, content and resource."



Primary pupils enjoy some reading time after taking part in the National Literacy Trust's survey

WHEN READING STOPS BEING COOL

Pupils enjoy reading less once they reach secondary school, according to latest research from the National Literacy Trust.

In a survey of more than 32,500 children, just 40 per cent of those aged 14 to 16 said they enjoyed reading either very much or quite a lot, compared with 72 per cent of pupils aged 8 to 11.

The research also revealed that students at key stage 4 are substantially less likely to say reading is "cool" – 24 per cent versus 70 per cent at key stage 2 – and only 36 per cent of the older pupils see the "relevance" of reading to employability compared with 71 per cent of children at key stage 2.

There is also a gender gap, with 61 per cent of girls enjoying reading versus 47 per cent of boys.

Jonathan Douglas, the trust's director, says "energies" in primary pupils who enjoy reading needs to be released into secondary schools.

Influencing factors for the disparity between the two groups could include the pressures of academic studies, lack of time and less parental influence.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Tamsin Poulter, the current vice-principal at Cliff Park Ormiston academy in Great Yarmouth will take the reins from September following Rob Sherington's retirement.

Poulter, who previously spent 13 years as head of year and then vice-principal at Haileybury Turnford school in Cheshunt, says her main priority will be to oversee the introduction of the new national curriculum in a "fun" way for students.

"Given that the government has made such big changes, I want to, along with providing excellent academic results, ensure that lessons will still be fun and engaging."

Poulter also plans to expand "even further" the school's enrichment programme with links to local music clubs, nearby Great Yarmouth college and Nexus Engineering.

The school hopes to partner with "artistic" organisations after her research of the local jobs market showed many were arts and engineering based.

"Hopefully, with those partnerships, we can increase employability opportunities for our pupils and ensure that school is really fun as well."

Poulter studied history at Kings College London followed by a PGCE at the Institute of Education.



Tamsin Poulter



Jane Fletcher



Carly Wilkins

Jane Fletcher is to join Ark as its new regional director for secondary schools in Hastings and London.

She has been principal of Harris Girls' Academy in East Dulwich, south London, since 2008.

Her new role will involve overseeing a number of schools in Ark's chain of academies and will be, she says, a challenge that she "really wants to take on".

"I'll be visiting all the schools regularly to

work with leaders as well as listening to the communities, understanding what the issues are, and supporting them in progressing."

She adds that high expectations will be at the forefront of what she will be looking for in each school leadership team.

Fletcher has a degree in music from the

University of Southampton and a masters in education.

She did her teacher training through the Graduate Teacher Programme.

Carly Wilkins has been appointed head of Halcon primary school in Taunton, following its link-up with the Redstart Learning Partnership.

From September the school will re-launch as Minerva primary as its moves over to academy status.

Wilkins joins from Hamp academy in Bridgwater where she was the assistant head and a year 6 class teacher.

She says her main focus will be to collaborate with the other schools in the trust to share good practice, and to lean on other leader experience and expertise to get "the best teaching and learning possible".

Wilkins, who has been a teacher for 11 years, says: "In the few weeks that I've been head of school I've seen a real willingness to work together to bring back families to their community school."

She has a joint degree in education and history, as well as a PGCE, from the University of Plymouth.

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

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SALARY DEPENDING ON EXPERIENCE AND PREVIOUS SUCCESS
LOCATION: LUTON, BEDFORDSHIRE



The Shared Learning Trust is looking to appoint a CEO from January 1st or earlier for the right calibre candidate to play a leading role within a family of schools in Bedfordshire.

The Trust is comprised of four academies, two secondary Academies with sixth form provisions and two primary academies. Overall, the academies enjoy good success rates and positive relationships with their students and the communities they serve.

We are now seeking to appoint a Chief Executive Officer to provide the Trust with strong senior strategic leadership and who will promote its benefits through this time of significant opportunity and challenges. The successful candidate will build on existing good practice to raise standards, strengthen partnerships, and ensure our Trust is well supported to deliver an excellent education to the children and young people of the community.

We would like from you:

- an experienced leader with a proven track record in the broader educational arena, including experience of inspections
- the capacity to ensure that a high quality educational experience is available for all children and young people
- successful experience of senior management in a complex organisation, including resource and financial management with strong commercial

- awareness and understanding of funding streams and cost management
- a relationship builder able to articulate and communicate organisational vision and values to a wide range of stakeholders across the wider community
- a strategic thinker who will grow the Trust

We can offer you:

- a unique family of schools, 2 primary, 2 secondary, a Teaching School and Sixth Form provision
- fantastic young people who are "eager to learn and exemplary in their attitudes to their work" (Vale Academy Ofsted, 2014) and who are "hugely proud of their Academy" (West Academy Ofsted, 2014)
- a role where you can really make an impact growing and leading our Trust
- competitive benefits package

For further information and to return completed applications please contact: Kevin Martin, Human Resources Manager
Tel: Kevin Martin on 01582 211226
Email: academyrecruitment@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

Closing Date: 27th June (9am)
Interview Date: w/c 4 July 2016

The Shared Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all its learners.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. Our schools have excellent links to the M1 motorway, National Rail networks and Luton Airport. We are 30 minutes from London.

HEADTEACHER

Ref: HT01

Location: Stroud, Gloucestershire

Salary: Leadership spine L15 £54,503 to L21 £63,147

Play a pivotal role as Headteacher of SGS Pegasus School, Bristol.

Based at our purpose built new £8m Free School designed to enable ASD learners to succeed in a mainstream environment, the SGS Pegasus School is situated close to the main M4/M5 corridor at Patchway, on the South Gloucestershire / Bristol border.
Contract Type: Permanent Full-time.

