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FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017 | EDITION 100

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EDITION 100

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NEWS

A-level entries drop as tougher GCSEs bite

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

Schools and colleges are bracing themselves for a "significant" drop in English and maths A-level entries this year as pupils are put off by "tougher" GCSEs.

English looks likely to be the worst hit, with some sixth forms suggesting that take-up is dropping by 35 per cent, while maths is down about 20 per cent.

Experts say the decline follows the new, tougher GCSEs currently studied by year 11s, with the switch to linear A-levels leaving pupils "less inclined to take a risk" on harder subjects.

Bill Watkin, chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said he feared the "love of the subject" for English and maths was "in danger of being overshadowed" by the standards now expected of pupils.

He shared provisional figures from eight colleges with *Schools Week*, indicating a "potentially significant" drop in take-up of the subjects.

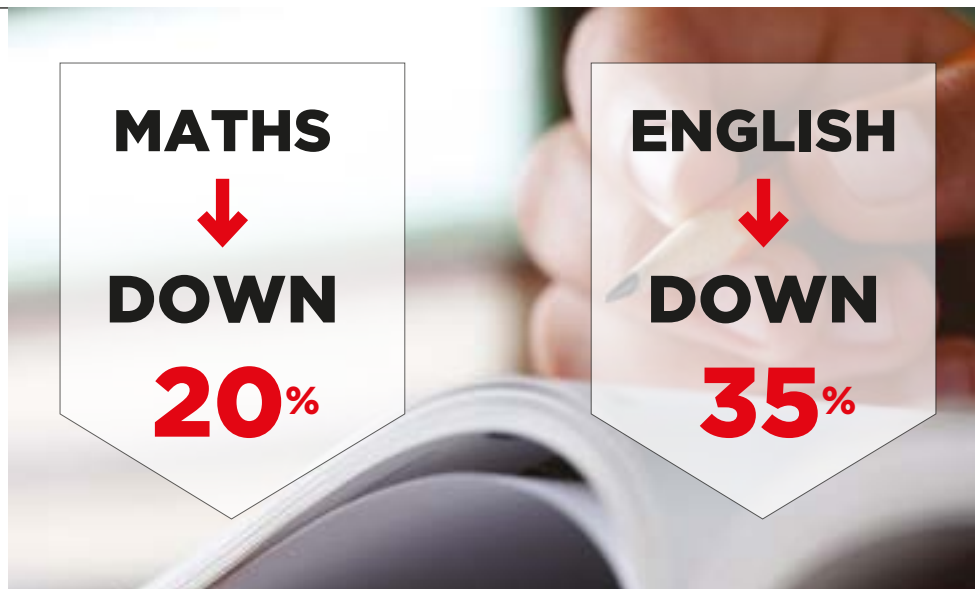
One sixth form revealed that entries to English language and literature A-levels from September 2017 are currently down 35 per cent compared with last year. Entries to maths have fallen about 23 per cent.

Another sixth form fears that its English literature applications will dip 24 per cent, while maths will decrease 10 per cent.

Data from six other sixth forms reveal a similar picture, with English slightly harder hit than maths.

Tougher English and maths GCSEs were introduced for exams this summer.

Higher-tier maths papers, for example, previously devoted 25 per cent to questions at the A and A* level. In this year's exams, questions relevant to grades 7, 8 and 9, the new equivalent to



A and A*, make up half the paper.

Research by the Mathematical Association (MA) shows further evidence of pupils shunning post-16 maths. In a Twitter poll of association members, a third said maths applications were declining in their schools. A second poll said entries for further maths were going down in about two in five schools.

Laura Jenkins, who teaches in Bournemouth, tweeted that her school received 115 applications for maths A-level last year, but this was down to 53 this year.

David Miles, from the MA, said many pupils had been getting "very low marks on their mocks so their confidence is being knocked; thus, they don't want to take maths further".

He added: "It also has a double whammy because teachers aren't confident about the new number grades and are being cautious. They appear to be predicting one grade below what a pupil would usually get and, as such, the pupil is not meeting entry requirements."

Funding changes for post-16s also mean

many schools and sixth-form colleges will now allow pupils to take only three A-levels, which could lead to even lower entries for further maths as it is usually taken as a fourth subject.

Charlie Stripp, director of the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics, said his organisation was "aware of early indications" of fewer pupils starting A-level maths. But he said the more demanding GCSEs should "be seen as a development", rather than a deterrent.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "Our new GCSEs will provide more rigorous content to equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the future.

"The maths GCSE has been designed to match the best internationally and will mean students are better prepared to study this vital subject at A-level."

Maths A-levels took a similar hit when the two-part AS and A2 levels were introduced in 2002. The change resulted in A-level maths entries dropping 18.5 per cent.

'Unknown' number of foreign teachers face deportation

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

Officials are unable to say how many foreign teachers face deportation under new immigration rules that require them to earn at least £35,000 a year if they want to settle in the UK.

Since last April, workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) who want to teach in England for longer than five years must prove they earn more than £35,000 to qualify for what is known as a tier 2 "settlement" visa.

The change means those who have been in the country since 2011, and now need a settlement visa to remain, will have applied under the new rules in the past year.

But the Home Office will not say how many teachers and other school staff are affected because it costs too much to collate the information.

When the new rules were announced several years ago, education leaders raised concerns about the impact on schools already struggling with recruitment.

Vic Goddard, head of Passmores Academy in Essex, said he was facing the loss of eight teachers unless he could find the money to hike salaries.

In January, the government's Migration Advisory Committee also warned that, given the relatively low starting salaries for teachers, it was likely a "high proportion of tier 2 teachers will not be able to meet the £35,000 threshold".

According to workforce data, 60 per cent of secondary teachers and 75 per cent of primary and nursery teachers earn less than £40,000 a year. Most if not all teaching assistants also earn far less than the cap.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, *Schools Week* requested data on the numbers of teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff who had been

turned down for renewal of a tier 2 visa or had it withdrawn because they did not meet the £35,000 threshold.

The Home Office, however, says the reasons for refusals cannot easily be extracted from its data and providing the number would require a "manual trawl through every individual case record". The costs for this would be prohibitive.

Mary Bousted, general secretary of Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said she was "hardly surprised" the government would not provide figures on the impact of the cap, which she said was expected to be "significant".

"One of our leaders said that several schools in their consortium couldn't staff science or modern foreign language without these teachers.

"When the average teacher's salary in England after 10 years is about £30,000, this cap is effectively sending the majority of non-EEA teachers home at a time when they're needed more than ever."

NEWS

UNIONS STAND TOGETHER AGAINST SELECTION PLANS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Investigates

England's teaching and leadership unions have reiterated their opposition to plans to expand selective schools amid rumours that ministers may try to buy their cooperation with the promise of extra funding for schools.

Documents reveal two of the most prominent unions – the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) – have no specific debates on selection timetabled at their conferences next week, though both insist the subject will be aired.

The government's much-anticipated white paper, which will set out how ministers will legislate to open new grammar schools, was expected several weeks ago. *Schools Week* now understands it is scheduled for a May release.

"I think people are waiting and seeing," Mary Bousted, general secretary of the ATL said this week, before saying that the furore over the initial announcement to bring back grammar schools was a "phony war" until further details were released.

But Simon Stokes, the union's senior policy adviser, said the ATL would not reconsider its position on grammar schools, even if offered additional school funding as a sweetener.



ATL
MARY
BOUSTED



NUT
KEVIN
COURTNEY



NASUWT
CHRIS
KEATES



ASCL
MALCOLM
TROBE



NAHT
RUSSELL
HOBBY

"If we are to be an evidence-informed profession, then we have to follow the evidence that expanding grammars would not result in increased social mobility and would cost the system money it can ill afford."

The NUT is also opposed to the expansion of selective education and will continue to campaign against government plans to expand grammar schools.

"The NUT would not be bought off on a matter of principle. The government's plans for selective education will condemn 90 per cent of children to what would be in effect secondary-modern schools," said a

spokesperson.

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) announced its opposition to the expansion of selection after a survey of members last year. The union will debate a motion aimed at reaffirming that position at its conference later this month.

Russell Hobby, the NAHT's general secretary, insisted that more school funding "wouldn't change our position on grammars".

"What is right is right, on all fronts."

Equally, the Association of Schools and College Leaders said the expansion of selection "is a "distraction to the profession's

efforts to ensure that the education system works for everyone".

It confirmed its position, set by its policymaking council, is "not negotiable".

Unusually, the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers said it did not oppose grammar schools, which it recognised as an "important part of the schools network", but said it had raised concerns about plans to expand selection as it distracted from other issues.

"We are not looking at any deals around funding or anything else," a spokesperson told *Schools Week*.

Film company targets grammar teachers for ad

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Grammar school teachers are being singled out to feature in a "government-led" TV campaign, although the Department for Education (DfE) says it has not commissioned a production company.

Just So Films has asked full-time teachers in secondary "state and grammar schools" to get in touch if they want to feature in a film that will delve into their experiences in the classroom.

In a tweet the company says that filming for the government's campaign will take place in mid-April.

Would-be participants must be aged 22 to 28, which suggests that it is a recruitment campaign aimed at a younger audience.

The teachers are asked to share their "experiences starting out as a teacher", including questions such as: "Did you worry about not earning enough?" and "Were you nervous about standing up in front of a class?"

It is not the first time the DfE has used films and videos to encourage recruitment.

In October 2015, the Advertising Standards Agency investigated a complaint over a recruitment advert that claimed a "great teacher" could earn up to £65,000.

Martin Powell-Davies, an executive member of the National Union of Teachers,



said it was "deliberately misleading" because an "absolutely minuscule" proportion of teachers, mostly in London, earned that much.

Government figures showed just 0.6 per cent of teachers were paid through the "leading practitioner" pay scale, which begins at £38,598 and ends at £65,000.

A spokesperson for the DfE said it had not yet commissioned a production company to do the film and was unaware of the tweet. But they added that £6 million was being spent on a "Your Future Their Future" recruitment campaign.

A further £1.3 billion was being spent on encouraging graduates to move to teaching.

Just So Films said it could not disclose any information for the next two weeks. It would not be drawn on why grammar teachers were targeted.

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NEWS

FREE SCHOOLS GET EXTRA TIME TO PAY BACK LOANS

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

The government has been accused of propping up under-subscribed free schools with "interest-free loans", while academies and council schools are left to struggle on without extra cash.

It comes after new figures seen by *Schools Week* reveal the government overpaid free schools by more than £28 million in the past three years.

New free schools are initially funded on estimated numbers for the upcoming year. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) then reviews how many pupils are on roll at the end of the year and retrospectively retrieves or hands out extra funding.

Much of the £28 million extra funding was clawed back by the government, which recoups the cash from the first three months of the following year's funding.

However, documents seen by *Schools Week* show that some free schools have secured deals to put off paying back the funding for up to two years.

Andy Jolley, a former school governor and education blogger who obtained the figures under the Freedom of Information Act, said: "It's almost as if the government pumped money in to subsidise them – it's like an interest-free loan."

The EFA granted Falcons Primary, in Leicester, a 15-month repayment schedule to recoup £300,000 extra funding (£20,000 per month).

And Parkfield School, in Bournemouth, has asked for a grant to cover 75 per cent of £493,000 additional funding the government is due to clawback.

In a governors' meeting last year, school leaders blamed low pupil numbers on delays moving to a permanent site – a decision taken by the government.

It's unclear if a deal was agreed as the school refused to comment.

Other free schools have run up large clawback bills over consecutive years, despite the government being made aware early on they were struggling to meet pupil estimates.

For instance, the government had to clawback £171,719 from Bolton Wanderers Free School in 2014-15.

Despite the school clearly struggling to



recruit pupils, the government overfunded it again the following year – this time to the tune of more than £550,000.

The school will now close later this year, with nearly £500,000 still owed to the government.

Jolley said it was "ridiculous" that free schools "nowhere near their pupil targets" had been given "even more money for an even bigger target the next year".

Other schools are relying on government deals to stave off closure. Latest accounts for Aston University Engineering Academy in Birmingham show it has agreed to put off a clawback from 2015 of £590,170 until this September, when pupil numbers are expected to have risen.

However accounts say the "material uncertainty" of future funding may "cast significant doubt on the trust's ability to continue as a going concern". The school did not respond to a request for comment.

In December *Schools Week* revealed that

the government had drawn up clawback plans totalling £11 million after 106 free schools failed to recruit estimated numbers in 2015-16.

The new figures show the government had to clawback nearly £18 million from more than 180 schools between 2013 and 2015.

Most of that has now found its way to the government – with just £4.1 million still outstanding.

Mark Lehain, founder and principal of Bedford Free School, said most free schools had managed the uncertainty in pupil numbers "really well".

He said the funding system based on anticipated numbers was clearly set out, but urged schools to be cautious in their estimates.

Parliamentary figures from January show the government wrote off £800,000 that it felt it was unable to claw back, likely to be related to free schools closing without

being able to repay debts.

But Lehain said taxpayers could be sure that where schools were overpaid, the government normally clawed back the money, something that didn't generally happen when local authorities opened schools.

However, Liam Collins, head of Uplands Community College in East Sussex, said there were no similar funding deals for non-free schools.

His school had had to make budget cuts to cope with low pupil rolls for the previous five years.

Responding to the clawback system, he said: "Is it fair? No. Any money that is wasted from the system at the moment [during a funding squeeze] is a tragedy."

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said it worked "closely with schools each year to review estimates and to help to minimise the likelihood of significant adjustments".

Bid delay squeezes next year's opening dates

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Free school applicants claim they have been "left in the dark" by the delay in announcing the latest successful bids.

Schools Week understands the names of successful wave 12 proposals were due to be announced at the beginning of March, but applicants are still waiting to hear if they have got the go-ahead.

The delay has also pushed back wave

13 applications, expected to have opened some time last month.

The delay is also squeezing the timeframe for wave 12 schools due to open in September next year, many in areas that need more places.

Delays could also impact the government's manifesto pledge to open 500 new free schools in this parliament. Another 133 still need to be announced (and to open before 2020) to meet the target.

New College Swindon is waiting to hear

if its proposals to open the Great Western Primary Academy will get the nod of approval.

Graham Taylor, New College's principal, said he was expecting an announcement in the first week of March. "We're completely in the dark."

Schools Week understands the sign-off for the announcement is now with ministers.

Great Western is due to open in 2019, but New College Swindon plans to submit two more free school applications under

wave 13. Taylor urged the government to push this back to September so schools have enough time to put together their applications.

Civil servants have previously said that most free schools needed 26 months from approval to opening.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "There has been no delay to wave 12 and we will announce the outcome shortly. We will confirm the arrangements and timetable for the next round of free school applications (wave 13) in due course."

NEWS

46 schools seek to end daily Christian worship

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

More than 40 schools have sought exemptions in the past 18 months from the legal requirement to provide a daily act of Christian worship, with many choosing "non-faith" or "multi-faith" alternatives for the first time.

A total of 46 schools since 2015 have asked to opt out from a daily act of worship that is "wholly or mainly" of a Christian character, a rule that has been in place since 1944.

The rate at which schools are bowing out from the requirement, often criticised by secularists, appears consistent with previous years.

Schools Week has previously reported about 125 schools sought exemptions over the three years up to 2015, which averages about 40 per year.

But Freedom of Information responses from 96 councils show two schools have specifically asked to hold "no-faith" assemblies.

Others got the go-ahead for "multi-faith" assemblies. Previously schools have usually used the exemption to switch to another faith.

The Three Towers pupil referral unit in Wigan was granted exemption on the condition pupils took part in some form of collective worship such as



"reflective exercises".

Atheist groups said the rise of "more inclusive assemblies" proved most schools now felt providing an act of worship from a single religion was "inappropriate" for pupils.

But Nigel Genders, chief education officer at the Church of England, said the low number of schools that chose exemption from Christian worship showed

daily collective action had "proved a powerful tool in bringing pupils together, giving them a rare opportunity to pause".

Two schools in Coventry, including Frederick Bird primary, asked its local council for "non-faith" replacements to Christian worship. The request was made through its Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE).

The school did not respond to a request

for comment, but an Ofsted report from 2014 highlighted the school's "family assemblies" as a strength.

Most pupils were from minority ethnic backgrounds, according to the report.

The other school, Holbrook primary, opted for "non-faith" assemblies. Almost half of pupils were of Pakistani heritage, according to an Ofsted report.

Seven schools in Brent, north London, six in Leicester and two in Oldham have requested to hold "multi-faith" assemblies.

Jay Harman, a spokesperson for the British Humanist Association, said schools with no religious character should not be required to carry out "entirely inappropriate" Christian worship.

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, chair of the Accord coalition that campaigns against religious selection in schools, said the obligation to worship in just one faith had caused assemblies to "wither".

Instead, they should investigate ethical issues from a "variety of religious and philosophical traditions".

But Genders said that about a quarter of primary pupils and one in 16 secondary pupils attended Church of England schools, which showed that parents welcomed what was on offer – including daily Christian worship.

Ofsted stopped inspecting collective worship in 2004 after 76 per cent of schools were found to be non-compliant.

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PRIMARY SATs CHANGES

Explainer

JOHN DICKENS



@JOHNDICKENSSW

Last week the government announced significant changes in the primary assessment plans. In case you missed out, here's our explainer to keep you on track

1 SCRAP KEY STAGE 1 TESTS FOR 7-YEAR-OLDS

The consultation proposes making key stage 1 assessments non-statutory (translation: make them optional). This applies to teacher assessments and tests. But this would only come into effect when a new reception baseline test has been set up.

The government suggests it might still do "sample" tests to "ensure academic standards remain high" – the details of how this will be decided are up for consultation. One idea is that it could end up like the national reference tests, which a proportion of year 11s now take in March each year to inform GCSE results.

2 ESTABLISH NEW BASELINE ASSESSMENT FOR RECEPTION PUPILS

The government wants to measure progress starting from reception, all the way to the end of primary. This will be done through the introduction of "teacher-mediated" baseline assessments, which will be developed by the profession to "ensure schools are measured on how they support every child".

The tests will not be used as a direct school accountability measure. Results will only be published at national level for transparency, but will not be published at school level, nor shared with regional schools commissioners, local authorities or Ofsted. They will, however, influence the scores given to primaries for progress made by the time pupils are leaving the school.

3 REDUCE TEACHER ASSESSMENT 'BURDEN'

The consultation asks for thoughts about removing the requirement for schools to submit teacher assessment data when it's not used as part of school accountability.

The government is also considering whether there should be "greater flexibility" for teachers to use their judgment when assessing pupils' writing – with a nod that it might allow teachers to mark using a "best fit" model for assessments, rather than the current "secure fit". (Which means pupils would not need to meet every criteria in order to achieve a set mark.)

4 ENSURE PUPILS BELOW NATIONAL LEVELS ARE COUNTED IN PROGRESS

The government launched a parallel consultation on proposals from the Rochford review to ensure it "finds a solution" for pupils who are below the minimum national curriculum level and are not counted in current school accountability measures.

The government has pledged to ensure "no child is left behind", with schools recognised for the progress they make with all pupils.

5 GIVE THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE A MAKEOVER

The government is also consulting on how to make improvements to the early years foundation stage profile to "reduce burdens" on staff.

It also wants ideas on how to change the collected data so more is known about a child's "school readiness".

THINGS TO KEEP AN EYE ON

While the five proposed changes are the main things to know, the consultation document also shows some interesting trends in government thinking



1 A NOD TOWARDS 'COMPARATIVE JUDGMENTS' (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH 'COMPARABLE OUTCOMES')

Comparative judgment – a process of comparing writing side-by-side – has shown promise as a quicker and more accurate way of marking pupils' writing abilities than having teachers score using a set of criteria.

The consultation asks for views on its use and asks if there are any other "robust alternative" approaches to assessment, suggesting the government is looking to quicken (and possibly cheapen) the process.



2 PEER-TO-PEER MODERATION OF TEACHER ASSESSMENTS, RATHER THAN LOCAL AUTHORITY INTERVENTION

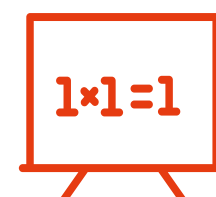
Moderation of teacher-assessed parts of primary testing has so far been controlled by local authorities. However, there is evidence that some councils are stricter than others.

Hence, the consultation asks for views on other forms of moderation and says there will be a pilot of a "peer-to-peer" approach this year "in which teachers from different schools will share their teacher assessment judgments and supporting evidence in local groups, overseen by a moderator".



3 A TRIAL OF THE 'TIMES-TABLE CHECK' WILL GO AHEAD

In their 2015 manifesto, the Conservatives promised that all children would take a test of their multiplication skills before they left primary school. This policy is now at implementation phase, with a trial going ahead over the next year. But the consultation wants views on whether it's a good idea and, if so, if the end of primary school is the best time, given that pupils are supposed to learn their tables by the end of year 4.



NEWS

DfE hints at test-based primary assessment

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Early Excellence, the popular baseline assessment provider whose observation-based model was favoured by 70 per cent of primary schools, is "surprised" by the government's preference for a test-based approach for assessing reception pupils.

The Department for Education (DfE) last week announced it wants to scrap key stage 1 SATs and potentially replace them with a new baseline test completed by pupils when they start school.

It follows the government's abandonment of three existing baseline tests, which cost millions to develop and implement. The tests varied in their approach: one involved observation; two were test-based. All were abandoned as a valid basis for a school performance measure last April.

However, the new announcement suggests the return of a test, which a source says is likely to be online.

Jan Dubiel, national director of Early Excellence, said it was "surprising" the government wanted to go down a test-based route after it was heavily snubbed by the schools community.

His organisation's



Jan Dubiel

model, chosen by more than 12,500 primary schools (about 70 per cent), did not include any predetermined tests, but instead required reception year practitioners to build knowledge of a child through observations, interactions and daily activities.

Dubiel told *Schools Week*: "It is weird the Department for Education seems to want to do the same thing again, but not take into account . . . the clear and overwhelming rejection of a test-based approach.

"A formal test-based approach, such as using a tablet or pre-set questions, is unlikely to produce the information we need to truly understand the learning and development of children at this young age, and therefore is unable to allow schools to be accountable."

But Rob Coe, director of Durham University's Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, another approved provider of last year's baseline, said a test-based approach was more "efficient and generally better" than observations, but warned that the DfE could face boycotts if the



Rob Coe

approach was forced on schools.

"If this new test assessment happens at a stroke and is imposed on people I can see we might be looking at boycotts," he said.

"It doesn't mean the DfE's preferred approach is wrong, but I do think teacher choice needs to be taken into account."

He added that staying with one provider for delivery "keeps it simple" and was the right move.

The DfE abandoned the controversial tests after a study showed that the three approved assessments were not comparable.

"They [government] set it up to fail," Coe said. "I can see politically that the department is not going to go down the route of multiple providers again. But the reason it didn't work was because the DfE



Catherine Kirkup

didn't manage it properly."

He added that his organisation would contribute to the consultation but would "wait to see" the DfE's tender criteria before putting a bid in to be the provider.

Catherine Kirkup, acting head of the National Foundation for Educational Research's centre for assessment, the third provider of last year's baseline, said her organisation would contribute to the consultation and would "definitely be interested in developing an appropriate assessment".

Dubiel said he understood that the government would this time recruit a single provider instead of three.

Early Excellence would "see what happens" with the tender process before deciding whether to get involved.

SATs tweaked to boost pupils' confidence

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

The government has simplified questions in this year's primary SATs after reports that last year's tests left pupils in tears.

Schools Week has learnt that the Standards and Testing Agency has made the questions early on in this year's tests for 10 and 11-year-olds slightly easier.

The agency has also assessed the structure of the test paper, and how questions are sequenced to make sure "children are not discouraged".

Teachers said pupils were "completely demoralised" last year, particularly after the reading test.

The Department for Education said it was "well accepted" that last year's controversial tests were hard, the first on the new tougher national curriculum.

However, it said that pupils would still be expected to reach the same standards – which suggests exams will be marked equally rigorously.

Just half of year 6 pupils met the new expected standard in key stage 2 SATs last year, compared with 80 per cent in 2015. But the government said the figures were not comparable because of the national curriculum changes.

Mary Bousted, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, welcomed the change in the difficulty of questions.

"It's a huge advantage for children when



they open their test paper and can do the questions at the start – it promotes endeavour and boosts confidence."

The former education secretary Nicky Morgan said last year the government had raised the bar to a more "rigorous system" and that she "knew" it was "asking more".

She said the 2016 results were a "good start" that had "vindicated [the DfE's] decision to raise standards and will help those who need extra help get the support they need to lay the foundations for a bright future".

However, Bousted said the reasons for tests "written so they were so undoable" should be questioned.

And while this year's change was positive, schools must keep their eye on the bigger picture of ensuring the primary assessment consultation announced by the education secretary Justine Greening last week got things right.

Proposals include scrapping key stage 1 SATs for a new baseline test at reception (see story above). The consultation on the plans also asks for views on moving to a "best fit" model

for teacher assessments of writing at key stage 2, as opposed to the current "secure fit" model.

The consultation follows a chaotic year for primary assessment. As well as reports of increased stress among pupils, there were protests and boycotts from parents, and pleas from school leaders for an end to the system.

The government also had to scrap the controversial spelling, punctuation and grammar tests after they were leaked online.

Greening said last week the government had reformed the primary school system to "make sure children can master the basics of literacy and numeracy so they get the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in later life.

"Now we want to build on that by developing a stable assessment system that helps children to learn, while freeing up teachers to do what they do best – supporting children to fulfil their potential."



Justine Greening

NEWS

INTERESTED IN A SHARE OF £140M? EXPRESS AN INTEREST NOW . . .

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Investigates

Schools can now register an expression of interest in getting some of a new £140 million improvement funding pot – but the government is keeping quiet on further details.

The education secretary Justine Greening announced the new funding in November under a package of measures to ensure improvement support was “targeted at the schools most in need”.