As part of the South Gloucestershire and Stroud Academy Trust (SGSAT), the SGS Pegasus School will open to our first intake from September 2017. The School will be a ground breaking development providing a genuinely innovative school for children and young people, aged between 4 and 19, who have autism.

At full-capacity, the School will cater for 80 pupils who will access the national curriculum while still receiving the specialist support they need. We are absolutely committed to ensuring learners leave the School feeling fulfilled and able to play a valuable and contributing part of society.

The School has been developed in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council in direct response to their need to provide excellent local education within the area for learners with ASD. Many learners are currently transported out of the region to receive specialist education and on completion of their studies find it hard to transition back into their local community.

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College welcomes applications from all sectors of the community and is an equal opportunities employer.



The Trust are passionate in their belief that our pupils should have the same opportunities that most of us take for granted – nationally only 15% of young people with autism go onto university, further education, training or employment – however, we estimate that at least 85% of our pupils will! We need an exceptional individual to realise this ambition.

We are seeking an outstanding Leader with knowledge and understanding of ASD and who can absolutely demonstrate that they are a passionate, child-centred practitioner with the ability to lead the School forward within a rigorous professional environment focused on the progress and achievement of children. We expect the successful candidate to inspire and motivate their team to enable the School to achieve outstanding status by its second OFSTED inspection.

To apply for this position please visit: www.sgscol.ac.uk
Or email sharron@onlyfe.co.uk for a Job Description and Application Form.

Closing date for applications: Thursday 23 June 2016

Expected interview date: w/c 27th June, 2016

The successful applicant will be required to obtain and maintain a satisfactory Disclosure Certificate as a requirement of the job.



STANGROUND ACADEMY

Situated in one of the UK's fastest growing cities, the Stanground Academy, in Peterborough, is transforming the life chances of its pupils by ensuring that every child can succeed, despite the challenges they may face.

The academy offers state of the art facilities and an array of extracurricular activities to promote and enhance learning. Our success is based on an effective partnership between pupils, staff and parents, building positive, trusting and long lasting relationships to support pupils to achieve their best. We are part of the Greenwood Academies Trust (GAT) which has a proven track record in school improvement. The Trust provides centralised services and support to enable staff to focus on teaching.

We currently have the below opportunities to join our middle and senior leadership teams. To find out more please visit www.greenwoodacademies.org/vacancies/. Alternatively, please call our Recruitment Line on 0115 748 3344.

HEAD OF YEAR

(Ref: 15-16/STA/047)

MPS/UPR plus TLR 1B (£9,284)

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

(Ref: 15-16/STA/051)

Leadership 18 - 24 £58,677 - £67,963

Required from January 2017 or earlier if possible

Closing date 27th June 2016 at noon



Sir John Lawes School
Education for a changing world

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

LOCATION: HARPENDEN, HERTFORDSHIRE | SALARY: MPS | REQUIRED FOR SEPTEMBER 2016 | FULL OR PART TIME CANDIDATES WILL BE CONSIDERED

We are seeking an excellent teacher to join a highly skilled Mathematics team made up of enthusiastic specialist teachers. There are excellent, thriving A level groups and the department achieves impressive results.

We offer an environment with a supportive induction and professional development programme, recognising that our teachers are the reason for our continuing success. Our status as a Teaching School means we are able to offer staff the highest quality support. The school has been judged as being one of the 100 top non-selective schools in the Country.

Further details and an application form are available from Shirley O'Donovan at sodonovan@sjl.herts.sch.uk, or the school website www.sjl.herts.sch.uk or on 01582 760043 ext 271.

CLOSING DATE: 12.00 NOON ON FRIDAY 17TH JUNE 2016

INTERVIEW DATE: WEEK COMMENCING 20TH JUNE 2016

Sir John Lawes School is an equal opportunities employer. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service.

www.sjl.herts.sch.uk



STANGROUND ACADEMY

TEACHERS OF SCIENCE

(Ref: 15-16/STA/049-050)

Salary: MPS/UPR

1 x Permanent and 1 x Fixed Term Maternity Cover | Full and part time considered
Required from January 2017 or earlier if possible

Closing date: 27 June 2016 at noon

A fantastic opportunity for a passionate Teacher of Science to join the Stanground Academy. Newly Qualified and experienced Teachers are welcome to apply.

The Stanground Academy offers state of the art facilities and an array of extracurricular activities to promote and enhance learning. Our success is based on an effective partnership between pupils, staff and parents, building positive, trusting and long lasting relationships to support pupils to be the best they possibly can be.

Successful applicants will be champions of science and passionate about helping young learners achieve, they will be able to demonstrate a range of teaching styles and behaviour management techniques to inspire and motivate pupils. The ideal Teacher of Science must be able to work effectively as part of team and be willing to play a part in the further development of the academy.

The academy is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust (GAT) which has a proven track record in school improvement. The Trust provides centralised services and support to enable staff

to focus on teaching. Being part of the Trust means that we are able to share specialist best practice and work collaboratively with colleagues in other academies. When you join us as a Teacher, you can be certain that we'll advance your professional development and give you the opportunities to build your career across our group of academies.

There are two positions available, one permanent and one fixed term to cover a period of maternity leave. Part time and full time applications will be considered for each.

Visits to the academy are warmly welcomed; please contact **Pauline Poli**, PA to the Principal, on 01733 821430 or email ppoli@stangroundacademy.org.

For application forms and further information, please visit our website.

www.greenwoodacademies.org/vacancy/11572/

Alternatively, please call our Recruitment Line on 0115 748 3344

We also please ask that you complete our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form by visiting:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/NDNDSQ2

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

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.