Schools commissioner Sir David Carter said the cash would go towards four issues. He wants to create “less patchy” coverage of multi-academy trusts and teaching school alliances, launch quality teacher training in challenging areas, ensure effective curriculum schemes reach all classrooms, and allow faster intervention in failing schools.

The government is now inviting expressions of interest from academies and maintained schools for the funding.

Interested parties fill out a Google form, supplying their email address and which organisation they work for. They will then be emailed more information about the fund when it opens.

The Department for Education would not provide further details – including when the fund opens for official bids and when cash will be dished out.

The funding was announced alongside a new £50 million grant for local authorities to monitor and rebroker school improvement for low-performing maintained schools. Final allocations for that grant will be confirmed in September.

However, councils have pointed out that the £50 million does not make up for the £600 million cut in the education services grant they used to receive.

Carter last year said that multi-million pound funding in the “current climate” was “fairly unprecedented”, and proved the government had shifted its focus from “mass conversion to mass improvement”.

The £140 million, he said, would “make the biggest impact for schools that are in the most difficulty”.

The new cash aligns with his plan to parachute in support to struggling schools that are “unattractive” to new sponsors.

As revealed by *Schools Week* last week, he wants to send in national leaders of education on short-term support contracts when schools fall into special measures, similar to the support previously offered by local authorities.

He said this would give regional schools commissioners time to deal with the underlying blockage to a permanent takeover – normally down to hefty private finance initiative contracts or crumbling buildings.

Carter also signalled his intent to set up a more consistent spread of teaching school alliances, and to grow capacity in multi-academy trusts.

Schools can register an interest in the new fund at www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-school-improvement-fund

Schools switch redundancy tactics

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Staff are going through interviews and graded assessments to decide who to make redundant, *Schools Week* has learnt.

James Lynas, a partner at law firm Winckworth Sherwood, said a handful of schools are taking the new redundancy route to ensure that they keep the best-performing teachers.

Teaching unions, however, say schools could be using the approach to target particular staff.

The disclosure comes in the midst of a funding crisis with schools expected to slash £3 billion from their budgets by 2020.

Lynas said the new approach was a result of falling confidence in a current scoring matrix in which schools tallied points based on how teachers compared against various factors, such as disciplinary matters or appraisals.

“Schools have had a negative experience of constructing the matrix – an artificial exercise to curate certain information into numbers. Under the points-based system there was a higher risk of school’s losing their stronger teachers.

“They are looking to keep the best-performing teachers, so are going back to assessing on the basis of interview, then assessing their teaching.”

He would not name any schools that had done this.



Andrew Morris, head of pay and pensions at the National Union of Teachers, said that schools using such an approach “could actually be seeking to target particular individuals who would not be selected through more objective processes.

“We would not want any school to rely on interviews or other subjective processes rather than pursuing an objective assessment of individuals’ skills – including in areas other than their current teaching area – and the curricular and organisational needs of the school.”

Chris Keates, general secretary of the NASUWT, said her union would challenge any schools adopting interviews and assessments for redundancy without consultation or agreement.

A survey by the National Association of Head Teachers published last year found more than two-thirds of schools had started, or were seriously considering,

making staff redundant.

Keates said she “seriously questions the need for schools to make teacher redundancies”. She added last year the total unspent budget balance across all local authority maintained schools was £2.1 billion – suggesting that schools should dip into their reserves, instead of slashing staff.

The government has said that schools can cope with the cuts, although Jonathan Slater, permanent secretary at the Department for Education (DfE), told MPs in January that efficiencies would have to be made. He suggested schools look at curriculum planning, reviewing supply arrangement, and management of senior leadership teams.

The DfE has also ramped up its efforts to help schools to make cuts. It followed criticism from the National Audit Office, the government’s spending watchdog, that the department had not communicated the scale or urgency of the budget cuts.

A new guidance document on “school workforce planning” was published in January, alongside a video of “top tips”. The latter suggests “maximising value for money” by reviewing the percentage contact time for all teachers, and the pupil-to-teacher ratio.

The Education Funding Agency is also publishing case studies of how academies can trim staff. They can be viewed by searching “school financial planning” on gov.uk.

Primaries struggle to find new heads

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Primary schools are struggling to fill headships and are readvertising top roles at more than double the rate of secondary schools.

A quarter of primary schools (26 per cent) seeking a new head had to readvertise in the first three months of this year, compared with 10 per cent of secondary schools, according to figures from TeachVac.

In the past, secondary schools seemed to struggle more, said Dr David Owen, head of teacher education at the Institute of Education at Sheffield Hallam University.

He said previous research suggested there were more temporary heads in secondary schools than primaries, but he was “surprised” by the deteriorating primary recruitment.

Fewer primary schools were in teaching alliances or trusts, meaning they could struggle to locate upcoming talent when a head moved on – plus a salary of about £45,000 to £50,000 might not be an incentive for the extra responsibility, he said.

Derbyshire and Hampshire have fared worst: in January four out of five (80 per cent) of headships were readadvertised in Derbyshire, 64 per cent in Hampshire.

The best rate was in Yorkshire and the Humber, where only 5 per cent of posts had to be advertised again.

HEADTEACHER VACANCIES

REGION	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ADVERTISING IN JAN	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS READVERTISING BY MARCH	% READVERTISING
East Midlands	22	14	64%
East of England	47	15	32%
London	34	8	24%
North East	16	5	31%
North West	50	10	20%
South East	81	23	28%
South West	35	8	23%
West Midlands	30	7	23%
Yorkshire and Humber	21	1	5%
Derbyshire	5	4	80%
Hampshire	26	17	65%

John Howson, an education data analyst who runs TeachVac, said infant and junior schools, as well as faith and primary schools, struggled the most because the pool of candidates was small.

A wider range of senior leadership roles in secondary schools meant more people were prepared for headship than in the primary sector.

In January 2013, a similar rate (26 per cent) of primary top jobs were readadvertised. But that was an 11 percentage-point increase on 2012 – showing substantial fluctuations in the pattern of recruitment.

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said candidates needed to be sure they would not lose their jobs if results fell, particularly in rural areas.

“The idea your career could come to an end if several children get poor results – that’s the main thing that needs to change for people to take on headships.

“It’s the scrutiny, and churning through data, and not being in front of the children that discourages them.”

The removal of bursaries for leadership courses such as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) had also left small primary schools without the funds to back training, he said.

A survey by the National College of School Leadership in 2009 found 92 per cent of heads thought it was a “great job”, but a 2015 survey by The Key, an information service for school leaders, showed 86.8 per cent of respondents thought it a less attractive role than five years before.

The Telegraph

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NEWS

DfE knew we outsourced teaching, says threatened UTC

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

A specialist vocational school that outsourced its teaching has been handed a financial notice to improve, although it says the government signed-off on the arrangement.

Energy Coast UTC in Cumbria was handed the notice last week over "historic failures" in its financial management.

The Education Funding Agency (EFA), which sent the notice, cited a number of "material weaknesses" in the schools' accounting, including overpaying one of the school's sponsors that directly delivers teaching to pupils.

The UTC was opened in 2014 by four co-sponsors – Gen2, a private training provider; Lakes College West Cumbria; the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, a large local employer; and the University of Cumbria.

Before opening, the government agreed to allow Gen2 and Lakes College to teach pupils on their premises as the school lacked the high-tech facilities to provide specialist technical courses.

But a recent EFA financial review found "sufficient evidence" that Gen 2 charged more than it cost it to deliver the training, which is a breach of academy rules and, under government regulations, cannot be regarded as "value for money".

Cherry Tingle, Energy Coast's principal, says that the government knew the costs.

"It was always the intention that much of the teaching and learning of the UTC's students would be delivered by partner organisations. The capital build of the UTC was reduced to reflect this, and was agreed by the EFA and the Department for Education when the UTC was originally approved."

A Gen2 spokesperson added: "As a private sector organisation Gen2 is not in



direct receipt of any school funding, and provides services to the UTC on a full cost recovery basis, but without including any element of profit.

"Gen2 is, therefore, disappointed with the EFA's conclusions regarding the cost of

the teaching services provided by the UTC's partner organisations, as this does not reflect the true cost of providing outstanding teaching and learning in technical subjects such as engineering."

Outsourcing school business is typical in areas such as HR, according to Bethan Cullen, a director at the National Association of School Business Management. But Energy Coast was a "rare case" as teaching was not traditionally done by outside providers.

All outsourcing, regardless of the type, must "go through a procurement and tendering process to ensure best value and value for money for the school", she added.

The EFA's report said Energy Coast UTC failed to procure the agreements it has with Lakes College and Gen2 and to apply a competitive tendering policy.

According to the UTC's 2015-16 accounts, it paid more than £550,000 to Gen2 for its "provision of teaching staff, facilities and resources" for about 220 pupils – about £2,500 a pupil. Lakes College was paid £120,000 for nearly 40 pupils – about £3,000 a pupil.

In future, all Energy Coast transactions, regardless of size, must be approved by the EFA until the UTC has shown it can comply with rules to the satisfaction of the education secretary.

The UTC and Gen2 have agreed to work with the EFA to provide improved value for money in future teaching provision.

BUT IT GOES AHEAD WITH PLANS TO FAST-TRACK YEAR 9s

This September Energy Coast plans to place a group of "gifted and talented" 13-year-olds straight into year 10.

The school, set up for pupils aged 14 to 19, is planning to recruit about 20 year 9 pupils and place them on a full time "accelerated programme" in which they will work alongside the UTC's year 10s.

The pupils will be headhunted through "direct marketing to parents" with adverts in the local press and radio rather than pitching the idea to other schools. They will be selected through face-to-face interviews with the school's principal, Cherry Tingle, who will look for evidence of enthusiasm for STEM subjects, as well as previous school reports.

Tingle says she is introducing the scheme to address a growing engineering skills gap in Cumbria.

"We're expecting an engineering shortage of about 10,000 people in the next five years, so what we want to make sure of is getting people who have that passion and getting them started working with local employers and on that progression route sooner rather than later."

Academies, including UTCs, have traditionally sought the permission of their regional schools commissioner (RSC) to expand their age range, but as Tingle plans to take on only a "small number" of pupils, RSC approval is not needed.

The school admissions code says that parents can seek a place for their child outside

their normal age group if, for example, the "child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health".

Another under-performing UTC, Central Bedfordshire, previously applied to allow pupils to join its school from 13. The school said at the time it wanted to expand its intake to "better meet the needs of students within these local authorities".

But it was rated "inadequate" by Ofsted in 2014 and closed in August last year.

Tingle said the accelerated programme would "condense three years" of learning, meaning some would take their GCSEs early while others will complete a three-year key stage 4.

Ofqual puts it on a postcard

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The exams regulator Ofqual has written to schools about proposed changes to new GCSE grades, but has left details of the government's new "standard" and "strong" passes off its new aide-memoire.

Sally Collier, the watchdog's chief regulator, says in a letter sent on Tuesday that her organisation has "added to and refreshed" resources to "explain changes to GCSEs".

It comes after the government scrapped plans to designate the new grade 5 as a "good pass" and instead rebrand it as a "strong" pass. A grade 4 will now be considered a "standard" pass.

But the new postcard issued by Ofqual does not include references to the new "standard" and "strong" passes, even though Collier said other resources had been updated to reflect

the new terminology.

The original postcard issued by the regulator prominently featured the old "good pass" descriptor.

The new edition simply includes a line denoting the pass threshold as being below the new grade 4.

As well as the postcards, Ofqual has a set of videos available on YouTube to explain the new system.

Collier said she wanted to assure schools the regulator's use of statistics would "ensure that the cohort taking new qualifications this year will not be disadvantaged compared to previous years.

"In terms of the new GCSEs, this means that broadly the same proportion of students will get grades 1, 4 and 7 and above in any subject as would have got grades G, C or A and above respectively in the old system."

New GCSE Grading Structure	Current GCSE Grading Structure
9	A*
8	A
7	B
6	C
5	D
4	E
3	F
2	G
1	U
U	U

NEWS

City needs 2,260 extra places (by next year)

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Some councils must expand their school capacity by 12 per cent in the next 18 months to meet demand for places, new figures suggest.

The Department for Education (DfE) this week updated its local authority school places scorecards – documents that show how councils fare in their duties to create extra capacity and how many additional places are needed for 2018-19.

Schools Week analysis shows that while some areas will not need to create any additional places, others must increase capacity by thousands.

In Leicester, 2,260 extra secondary places are needed by 2018-19, equivalent to two full secondary schools and almost 12 per cent of the area's total capacity as of May last year.

Leicester City Council says the demand has been created by a national birth rate bulge, migration to the area and a Labour government cancellation of plans for a new secondary in the city centre.

However, the council says it has already created 217 more secondary places for this September, and will embark on a major £45 million expansion programme this autumn to create 2,500 further places, some of which will be available by September next year.

Sarah Russell, the city's assistant city mayor for children, young people and

schools, said the council needed to act because the free schools programme alone would not ease the pressure for places.

"We're working with eight of our schools that are consistently over-subscribed, where we know there is some space available for extensions. We've conducted feasibility studies to establish what these expansions might look like.

"We know that there are applications for free schools to open in the city. This will help to ease the pressure, but our forecasting shows we will still need more. Building work takes time, which is why we're pressing ahead with these plans now."

North Somerset needs to increase its capacity at primary level by 920 places, equivalent to two schools and 5.23 per cent of its May 2016 capacity.

In Birmingham, officials expect a "significant proportion" of extra places to be created in existing secondaries.

The city council admits that the free schools programme and independent expansion "continue to be highly challenging" because of the need to co-ordinate planning.

The government's scorecards also allow users to rate the quality of new school places created between 2014-15 and 2015-16, based on Ofsted inspection outcomes and Progress 8 scores.

In 80 of the 152 local authority areas, new places were only created in schools rated as good or outstanding, but some

PRIMARY

LOCAL AUTHORITY	CAPACITY AT MAY 2016	NUMBER OF PLACES NEEDED BY 2018-19	PLACES NEEDED AS PROPORTION OF CAPACITY
North Somerset	17,576	920	5.23%
Lambeth	24,341	1,230	5.05%
Oldham	24,686	1,150	4.66%
Manchester	51,603	2,280	4.42%
Waltham Forest	27,150	990	3.65%
Leeds	71,232	2,230	3.13%
Barking and Dagenham	27,599	860	3.12%
Birmingham	115,721	3,590	3.10%
Wigan	27,127	810	2.99%
Norfolk (5)	69,029	1,990	2.88%

SECONDARY

LOCAL AUTHORITY	CAPACITY AT MAY 2016	NUMBER OF PLACES NEEDED BY 2018-19	PLACES NEEDED AS PROPORTION OF CAPACITY
Leicester	18,851	2,260	11.99%
Stockton-on-Tees	12,382	840	6.78%
Leicestershire	49,983	2,560	5.12%
Oldham	17,576	800	4.55%
York	10,879	380	3.49%
North Somerset	14,622	500	3.42%
Thurrock	10,785	340	3.15%
Walsall	22,135	660	2.98%
Telford and Wrekin	12,501	360	2.88%
Birmingham	83,303	2,360	2.83%

Source: Department for Education

areas did not fare as well.

In 14 areas, fewer than 80 per cent of new places were in good or outstanding schools, while in South Tyneside none of the places

created over the same period were in good or outstanding schools. All 210 of its new places were in schools rated as "requires improvement".

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NEWS

Happy 100th birthday, Schools Week

REVEALED!

The true story of how *Academies Week* became *Schools Week*

"Weren't you once called *Academies Week*?"
 "Yes, we changed after 13 editions."
 "Why?"
 "Good question."

I've had this conversation hundreds of times over the past two-and-a-half years, and most of the time I've wriggled out of it. But it's our 100th edition. So if you don't know it already, here's the story of how we changed our name to *Schools Week*, and why.

The owners bought the name *Academies Week* before I came on board. They were putting in a huge investment and wanted to reflect the fact the paper was to be edgy and investigative and modern - just the way its sister paper *FE Week* had turned out.

From everything the owners had learned about the schools community, they knew schools were increasingly becoming academies and wanted to get on board with this new innovation but didn't appreciate how much the term might offend some people. Plus, the complicated world of UTCs, voluntary-aided schools, boarding schools, private schools, and everything else that uses the phrase 'school' also made it difficult.

Thing is, if you're called *Academies Week*, and you cover private schools, (which we did), and you have to ring one and tell them that you're calling from *Academies Week*, then it quickly gets complicated. You have to explain that while you're called *Academies Week*, you actually cover all schools. Then they want to convince that you shouldn't, and it all gets messy.

On the upside, the name did grab attention. A lot. In our first few months readers tweeted us furiously about how we were "the dark side", in the pocket of corporates, and going to be doing the devil's work of promoting academies.

Unions refused to have our newspapers in their reception areas. So did many maintained schools. Councils wouldn't touch us with a bargepole.

This wouldn't have been so bad if we really were promoting academies. We could have got some kudos for feeling the way academies were often treated by these groups. But we weren't even being that nice to academies. Our first front-page story had a go at a free school. Our second edition investigated an academy excluding kids to improve their results.

What we then found was that people's anger and suspicions drove a lot of attention our way. The more angry tweeters that had a pop at us, the more readers came over to see what we were doing. And when they saw our stories, they tended to like them. Soon, shouters became subscribers, even if still mildly miffed at our title.

OUR STORY IN TEN FRONT PAGES



SEPTEMBER 2014

Edition 1 of the then *Academies Week* reveals an £18 million free school with only 17 pupils. Inside, it also tells the story of Department for Education board member Theodore Agnew signing up to become a trustee of Lord Nash's academy chain. The day of publication, Agnew resigns.



MARCH 2015

Within two weeks of joining the staff, reporter John Dickens gains national attention for his story showing how the school where prime minister David Cameron intends to send one of his daughters is asking for illegal £100 donations to take up a place. The story is covered across national newspapers and the BBC.



JANUARY 2015

New year, new editor, new name. After 13 editions, Laura McNerney takes the editor's chair and shifts our name to the more accurate *Schools Week*. In her second edition at the helm, the paper reveals Ofsted's plan for double inspections the results of which were, finally, released last month after a two-year campaign by the paper.



JUNE 2015

Schools Week is the first to report that government plans to change GCSE grades from a lettered grade to a numerical nine-point scale will lead to about 20 per cent more children "failing" their exams. It takes almost two years before Justine Greening catches up - announcing last week the pass grade for school measures is being lowered.

The turning point came at the SSAT's annual conference, held in December. The paper's managing director, Shane Mann, created the first coffee bar at SSAT that year, sponsored by *Academies Week*, and spent two days talking to readers to see how much they liked the product and if he could convince them to subscribe. They all said the same thing: "Love the paper, hate the name".

Two weeks later, when *Academies Week* editor Nick Linford decided to pass the reins to me, I was called to Shane's office and told two things. One: congratulations, I was now editor. Two: we were changing the name of the paper.

In the first month after the name change we had more subscriptions than in the previous four put together.

If there's a lesson to be learned from this, it's that if you need to get something changed by someone senior to yourself, make sure you put them in the firing line.

From edition 14, published in January 2014, we have been *Schools Week*. It has been a privilege steering the ship since and I look forward to helping steer it towards 100 more.

BEST OF THE REST (AS PICKED BY)

Nicky Phillips, head designer

"I was a big fan of the story about why schools are not named after women when they're so often named after men. It felt like a really important discovery that no one had ever taken the time to notice.

"Coming up with an image to go with the concept was really enjoyable. Plus I love comics and all things that say 'go women' in an enthusiastic way.

"The cover was selected from a series of images we had in the vault. But, amusingly, everyone thought it was a photograph of the editor - even our managing director!"

Jill Craven, subeditor

"This front cover is intriguing. I want to know why a boat is

sinking on the front of *Schools Week*.

"I also like that it has fewer words, I prefer things that are simple, I always have. You know what to look at, you want to know what the story is going to be about. Nothing is clashing.

"It's purely a personal preference, but I do believe in KISS: Keep It Simple, Stupid."

John Dickens, chief reporter

"There's nothing quite like finding out a school is about to be sponsored by a weapons company and then, when you call the weapons company, they offer to send pictures of their goods.

"We played the front page very straight. We didn't make any claims about it being a problem, in fact the story is neutral on the matter as the company is a large local employer that also sponsors the local college.

"But I do love the contrast of a picture of a nuclear submarine



Schools Week

EXCLUSIVE



JANUARY 2016

Reporter Billy Camden, who joined the paper as a junior in 2014, gets his first front-page story that reveals how baseline tests for four-year olds are to be scrapped over reliability concerns. Four months later, in April, the government finally admits the doomed tests will go.



MAY 2016

The government claims a u-turn over the forced academy policy, but *Schools Week* recognises this isn't really a u-turn and coins the phrase "z-turn" to point out the plan is still going ahead in principle. We are also the first paper to recognise the impact of the apprenticeship levy and targets on schools.



SEPTEMBER 2016

We take a strong editorial position against grammar schools, despite having remained neutral on academies and Brexit. As the politicians say, when the facts change, our minds will change. Until then, the evidence is overwhelmingly with the paper's choice.



MARCH 2016

George Osborne announces that every school will be an academy, followed quickly by a government white paper on the policy. *Schools Week* delivers a special edition devoted to every aspect of the 120-page document, a black and white cover that is emulated a week later by *Private Eye*.



JUNE 2016

Trying to print a paper in the wake of the Brexit referendum and as government and Labour politicians are fired becomes impossible. So we send out pencils with the edition and write some stories with a "delete where applicable" style. (*Private Eye* does the same thing a week later.)

AND ON... CRYSTAL BALL

In the past two weeks our front pages have prompted national coverage of the free school paying rent to a football club and Ofsted's latest plan to snoop on social media accounts. Here's to another 100 editions.

BY THE SCHOOLS WEEK TEAM)

with Dylan Wiliam's interview pic below."

... and the two we'd put in the bin

Over 100 editions we've loved almost every front page. But we all flop sometimes.

There are only two editions that we roundly agree were not our best.

The One With The Lion

Why is there a lion on the front? What is a bite-sized skill? Which funding has been simplified?

Edition 9 was a classic example of what happens when you start something new. Like a newly qualified teacher taking on the annual school musical we were tired, emotional and still a bit unsure.

On the upside, whenever



we now think we're struggling with an edition we have this one on hand to get out and make ourselves feel better about how far we have come.

The One With the Prom Dresses

No, it's not the picture of Toby Young that upsets us, it's the complicated graphic that doesn't properly illustrate the story.

What the main image should represent is a story about payday loan sharks going after parents to pay for prom dresses as school leavers' balls grow in popularity and expense. It didn't work - we couldn't find an appropriate prom image, the story on safety jarred with the images. It fell flat.

On the upside, it was the last time we really messed up a front cover, and it was two years ago. Phew!



READERS! WE LOVE YOU....

To celebrate our 100th birthday and to reward you coming along on this journey with us, each print subscriber will get a strip of raffle tickets in this week's edition.

Your task is simple:

- Find the ticket
- Keep the ticket
- Check our live prize draw results on **Wednesday, April 7, at 4pm**
- If you win, let us know!

Winning ticket numbers will be announced on our Twitter feed on Wednesday during the live draw. They will also be listed on our website and emailed to subscribers along with details of how to claim.

Prizes include

- 2 x £100 Amazon vouchers
- 2 x £50 Amazon vouchers
- Bottle of Champagne
- Four lots of two tickets to The Telegraph Festival of Education
- Four lots of a year's subscription to *Schools Week* (free renewal)
- Four *Schools Week* goodie bags



Tell them I love seeing my leaked stories in 'Week in Westminster'...



EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

I'm bothered that the DfE can't be bothered

It's our 100th edition. 100 front pages; 100 editorials; 100 late nights putting the paper together. And I think I have a 100 wrinkles to show for it.

But this editorial isn't going to be about that.

It's about a different anniversary. It's about the fact that two years ago, in our first Easter edition, we printed the most recent board minutes of the Department for Education (DfE), because – frankly – they're an insult to the thousands of school governors who volunteer their time to attend similar meetings, at school-level, and who diligently make sure minutes are recorded, checked and available to the public.

Last Easter, we published the minutes again – with a note pointing out that they hadn't been updated.

This year, we are here again. And guess what? Still no update. For two years the DfE hasn't bothered to put together a one-line summary for its meetings. Or maybe it hasn't had meetings? We don't know.

In the same two years, however, academy trusts have faced increasingly bureaucratic checks and have had to hand over their governing body minutes to anyone who wants them. Meanwhile, the people at the top

of the chain with the power – the ministers, the board members of the DfE – can get away without so much as printing a full agenda.

And here's the thing: I couldn't care less about it for the headlines. The reason it naffs me off is that it is undermining faith in the academy system.

No one knows how much it costs to transfer academies as there is no official due diligence process for takeovers. Leaders are pushed into taking schools they can't cope with, then are publicly battered over the head with unregulated academy chain inspections when they don't perform miracles.

At the centre of almost every nightmare we report, or investigate, is the Education Funding Agency (EFA). We hear almost universal disgruntlement about its service. The cock-ups are eye-watering.

Nevertheless, deep in my heart I believe the DfE's senior board must be taking the matter in hand. But I can't know it: **BECAUSE NO ONE HAS UPDATED THE MINUTES.**

A hundred editions ago, when we started this paper, faith in Ofqual and Ofsted was equally low. But by opening up, connecting, and fronting up to



their difficulties, they crept back into people's good books.

The EFA now needs the same treatment. And the first step ministers could take is writing professional, unsarcastic, transparent board minutes. Once that basic is sorted, maybe everything else can start to improve too.

We're now off on our Easter break. We're back on April 28, but you can follow all the news on schoolsweek.co.uk

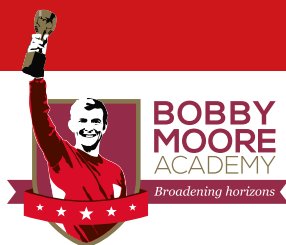
DIGITAL EDITION UPDATE!

Since going to print the Department for Education have published the last two years' worth of board minutes. Could it be because we tweeted to tell them we'd be repeating our usual Easter tradition? I guess we shall never know. What we do know is the minutes haven't improved. One is just 10 words long and says the board discussed the department's "transformation" programme. Oh well. At least now we know. Happy Easter!

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A unique, state-of-the-art learning environment, the Academy will transform the life chances of students across East London. What's more, as it's part of the David Ross Education Trust – a network of over 30 unique and diverse academies – you'll have exceptional opportunities to progress too. So whilst forming part of the management team and working directly with the Principal, the role will also grow as the school does, offering the potential for senior leadership opportunities in the future.

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As well as continuing professional development, and the opportunity to progress into a senior management role, you can expect:

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Apply now

To apply, please send your CV to accompany our online application form by **21st April 2017**.

DRET is committed to equality, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check is required for all successful applicants.



Director of Maths

Salary: £49,429 - £54,223 per annum

Location: East Sheen, London



Richmond Park Academy is seeking to appoint a dynamic, highly motivated and ambitious practitioner who has the drive, energy and capacity to become an outstanding leader.

The successful candidate will benefit from a reduced teaching load in order to focus on raising standards through the development of teaching and learning within the Mathematics Faculty. You will be an outstanding teacher with the drive and capacity to make a significant difference, with the ambition for senior leadership.

The candidate will be eligible to be part of the AET Subject Leaders Programme, and will benefit from a range of wonderful opportunities to enrich their teaching and leadership role, including:

- Membership of the AET national mathematics teacher network including national conferences and three regional meetings each year.
- Personal support and coaching from the AET mathematics regional leader.
- Visits to other Mathematics Departments within our community to observe and share best practice as well as to coach and develop colleagues.
- Invitation to be a member of the national AET Mathematics Innovation Team to work on international and national mathematics projects.
- Opportunities to collaborate with academies within our cluster on joint projects such as Numeracy across the Curriculum, Academy-to-Academy Competitions using video technology and Curriculum Development.
- Free access to a range of national training opportunities from the central AET Mathematics team delivered by colleagues such as the author of Method Maths and Mr Barton Maths.

This position is required to commence Friday 1 September 2017

Closing date: Thursday 20 April 2017, 3:00pm

Interviews are scheduled to take place Thursday 27 April 2017

For further information and for an application please email Maddie Porter at:

mporter@academiesenterprisetrust.org

We are committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. A Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate will be required for all posts. This post will be subject to enhanced checks as part of our Prevent Duty.



David Ross Education Trust
Broadening Horizons

PRIMARY CLASS TEACHER

LOCATION: NORTHAMPTON / DAVENTRY

SALARY: M1 TO M6

Joining DRET is a great opportunity to show your passion for teaching and learning - you will be ideally placed to move your career forward with one of the region's leading academy groups.

About you

You will have a proven ability to teach across the primary age range to high standards with experience in EYFS, KS1 or KS2. You will certainly bring a strong commitment to improving standards and support your Academy to develop a vision for high quality education promoting inclusion, spiritual, moral and cultural development.

DRET has a number of Academies across Northamptonshire so whatever you're looking for, there will be a suitable place for you to join. We currently have opportunities for you at the following Primary Academies:

- Kings Heath Primary Academy
- Briar Hill Primary School
- Newnham Primary Academy
- Malcolm Arnold Prep School (MAPS)
- Falconer's Hill Academy
- The Arbours Academy
- Cedar Road Primary
- About The David Ross Education Trust

The David Ross Education Trust (DRET) has grown to a network of 33 academies, incorporating primary, secondary, grammar and special schools. We employ over 2,000 staff supporting the David Ross Foundation's vision to give children better life chances through access to the best education and support we can offer.

Salary & Benefits

- M1 to M6
- Access to Teachers/Local Government Pension Scheme.
- Business mileage.
- Ongoing CPD.

Apply now via: www.dret.co.uk/vacancies

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The above post is subject to a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure Certificate with Barred List check (child) via the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Assistant Headteacher -

Pupil Development, Behavior and Welfare



Salary: L7 - L11 £45,290 - £49,976 Location: Birmingham

Progress your career and join an academy where inspiration, fun and teamwork are second nature!

Lea Forest Primary Academy is a popular and growing 2 form entry school and proud to serve the communities around Kitts Green in Birmingham. We are part of Academies Enterprise Trust network of schools, and we were delighted that Ofsted graded us as 'good' in 2016 across the board.

Due to an internal promotion to Deputy Headteacher we are seeking to find an outstanding teaching professional to lead on pupil development, behavior and welfare.

Career development recruitment incentives:

- £500 invested into your own CPD in the first 2 years.
- Access and support to follow middle leadership programmes from the outset e.g. NPQML, Future Leaders.
- Candidates should be looking at this post as a career pathway to Deputy Headship and beyond.
- We advise you to come in and speak with the Headteacher to discuss the above and shape the next 3 years of your career, thus this post is suitable for both experienced Assistant Headteachers as well as phase leaders/TLR holders.

The ideal candidate will:

- Be an outstanding practitioner with evidence of a whole school responsibility and experience of turning policy into effective and successful practice.
- Be able to inspire and motivate staff through your own best practice
- Have a track record of behavior management skills.
- Have high personal expectations of their own achievement and professional development.
- Ideally have experience in KS1 and one other Key Stage.

The recruitment and retention of our staff is of the upmost importance and we want you to thrive and develop your career here.

This position is required for **September 2017** and interviews are scheduled to take place on **Tuesday 2 May 2017**.

For further information and for an application please email **James** at: **jannetts@academiesenterprisetrust.org**



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—★—
TRUST

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RECEPTION TEACHER
YEAR 1 CLASSROOM ASSISTANT
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NURSERY MANAGER
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As well as the opportunity to shape a new school, you'll be able to enjoy the beautiful and historic city of Norwich, with Norfolk's golden beaches and famous Broads just minutes away.

Closing date for all roles is Thursday, April 13, 2017.
For full details go to inspirationtrust.org/careers today.

The Inspiration Trust takes the safeguarding of our pupils very seriously, and all positions are subject to an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.

CHARLESDARWINPRIMARY.ORG.UK

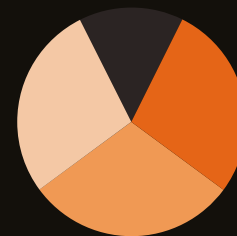
Imagine if...

- everyone in school used assessment to create learning and drive pupil progress
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...Imagine when with Assessment Academy

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THINK HARRIS.

 **Harris Academy**
Peckham

PRINCIPAL

Start Date: September 2017

**Generous salary based on experience + Performance Bonus +
Private Medical Insurance + Harris Benefits**

To lead a school in London is always worthwhile; but to do so in those areas of the city which most need the support of excellent teachers is a privilege.

We are looking for a dynamic leader to be Principal of the Harris Academy Peckham, an 11–18 academy with 1,000 pupils on roll, who is either looking to extend their experience of Headship or begin it in a challenging but highly rewarding environment. Currently judged “Good” by Ofsted, this academy is very well placed for the next stage in its journey to becoming Outstanding.

This is a chance to lead a team committed to improving the lives of the community and harnessing their children’s ability into qualifications and experience that will fulfil their ambition. Harris Academy Peckham is co-located with the growing Harris Primary Free School Peckham, and in due course, the two schools will become a single all-through academy.

You will be a successful leader and a good communicator, whose understanding of school improvement strategies is matched by your ability to manage change and motivate staff and the community. Above all, you will possess a relentless drive to raise standards for our ambitious young people.

Harris is a Federation and not a chain; each Harris academy is different, reflecting the particular aspirations and leadership style of its Principal.

If you would like to discuss the post in confidence, please call Sir Dan Moynihan, CEO, on 020 8253 7777.

Closing date: 18th April 2017

Harris academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check.

Discover more at:

www.harriscareers.org.uk

Head of Science

Salary: Main Scale +TLR 1 (£9,379 p.a)

Required for September 2017

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Foundation Academies Trust

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“With consistently positive attitudes and good behaviour in lessons...students take a pride in their school and their work”

(Ofsted) ”

A brilliant opportunity to join a thriving 11-16 academy and be part of a small family of schools. We are looking for an individual with leadership experience and potential who will have the enthusiasm and energy to ensure that our Science team really make a difference in the classroom.

We are looking for individuals who are on a mission – the kind of people who make others smile because of their enthusiasm; the kind of people who will get satisfaction from seeing our children learn to do things that staff in other schools might take for granted. In return, you will get a lot back from our young people – they are lovely – and you will be working for a Trust that will take an active interest in your wellbeing and development.

Visits are welcomed – come and see us in action!

Please contact **Michelle Pogson**, HR Director on **01204 333 222 ext 3022** or by email pogsonm@essaacademy.org

Please note we are closed for the Easter holidays from Monday 10 April 2017- Friday 21 April 2017 inclusive.

For further information and details of how to apply please visit www.efatrust.org.

Any general enquiries should be addressed to:

E-Mail: hr@essaacademy.org -

Telephone number: 01204 333 222

Closing date: Monday 24 April 2017 @ 08:00am

Interviews: Thursday 27 April

Essa Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments will be subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Baring check.

Education Associates

Location: London (Bethnal Green)

Are you an outstanding teacher, who wants to transform children and young people's readiness for real life?

Enabling Enterprise is an award-winning social enterprise. Our mission is to ensure that one day, all students leave school equipped with the skills, experiences and aspirations to succeed – beyond just a set of qualifications. We do this through creating innovative educational programmes for schools that introduce new, more enterprising teaching approaches. Our work is reinforced and supported by more than 100 top employers including PwC, London City Airport and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital.

We are looking for an experienced and passionate teacher, comfortable working with students, training and modelling to teachers, and presenting to school leaders. We want someone who will be dedicated to building and maintaining relationships with our schools, and supporting them to make our programmes transformational for their children. To build credibility, we are looking for evidence of outstanding teaching practice in a primary or secondary school in the UK. Subject specialism is not important.

From our three national offices in London, Birmingham and Manchester, we currently work over 80,000 students in schools across the country, from Middlesbrough down to the South coast. This will be a key role as Enabling Enterprise becomes a truly national organisation, working towards our goal of developing the skills of over 125,000 students per year across England by 2019.

If you want to be part of an inspiring team, and benefit from opportunities for rapid growth, development and challenge, we want to hear from you.



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Terms & Conditions:

Salary: £27,000-£32,000 subject to review in 12 months + Training Budget

Start Date: 21 August 2017

Working hours: 40 hours per week, although due to working with schools across the country occasional early starts and evening work will be needed.

Holidays: 25 days per year, plus bank holidays

Contract length: Initially 2 years, probationary period of 6 months

Application Process:

Applications (including your CV) should be made here:

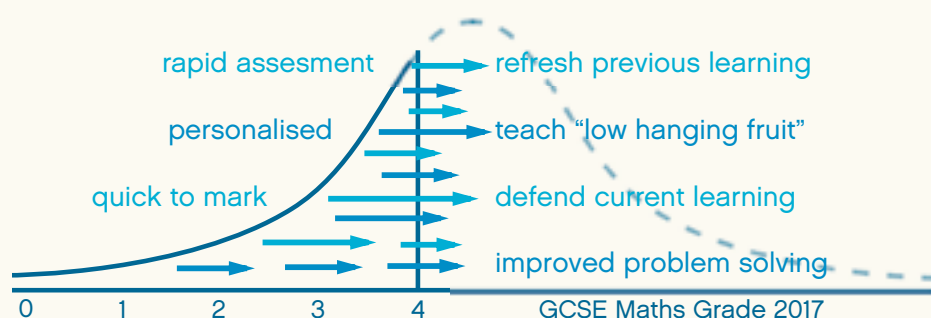
<http://enablingenterprise.org/education-associate-application>

This round of applications ends at **9am on Tuesday 18 April** with interviews taking place in London on **Wednesday 26 April and Thursday 27 April**, with evening slots available.

Enabling Enterprise is an equal opportunities employer, and actively encourages applications from all qualified individuals.



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READERS' REPLY



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Ofsted turns to Facebook

Simon Hepburn, Greater Manchester

I'm a bit sceptical about this, but it does show how social media is important to schools. You can't control the fact that people will say bad things about you, but you can be aware of it – and you can enable people to share good things that will counter negative perceptions.

Education State, address supplied

Is the only data that counts the data that schools can control and a paid-for product can collect and analyse? Is the only good data positive data? Social media data should be welcomed as it provides further insight into how a school is doing, especially important for parents who, with academisation, today find themselves increasingly marginalised.

Colin Richards, Cumbria

Note the negative tone in Ofsted exploring "the possibility of using near-real-time data and information from social media and other sources to predict and prevent decline in school performance". Why the concentration on "decline"? Why not on monitoring "to predict and promote excellence"? The organisation has a long record of giving out mixed messages. This latest negative stance does not sit comfortably with the upbeat, relatively positive comments from Ofsted senior management

GCSE grade 4 becomes 'standard' pass

Rachel Brindle, address supplied

The new GCSEs are designed to be more challenging and this system is designed to align with other countries and stretch out the grades so pupils can realise what they are good at, rather than getting six A*s. It is a better system and schools should embrace it, even if some grades are lower on merit.

We need to give Justine Greening some credit for her interventions. She knows damn well that it is an almighty mess. Two of my children are unfortunately caught up in with 2016 SATs and 2017 new GCSEs. It will be very difficult for even bright children to get the grade 5 due to the enormous quantity of material studied in great depth. I studied O-level including Shakespeare, Thomas Hardy and George Eliot and I am confident that this is more akin to facing A-level standard at 16. Well done to those children who DO achieve a "strong pass". It will cost too much in time and resources for resits for those achieving 4 "standard pass". FE will accept grade 4 and rightly so.

Roger Titcombe, Cumbria

What utter nonsense. If the GCSE is to be a valid test of knowledge and understanding then the mark pattern will follow the "bell curve" normal distribution. This will be the case whatever labels are attached to the grades.

There's no such thing as a toxic school, says Carter

Tim Warneford, Bedfordshire

What incentives are the regional schools commissioners armed with when incentivising multi-academy trusts to absorb schools that retain risks and liabilities? Can the RSC make a case to the Education Funding Agency to fund essential built environmental works if the local authority cannot afford to?

Greening consults on scrapping key stage 1 SATs tests

@PaulGarvey4

Best April fool of this year! Oh, hang on...

Asseate Johnson

Can this be done from this May, my six-year-old has nightmares about it and talks in her sleep.

Tiffany Robinson

This is a move that would fill me with joy!

ECDL exam dropped from league tables a year early

Rob T Glass

Good. It's a joke.

Lesley Brennan

Is it related to Brexit? European computer driving licence!

Primary recruitment tumbles as controls bite

@HickinEllen

Bad enough that qualified teachers like me have left, but dropping numbers before it even starts? Fingers crossed something good comes soon.

@kfallan

A disastrous recruitment year last year only adding to the difficulties of recruitment and retention.

Keep lessons to 12 minutes, study finds

Saira Shahid

Kids can absorb a 30-minute lesson easily.

GCSE grade 4 becomes 'standard' pass

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Terry McGovern, address supplied

Alternative new standards for GCSEs

F = Proper fail

1 = Not really a pass

2 = Not really a pass

3 = Not really a pass

4 = Standard pass

5 = Strong pass

(previously a good pass)

6 = Amazing pass

7 = Spectacular pass

8 = Brilliant pass

9 = Bloody miracle pass

REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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PROFILE

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Jason Wing, executive principal of Neale-Wade academy, Cambridgeshire

Jason Wing taught himself to become a national standard long-jumper when he was 12. He went on to represent Great Britain, become a professional rugby league player, and eventually make it as an Olympic bobsleigher before turning his full attention to teaching. Much like Eddie the Eagle, Wing has tested the limits of how far he can fly. But this time the stakes are personal: he leads the school where he was once a pupil.

"I really wanted this job," says the 51-year-old who was brought up in the small Fenlands town of March. "Some of the parents around here know me from when I was a kid."

It has been a challenge. The school plunged into special measures shortly after his arrival in 2011 and despite (or including) all the reforms that he put in place, it "required improvement" three years later.

"That was tough," he says. "We'd worked so hard." Bad behaviour dogged the school; as the taxi driver drops me off at an impressively colourful and modern building, he notes a reputation for disruptive pupils. Yet the last Ofsted was "good" and behaviour is under control. Soon Wing will head a second academy, also run by the academy's sponsors Active Learning Trust.

Wing sums himself up as relentless. "I was a geek really, but of long-jumping rather than maths. I read everything I could about it. I used to finish school, go back, climb over the fence, and use the long-jump pits on my own."

By 14 he was fourth in the UK for the event. By 15 he was second. Then followed a string of achievements that he attributes to an "ultra-competitive drive" and a knack for being spotted. While studying for a BED in PE and IT at Borough Road PE College in London, he was seen playing rugby by Bev Risman, a former captain of the Great Britain league squad. In 1991 he was signed to play for the London Crusaders, but badly dislocated his elbow in a tackle. So he decided to do some sprinting "to keep fit".

"Again, right place, right time. I was sprinting and the driver for the Great British bobsleigh team was there. He came over after the race and said, 'Have you ever thought about bobsleigh?'"

He gave it a go. At 15½ stone but able to run the 100m in 10.6 seconds, he was perfect for sending a sleigh hurtling down the ice. In 1994 he became a silver medallist at the winter Olympics in Norway.

But at 29 Wing's body began to break. An operation on his calf, and a rupture to the muscle from his hip to his knee – "I've still got a big hole there" – turned his thoughts back to teaching.

He became a director of sport at Isleworth Boys' School in west London, and won the specialist sports college of the year award in 2003. Mo Farah, long-distance legend, passed through his doors, mainly in the hands of Wing's colleague, Alan Watkinson. "Mo was a great guy. Bags of talent. When he was with us he was trying to work out what to do – steeplechase or long-distance."

Several other teaching appointments followed, before the headship at the then Neale-Wade Community College came up. This was not just any appointment.

"I HAD A GOOD TEAM, SO I KNEW I COULD DO IT"

Wing was from the area, the only child of a barber who worked in nearby Cambridge and a sporty mum who used to "play a bit of hockey". Was he nervous? His step-daughter had been a pupil (his 11-year-old son will soon follow), but, more importantly, Neale-Wade's 2011 GCSE results placed it in the bottom 1 per cent of schools nationally for value-added.

Why take the challenge? He believed he had a good team – and his sporting years had taught him that mattered. "It's a bit like when I played on the wing in rugby – if you haven't got good centres you don't get the ball and you can't play. If I had a good team, I could do it."

It is five years this March since the school was put in special measures. Expecting that judgment, the then-45-year-old took heart from notes about his "strongly established" presence and staff calling him a "breath of fresh air". What did come as a body blow, however, was a no-notice inspection on a snowy day in February three years later that found the school was not good but "requires improvement".

Even worse, Ofsted said complaints from parents had prompted the inspection. The quality of teaching was still patchy, especially in French, book marking was inconsistent and there was "low-level disruption". A local newspaper described Wing as "wounded".

A change of team players – a new vice-principal – and Wing pressed on with his reforms, asking Ofsted to put him through the trials for a "good" outcome before February 2017.

"I was able to persuade the HMI, who I was working with at the primary school – of course, they never tell you if they're going to come in – but I said, 'I would really appreciate it if we could have the inspection, because I think we're a good school.'"

Wing was right. One line shows his trademark style had spread: "Leaders are relentless in improving teaching." A management information system that awards behaviour and praise points is seen by Wing at the end of each day. A star system is used for good performance and pupils who are "class reporters" give feedback to teachers. A "nurture group" brings struggling pupils from primary school up to speed in year 7 with poorer pupils making as good, and sometimes better, progress than the national average.

Wing took the criticism of behaviour seriously. In the past six years, there have been only two permanent exclusions, a huge reduction on the numbers before his arrival. He took a particular interest in Tom Bennett's recent behaviour review – he already has the inclusion

JASO

unit and data Bennett recommended.

What will he prioritise in the new school that will open in September?

"Restorative justice," he replies immediately. Tackling behaviour by requiring pupils to sit and talk to each other when one has mistreated the other.

Yet, despite all these efforts, headteachers cannot be in constant control. The day after we talk, Wing holds a eulogy for a 14-year-old pupil who took his own life. The boy had never caused any concerns; he did not have a single behaviour point. Wing is too sad to talk long about it. Twenty counsellors were brought in, and the library given up to therapy for staff and pupils. The boy's suicide is the first thing the taxi driver tells me.

But Wing can take heart from Ofsted: "The principal leads the academy with an unwavering determination to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well." It may take longer until every local knows it – after all, Wing does not even tell his pupils that their headteacher is a former Olympian; they find out from Wikipedia. But running a school is a marathon, not a race, and this head looks set to bring the team over the finish line.



Wing with his son



In his sprinting days



With fellow bobsleigh team members at the 1994 Winter Olympics



All aboard: the 1994 bobsleigh team . . .



. . . on the way to a silver medal

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What's your favourite film?

Heat. With De Niro and Pacino. It's got a little bit of everything: a bit of action, a bit of depth of character. What's De Niro's phrase? "Don't let yourself get attached to anything you can't walk away from within 30 seconds", which is completely the opposite to me. I found that character intriguing.

What is your most treasured possession?

I bought a Tag Heuer watch when I went to the Olympics. I don't wear it anymore, but I wouldn't want to lose it because it symbolises a time when I was really successful in sport.

If you were stuck on an island with two songs, what would they be?

Jerusalem. Fiercely patriotic school song . . . gets to me every time. And I quite like stuff by The Smiths; *This Charming Man* and so on.

Who do you admire?

In sport, Allan Wells [the 100m Olympic champion in 1980]. He was a guy who squeezed every ounce out of himself.

What's the naughtiest thing you did as a child?

I climbed out of a window during a lesson. I was about 14 and probably did it just because I could.

Where is your favourite place?

I've got very happy memories of visits to New York, with my wife and then with the kids.

OPINION



DAVID COBB

CEO, Oceanova

We must face up to the talent challenge

Teacher recruitment and retention are not just a government problems, says David Cobb. Schools must embrace new technologies, with leaders putting the needs of their teachers first

The debates rage on about grammar schools, free schools and funding. But it's all largely irrelevant if we don't deal with teacher recruitment and retention.

These are the facts: by 2025, pupil numbers will swell by half a million and we'll need more than 25,000 extra teachers. Yet we are missing our teacher training targets year on year, and more teachers than ever are leaving the profession. Hardly anyone seems to want to teach anymore and many of those that do have a pitifully low impression of the status of the profession.

Pretty sobering stuff. And yet there are precious few solutions or innovations mooted.

We need action at policy and regional levels. Schools, universities and government need to collaborate to develop NEW ways to create a teaching workforce that is fit for purpose.

Most importantly, schools must take responsibility and stop looking to central government for solutions (or more money). Having worked alongside schools for the past 15 years supporting their recruitment efforts, I've yet to see a truly professional series of talent management processes anywhere in the sector.

We need a paradigm shift in the way school leaders attract, retain and develop talent within their organisations. Schools must professionalise their recruitment processes and adapt to the more cost-effective strategies and technologies that are now common in other sectors. Financial services, tech, retail – even the NHS – have seen the light and embraced new approaches.

Globally, the recruitment industry is under increasing pressure as companies harness new technologies and social media to fill their internal vacancies, rather than turn to the expensive options of recruiters or press advertising. And yet these are still our first ports of call in education. Collectively, UK schools spend a whopping £250 million on advertising and recruitment fees. But the answer is not more money, it is more innovation.

Changing practices in recruitment is one

thing. Changing attitudes towards retention is another.

To keep the teachers we recruit, we need to raise the status of the profession and promote wellbeing in the job to unlock the creativity, passion and discretionary effort that undoubtedly exists.

Simply put, we need to put the needs of our teaching talent at the top of the agenda. They are the assets that execute the service delivery of a school – teaching and learning. That is why our institutions exist.

“The passionate “calling” of teachers has been exploited

We need radical new thinking and transformational service design to reshape the hierarchical and bureaucratic structures of our schools so that all teachers can get on with teaching and reconnect with the thing that drew them into the profession. For too long the school system has exploited the social responsibility and passionate “calling” of teachers and ignored their professional and personal development journeys.

Teachers need more time, variety, stretch, support, challenge, advice, learning and progress built in to their role. We know this because they've been telling us for more than a decade. We need to work out how we can deploy the available resources to create a better balance for our teachers' lives. Leaders must make talent management and professional learning their first priority.

Whilst effective leadership is critical to the success of a school, leadership teams must always remember that their function is principally one of support. The servant-manager principle has been almost universally adopted by business, yet many schools still prioritise the head's coffee over the French teacher's lack of whiteboard markers!

Leaders must put the needs of their teachers first. We know that to create trust and cooperation in the staff team, leaders must create a culture of safety and job security. Creating professional learning journeys for all that have talent management at their heart, is an essential first step.



JAMES LYNAS

Partner, Winckworth Sherwood law firm

How schools can avoid sexy selfie scandals

Regularly updated codes of conduct must guide staff on how to use social media, says James Lynas. Leaving it to common sense exposes the school and staff to disaster

Career death awaits school staff who use social media carelessly. Be wary of sharing a “sexy selfie” with Facebook friends who then tell your head; never forget that your sixth-form students might have Grindr or Tinder on their phones too and will share your intimate dating profile; realise that email banter with a pupil could be used against you in a safeguarding case.

Schools' codes of conduct should make it clear that no social media profile or post should mention the school and that befriending current or recent pupils and parents on social media is not allowed. Staff need to know that there are dividing lines that must not be crossed. Leaving it to common sense exposes the school and staff to disaster.

The ban on befriending must extend to sharing mobile phone numbers (which prevents WhatsApp conversations) with parents or pupils, or communicating by email with pupils. Online communication with pupils should only be done through a managed learning environment where all communications are transparent and can't be deleted. Anything else is unsafe.

Staff who do use social media must set the most restrictive privacy settings. Twitter and Instagram should be set as locked accounts; Facebook settings should be as private as possible. Ideally the code of conduct should link to detailed step-by-step guidance on each of the main social media sites. Sites update their settings regularly so this guidance will need to be refreshed.

Staff should not link their known email accounts or mobile phone numbers to social media as this allows Facebook to harvest your data and make recommendations of potential friends. This cuts both ways, so any pupil who has your email address or mobile phone number could see your profile..

Some teachers have changed their names on Facebook to reduce the risk of detection by curious pupils, but this doesn't tackle the big loophole with social media. Once you publish an embarrassing picture or

derogatory status update you are at the mercy of everyone who sees it.

If you are Facebook friends with work colleagues, they could tell the head about your drunken Friday evening photos in the pub opposite the school, or tell the press about the video of the staff celebrating their head's suspension by singing “She's getting sacked in the morning”, or report the comments they've seen from three years ago when you criticised the head of department for being lazy.

A friend from your own school days who you linked to out of curiosity seven

“Assume that you are giving ammunition to your worst enemy

years ago could see your post haranguing the governing body's decision to appoint an outsider as head and pass it on to their friend who is on the governing body.

Your best friend could see your inflammatory post about immigration and show her phone to her friend who tells a journalist – and you're in the *Daily Mail*.

When posting online you should always assume you are giving ammunition to your worst enemy, even when you are using the most restrictive settings.

Case law is quite clear: posts on social media should not be treated as private and anything you say that brings the school into disrepute can be used by your employer as a reason to fairly dismiss you. The school's code of conduct should make that ultimate accountability explicitly clear.

Staff should never use location-based dating apps when on school premises or on the journey to and from school. When setting a profile for a dating app, staff should assume that it could be accessed by their pupils so should draft their profiles accordingly.

A code of conduct is, of course, useless if it is never read. Schools should be able to show each year that staff have received training in the code and the guidance on privacy settings. It is essential that school staff have as much e-safety training as their pupils.

It's too early to talk of abandoning UTCs, says Sally Dicketts. The key to success is to hold true to their core principles – and find a formula that works for you

A quick scan of recent media coverage of university technical colleges (UTCs) could lead you to believe that this is nothing more than an educational experiment gone wrong.

Some commentators have even suggested that the government review its policy on UTCs. This follows a clutch of poor Ofsted ratings, two closures and four colleges announcing that they are to convert to mainstream status.

As a lead sponsor for two UTCs, including the first to be rated outstanding across all areas, my experience of this educational newcomer is a world apart.

Far from being fundamentally flawed, the principles at the core of the UTC movement make it a valuable part of our education system. These include:

- Offering young people a high-quality education that develops academic and technical skills;
- Providing pupils who know where their interests lie, the chance to specialise at 14 and get ahead of their peers;
- Providing a curriculum co-created with employers, that develops the technical and soft skills required by industry;
- Offering young people a clear line of sight to employment.

Where UTCs hold true to these principles, the organisations and their pupils succeed.



SALLY DICKETTS
Group chief executive, Activate Learning

UTCs give pupils the choices they deserve

Where one or more element is absent, the cracks appear.

Our UTCs, with one studio school and a mainstream comprehensive, are now part of a multi-academy trust with its roots in the technical, further education (FE) sector. This expertise in technical, vocational education has provided a sound foundation on which to build.

But we have also taken key learnings from our UTCs to shape curriculum delivery in our FE colleges. This includes a faculty structure aligned to industry sectors, employer involvement in curriculum design and delivery and a greater focus on project-based learning. It is about respecting sector differences, while building bridges.

There is clearly no single formula for what makes a successful school or UTC, but I believe the following can be critical.

Be clear about the offer If UTCs are to offer

young people a clear route into employment, their specialisms must meet the needs of local industry. At UTC Reading, a specialism in computer science prepares learners to work in the UK's "Silicon Valley". At UTC Oxfordshire, a specialism in life sciences supports the country's Science Vale, one of the largest science clusters in the UK. One size does not fit all.

Build strong employer partnerships

This will allow you to build your reputation on the back of theirs. It takes time to understand an employer's needs; while one might want access to the next bright young things, another might want to develop its corporate social responsibility or gain a new profile in the local community. Find out what's important, then formalise their involvement through memorandums of understanding.

Don't rely on feeder schools Too many people assume that building relationships

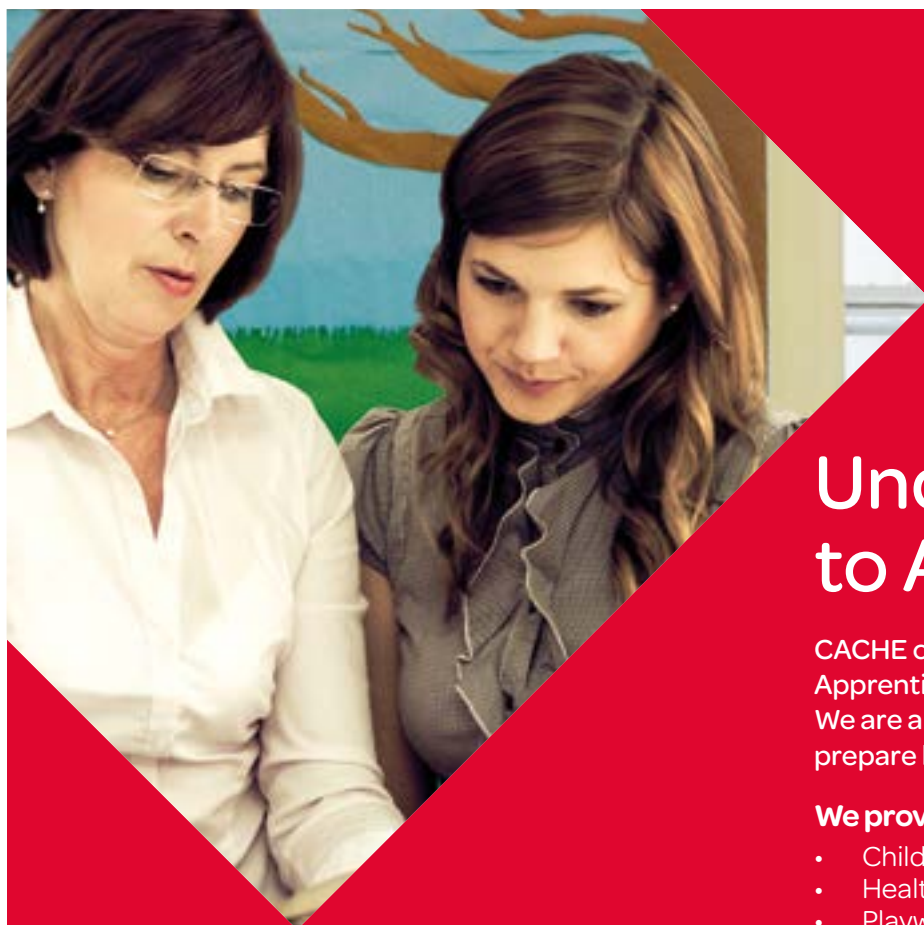
with local feeder schools is the key to recruitment. This is only likely to result in schools referring those who are not expected to achieve academically. If you want the best students, concentrate on building employer partnerships and developing a relevant, high-quality curriculum.

Be prepared to promote

New UTC principals, particularly if they have come from mainstream schools, don't always appreciate the work that needs to be put into marketing and promotion. There isn't an obvious catchment and, as a new school, it will have no existing credentials. This is where early employer engagement pays dividends. At both our UTCs, our employer partners helped by hosting taster events and activities. This offers a wow factor as it gives potential applicants the chance to see their future working environment and glimpse their future careers.

“ Concentrate on building employer partnerships

With the government's increased focus on technical education, it would be foolish to abandon the UTC movement so early in its lifecycle. Let's learn from what is working well, as much as what isn't, to provide our young people with the choice and education they deserve.



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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, union organiser and former primary school teacher @emmaannhardy

I'm assuming that some people are happy that Article 50 has been signed, although I'm doing my best to avoid them. Perhaps they are the same people who are focused on looking backwards for the solutions to problems in the present. Whether we like it or not, we are in a period of immense change. This could create opportunities for us to positively shape the future of education, but only if we are honest about the state we are in.

The danger of pseudo-traditionalist teachers

@IntEdToday

All our opinions are formed by our experiences. Therefore the tendency for people working in the same sector, in similar areas, is bound to generate the "group think" that makes blogs such as this even more important. If this blog is representative of how the English education system is viewed from abroad, then we should all be concerned.

It argues that "there is a vociferous minority of, predominantly UK, teachers who exalt a particular brand of right-wing ideology that sits uncomfortably with the more enlightened majority in the profession. These neo-traditionalists, or pseudo-trads, take their inspiration from Michael Gove and have a very narrow view of the purpose of education...Fortunately, the pseudo-trad nonsense seems the exclusive domain of the political right in the UK, and hasn't permeated into the international sector."

I agree with some of this, including the arguments against the common criticisms levelled against the "progressives". "Of course, those on the progressive end of the spectrum don't dismiss the importance of knowledge as many 'neo-trads' claim...It seems ludicrous to argue that there is a 'best way' to teach."

Subject-based learning: let's blow this baby wide open

@rethinking_ed

We really need new ideas in this brave new world of dog-eats-dog school survival in which the aims of the government are to re-create an unrealistic and mystical sense of the past educational system. James Mannion argues that, "1) schools have been focused almost exclusively on teaching a narrow band of traditional subjects for as long as anyone can remember; 2) I don't know if you've seen the news ever, but the world is in something of a mess. Conclusion: since we're only alive for the blink of an eye, maybe we should try relaxing some of the odd top-down controls on what people can learn and when."

He lists subjects that students could study, including active citizenship, analysing the media, argumentation, consensus building, ethical hacking, applying for funding and how to find reputable sources on the internet. He asks if there was a school offering subjects like this would you send your child there? I know that I would.

How to negotiate salaries for teachers

@ieshasmall

This blog made me feel conflicted. On the one hand, I applaud women empowered enough to argue for the salary they deserve. On the other, I know that schools funding is desperate and that negotiating a higher salary for one person could result in denied progression for another.

This blog gives clear guidance on how to negotiate a higher salary, including the need for market research. It also points out that it might not just be about money.

The last piece of advice is excellent: "Whatever happens you'll be building those negotiation skills for a time when it really matters and it's good to keep employers on their toes."

Prejudice

@grumpyteacher17

My intolerance for inauthentic people seems to increase the older I get, but I try hard not to make snap judgments or at least to control the inner eye roll. In this short blog Grumpy Teacher reminds us not to make snap judgments of the children we teach because none of us ever really knows what other people are facing.

BOOK REVIEW

Learning Without Labels: Improving outcomes for vulnerable pupils

Edited by Marc Rowland

Published by John Catt

Reviewed by Margaret Mulholland,
director of Swiss Cottage Development
and Research Centre



Pupil labels can be useful. They attract funding, define strategies, and promote a sense of doing the right thing for those who are disadvantaged. But labels are also sticky. When they become excuses for poor outcomes, they constrain to a point of uselessness.

In his latest book Marc Rowland argues that it is time to redefine what we mean by the term vulnerable or disadvantaged learner – and to widen the lens through which we see these children.

In his view, when we limit our thinking to the label (low ability; on the spectrum; the TA's table) rather than the learner (this child with these live issues, needs and potential), we reinforce a process in which we default to the lowest common denominator of expectation, of ourselves as teachers and of the learners.

In his introduction Rowland sets out six guiding principles, ranging from leadership to accountability, which enable excellent outcomes for the most vulnerable learners. He has gathered a pantheon of respected educationists to provide perspective on the culture needed to support this shift.

The result is a well-structured collection of 26 short essays with two main areas of focus: leadership and practical strategies. Each contributor suggests ideas of how to think "harder" and "better" about vulnerable learners, supported with evidence and memorable examples from their own expertise.

We all know it's time for significant improvement. It is shocking that vulnerable learners fall off a metaphorical cliff when they leave school. Just 6 per cent of adults with learning difficulties are in paid employment; less than half of disadvantaged pupils achieve five good GCSEs. Not a great advertisement for the school system of the past 20 years.

The book helps to humanise the broad range of stories behind the learners we see

every day. Some are obvious; many are invisible.

The risk remains that these pupils' lives can be defined by labels from their childhood, with all the associated low self-esteem and cyclical behaviours. One contributor described the challenge to "training fleas". Apparently, fleas only jump as high as the lid of the jar they are in. After three days, they can't jump any higher, even with the lid removed. Sound familiar?

It's impossible to mention all the ideas in the book. Social mobility, inclusion, exclusion, and overcoming barriers to low expectations are all there, with well-researched new ideas.

One example is the concept of "language poverty". We may be aware that some children may not always have access to books; did we also know that some have no access to vocabulary?

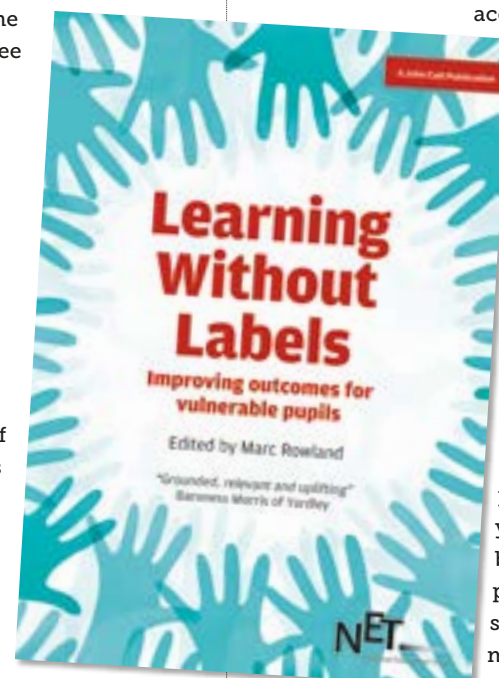
They simply don't hear as many words in their early years, so they have low confidence in speaking aloud.

The book also provides perspective on "no label" approaches from specific circumstances: alternative provision, where young people have been excluded permanently; teams supporting high-mobility children, looked-after children, or children

in care. Families and the wider community are also brought into the discussion. How brave must a parent be, who left school struggling to read himself, simply to attend a parent-tutor meeting? Let alone discuss GCSE options...

The area of identifying vulnerability is important. I've spent the past week visiting Jersey listening to newly qualified teachers buzzing with the idea of the Jersey premium (Jersey's version of the pupil premium) and its focus on the potential of the hardest-to-reach pupils. At my own school, we work with trainee teachers to be "detectives", leading enquiry around each child. We know there are no magic bullets, no one-size-fits-all solutions or quick fixes for the most vulnerable.

This book helps us to ask the right questions, and provides practical ideas and powerful insight on how to approach the challenge across the widest range of vulnerability.



One of the striking omissions when I studied A-level history was the lack of opportunity to study anything of my own heritage or of other non-western civilisations. And in the few opportunities that there were, the story was always told from a western perspective. This bias in history and across the curriculum has a profound effect on not only what you learn, but the lack of value you feel about yourself and the community you come from.

This can still be an issue for many minority ethnic pupils today. Schools have an important role in actively promoting community cohesion, particularly now that Article 50 has been triggered.

One way to achieve this is through the new GCSE history curriculum. Traditionally, history focused on western civilisations, with a limited foray into the teaching of other communities; Empire and migration have been curious absences. Most Britons know the country's prosperity and global importance emerged from the era of Empire, but few have been taught the mechanics and features of imperial expansion, and fewer still have learned about the earlier movements in and out of Britain that shape contemporary society.

The teaching of migration has been, at most, an intermittent feature in British schools. From the 1980s onwards it found a more solid place on the curriculum. But still, when it has appeared, it has done so mostly as an under-integrated topic often connected to Black History Month and leaving out centuries of events and large chunks of the globe. It was confined to covering narrow aspects such as slavery, Nazi Germany or the US civil rights movement. Pupils were rarely given the chance to learn about the multifaceted reasons for different communities settling here.

THE PAST WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER



HISTORY SHOWS HOW IMMIGRATION IS THE NORM

SAMEENA CHOUDRY

Local, independent initiatives – not least through weekend supplementary schools and the heritage sector – have long been strong, but it wasn't until the 2014 history curriculum that the potential emerged to cover this material in a sustained way. Even this was far from smooth, with a large group of vocal and committed historians uniting to oppose Michael Gove's draft curriculum, which explicitly aimed to promote national identity through focus on events that



Jamaican immigrants welcomed by RAF officials from the Colonial Office, 1948

happened on "our island".

As part of the new GCSE history syllabus introduced in 2016 by OCR and AQA, there are now modules on migration in Britain. This gives teachers the chance to sensitively explore that migration to Britain is not new, but the norm over

centuries – largely because of the desire of humans to have a better life for themselves or, in many cases, to seek refuge from war or hostile situations.

The common experience of migration –

the African presence of the 13th century; the Romani Gypsies in the 16th century; Eastern Europeans in 2004 – provides an opportunity for pupils to gain an insight to the human condition.

Some teachers find this a difficult topic to teach because of the negative profile that immigration currently has; others feel unsure they have the necessary knowledge; others that they lack the personal experiences to teach the topic confidently.

But more resources are becoming available. A recent collaboration between the University of Cambridge and the Runnymede Trust has developed an excellent free resource (ourmigrationstory.org.uk) to support history teachers, featuring video and text summaries of significant events in each era, plus historical enquiries.

Other resources are the Migration Museum project (migrationmuseum.org), which provides audio and video resources; Justice to History (justice2history.org), which promotes history education making a difference to the diverse multicultural societies we live in and, finally, the Moving Here Schools website (webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/movinghere.org), which although archived, is still worth visiting.

What is needed at this time in our history (or her story) is for all pupils to understand the many reasons for migration over the centuries, so they gain a long view of history. As such they will be better equipped to navigate the future with compassion and mutual respect, rather than be divided along the lines of difference and separation.

Additional material from Robin Whitburn and Malachi McIntosh



A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

Lord Nash, the government's hottest academiser, has held some interesting meetings over the past few months.

Cabinet Office records released today show that between October and December last year, he met several big names about "academy sponsorship".

The list includes Dunelm's Will Adderley (you know Dunelm: think bedding), multinational insurance broker Jardine Lloyd Thompson Ltd and the chair of the for-profit private school group Cognita.

But mystery surrounds another meeting – simply noted as "Zuma" in the documents.

Week in Westminster approached the Department for Education to ask whether this mysterious meeting was with the South African president Jacob Zuma or the Japanese restaurant chain of the same name. We haven't heard back yet, but in the department's preferred parlance we shall update you "in due course".

The records also show Justine Greening was given a silk scarf worth more than

£140 by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission during her visit to China in December, an item "held by the department". But where is it held? We feel a Freedom of Information request coming.

Continuing the international theme, the education secretary today mused on Brexit during a speech organised by the Social Mobility Commission.

She told school leaders that investment in teachers was needed to transform social mobility in "Brexit Britain". However, her speech did not announce any new investment of any sort.

Greening also failed to mention "grammar schools", despite the expansion of selection being one of the government's flagship policies. If that scarf is white, she could probably refashion it as a flag.

FRIDAY:

Trouble in paradise for the David Ross Education Trust. Within weeks of the revelation by Schools Week that several of its key personnel – including chair David Blunkett (remember him?) and chief

executive Wendy Marshall – have resigned, the chain is now in trouble with unions for threatening redundancies.

The trust, sponsored by Tory donor and businessman David Ross, is consulting on axing 40 support staff across its 32 schools after admitting "financial challenges".

The trust's latest accounts show that its net assets dropped from £4.4 million in 2015 to £846,000 in 2016. The trust's endowment fund fell from £2 million to £161,000 over the same period.

MONDAY:

Some old funding for school capital was regurgitated, which made for quick headlines. Just to be clear: THERE IS NO NEW MONEY.

In other news, Ofqual has new vids. Steady your excitement.

In one released on Monday tiny people sit on giant piles of paper, each lettered A to G, before seeing each pile be renamed 1 to 9, with a big space pushed apart for the new extra number.

The video did not mention the new labels

of "standard" and "strong" passes for grades 4 and 5, as announced by Justine Greening last Tuesday.

WEDNESDAY:

The government has suddenly got coy about the cost of transferring academies between trusts.

Both Schools Week and the Local Schools Network (LSN) requested the latest academy transfer costs – which have been given out in previous years – but have been told the government doesn't have to provide them under the Freedom of Information Act because it intends to publish them "in due course".

Although we have now been waiting for more than a year, the law doesn't allow the Information Commissioners Office to force a deadline. Which, as the LSN's Janet Downs points out, means the government can "postpone publication of academy transfer fees indefinitely". That's helpful.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS

School Bulletin *with Sam King*

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



Pupils at the centre of fashion exhibition

FEATURED



Prince Harry at the 2016 WellChild awards

CHOIRS, TUNE UP NOW FOR COMPETITION

A new singing competition will give primary school choirs the chance to perform for Prince Harry.

Children's charity WellChild is behind the competition, with the winners performing at the WellChild awards, which are regularly attended by charity patron Prince Harry and celebrity guests.

Winners will also receive the title of WellChild School Choir of the Year.

To enter schools need to send the charity a video of their 20-pupil choirs singing *Over the Rainbow*.

Finalists will be judged by a panel that will include classical singers Laura Wright and David Webb. Winners will be announced on September 8.

The chief executive of WellChild, Colin Dyer, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for schools across the UK to get involved in a fun musical competition while at the same time helping with our work supporting seriously ill children and their families."

For more information visit: www.wellchild.org.uk/over-the-rainbow/



York pupils wear it with style. Photography: Jamie Hawkesworth, courtesy of JW Anderson



of art, Sarah Pearson.

"To be asked to be involved in such a wonderful project is a great privilege," she said. "Our pupils certainly enjoyed the



experience of working with Jamie and we are all really excited to see how the photographs have turned out."

The event will run until June 18.

London school hosts VR conference



Student digital ambassadors Sarah Wensley, left, and Sophia Wyllie

A London school has become the first in the UK to host a virtual reality conference focused on education.

Putney High School hosted *Virtual Reality: The Future of Education*, which featured speakers from Google, PwC and Pearson, and showcased educational VR technology.

The equipment allowed pupils and conference delegates – mainly teachers and senior staff from other schools – to swim through the Great Barrier Reef and travel back to a medieval version of London, all from the comfort of the school's performing arts centre.

Speakers discussed the benefits of virtual and augmented reality, including how it

could encourage pupils to be more critical of subjects through virtual experiences.

The school is already committed to technology in classrooms, with 360deg cameras helping teachers to review pupils' behaviour and provide feedback on their engagement.

Conference organiser and head of digital innovation and learning at the school, Andy Perryer, said: "This is a particularly exciting platform for education and we have leading experts in the field to showcase how they see VR impacting on education now and in the future.

"Putney High School prides itself on being technologically forward thinking; our VR in Education conference is a schools' first."



Pupils take part in the engineering day and, right, the Animazing day
Inset: Student handles a reticulated python

From pythons to Pythagoras

Inspired by British Science Week, Reigate Grammar School in Surrey recently hosted a week of activities for pupils and parents, with each day focusing on a particular area of science.

Events included an "Animazing" day, where students got the chance to learn about and handle a reticulated python and giant rabbit.

An engineering day focused on pupils building an emergency shelter; in the science fiction day, music and English departments wrote, composed and filmed sci-fi themed material that was collated into an anthology.

Students also had a talk from Colin Wright, who travels the world talking about the mathematics and science behind

the art of juggling.

The event in late March was also open to budding scientists from local schools, but parents too were invited to attend a lecture by Professor Trevor Jones from King's College London on how medicines are discovered.

The acting head of biology and the school's scholarship programmes, Michelle Pope, said: "It has been fantastic to see so many RGS students exploring science beyond the curriculum.

"Science Week is an important vehicle to develop the younger pupils' enthusiasm for science and to further extend senior students' knowledge beyond the exam syllabus."



MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Peter Knight has been appointed principal at Oasis Academy Brislington, a member of the Oasis Community Learning Trust.

The trust currently has 47 academies in four regions of England.

Knight, who began his educational career as a PE and geography teacher, has been interim principal at the Bristol school since May 2015.

Before joining the academy he was principal at Oasis Academy Bank Leaze, also in Bristol.

He says his vision at Brislington is to build every pupil's "confidence, knowledge and skills".

"We have built firm foundations since Oasis took over two years ago, and I am delighted to have been given the chance to lead the team taking the academy forward into the next stage of its development."

Oasis regional academies director Matt Butler added: "Peter is an excellent leader who is creating an academy community of which everyone – students, parents and carers, staff, governors and the wider community – can be proud."

George Duoblys is the newest associate in LKMco's team of researchers and



Peter Knight



George Duoblys



Joanne Cottle

educationists.

He was a physics teacher and deputy head of sixth form at City academy in Hackney for just over three years; he is also studying for an MA in the philosophy of education.

On leaving university, he worked as an analyst in equity research at Barclays.

He says it is LKMco's "mix of high level policy work and on-the-ground expertise" that attracts him.

"This role will provide me with an

opportunity to work on some of my key areas of interest such as improving university access for traditionally under-represented groups, especially in STEM subjects, and developing a more rounded curriculum for British schools. I'm really looking forward to learning from such an experienced and knowledgeable team."

The education think-and-action tank undertakes policy research and campaigning, as well as working with schools, teachers and education and youth organisations.

Joanne Cottle has been appointed head of academy at Bournville school in Birmingham, a member of the Fairfax multi-academy trust.

She has spent the past ten years in senior leadership roles at Trinity High School in Redditch.

In her new role, she wants to ensure she maintains the school's "distinct ethos, history and tradition" and to develop an atmosphere of "mutual respect".

"I am passionate in my commitment to providing a strong and stable leadership, and will do everything in my power to support the school on its continued journey to securing positive outcomes for all learners, ensuring they have access to a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an engaging and stimulating manner."

She starts her new job on April 24.

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a Schools Week mug



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