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NEWS

Election delays decisions on free schools

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Pre-election "purdah" has put the brakes on the government's free schools policy, with a number of institutions due to open this September now in limbo until after the election.

Disruptions are also occurring to the education select committee and interventions in under-performing schools because of the election.

Schools Week knows of at least one free school that is awaiting final sign-off, while others may still be waiting on funding and land agreements.

But purdah – the pre-election period where public bodies have to act in a politically neutral manner – has now started.

Decisions on policy matters that may be opposed by a new government must be postponed until after the election, calling into question the ability of the Department for Education (DfE) to sign funding agreements or land contracts for new free schools until after June 8, especially given Labour's opposition to the programme.

A former civil servant familiar with the free schools process told *Schools Week* that funding agreements could now go unsigned, leaving sponsors "in limbo".

"Delayed would be the wrong word, because on June 9 it's all systems go if the current government is re-elected.

"It's the uncertainty, and it comes at a time when people will be handing in their notice to take up free school jobs in September. It



couldn't have come at a worse time."

Schools Week understands that before the 2015 general election was called, civil servants were told to clear all outstanding funding agreements.

However, Theresa May's election announcement earlier this month caught most people – including the civil service – off-guard, so similar preparations have not been made.

It is understood any funding agreements that do need to be signed off during purdah will have to go through extra layers of scrutiny, but may be agreed by Jonathan Slater, the head of the DfE, if found to be in the public interest.

The DfE also pledged last Friday (the day before purdah) to underwrite the salary of new principals while they helped to found new free schools. A letter sent to free school trusts said the move would give principal designates the "security they need to resign

from their current posts".

Purdah also impacts other decisions. *Schools Week* reported before the 2015 general election that failing schools had to pass a "public interest test" before getting government help. Planned interventions in failing academies may therefore need to go under the radar, or stop altogether over the next month.

The election is also affecting the House of Commons education committee, which now must rush to print its reports through before parliament is dissolved on May 3.

Several key reports are still outstanding, including primary assessment, mental health in education and post-16 education area reviews.

Schools Week understands clerks will attempt to publish reports for the first two inquiries before Wednesday, but questions remain about whether the post-16 area reviews report will be completed in time.

Committee member Ian Mearns, the Labour MP for Gateshead, admitted the group had "an awful lot of unfinished business" and that it would be up to its successor to decide what to do with any incomplete inquiries.

Becky Francis, the director of the UCL Institute of Education and a former select committee adviser, urged the committee's successor to pick up unfinished inquiries in the new parliament as "continuity is crucial".

"Almost all are designed to hold the government to account on important policy developments impacting the lives of young people."

Grammar and EBacc consultations on the shelf too

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Investigates

The government has been accused of "sidestepping" potentially negative responses to its education consultations after shunting their publication until after the general election.

Despite ministerial promises of early delivery, neither the long-awaited white paper on grammar schools nor the EBacc consultation will be published until after June 8.

The Department for Education (DfE) said "well-established restrictions" on government business during purdah in the run-up to local elections on May 4 prevented it publishing responses to any consultations that could affect the outcome.

Further restrictions also started on Saturday when purdah for the general election kicked in.

Education secretary Justine Greening told parliament on March 20 that the grammar white paper would be published "in the coming weeks", a comment understood by many to mean the government was prepared to publish the document during local election purdah.

Responses to the government's EBacc proposals that 90 per cent of pupils sit "core academic subjects" were scheduled to be published in spring last year.

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "The worry is that the disruption will allow the government to sidestep what may be very negative responses", although these challenges "would remain after the election".

The government's plan that 90 per cent of pupils study English, maths, science, a modern foreign language, history and geography at EBacc is threatened by the lack of teachers in certain subjects – particularly in modern foreign languages.

Schools Week understands one possible solution is to reduce the target to 75 per cent of all pupils sitting the EBacc. A DfE spokesperson told *Schools Week* it "would not comment on leaks".

The Schools That Work for Everyone white paper, which includes proposals to lift the ban on academic selection for new schools, is now unlikely to be published until mid-June. That's almost three months after Greening's "coming weeks" pledge.

The DfE confirmed consultations cannot be published because of purdah rules after

the National Union of Teachers (NUT) called for details of the final national funding formula to be brought forward.

Kevin Courtney, NUT general secretary, has threatened industrial action in areas facing further cuts under any revised formula, adding it would be a "total disgrace" if the government did not respond before the election.

He warned that if the new formula was going to be used to determine budget allocations from next April, it "can't be long delayed".

"Parents deserve to know what they are voting for."

However, the government has rebuffed the request, saying that it will publish the consultation findings as originally planned in the summer.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said delays were "an inevitable feature of the democratic process".

Speaking in relation to the EBacc consultation, he said: "Leaders will have made decisions about the EBacc for youngsters already."

The delay would "not be causing anyone any sleepless nights". Instead teachers would be more focused on choosing the curriculum that was best for pupils.

ELECTION WATCH

Labour promises to cut class sizes

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has fired the starting gun on the general election campaign with a series of high-profile education announcements, while Theresa May remains tight-lipped about her plans for schools.

Since the election was called last Tuesday, Labour has pledged to reduce class sizes, create four more bank holidays, and bring back the education maintenance allowance.

These come on top of existing pledges to extend universal free school meals to all primary pupils, raise teacher pay and "fully fund" schools. The party is also expected to say more about its flagship "national education service" plan.

The Conservatives, however, have been quiet on education, including its controversial plan to open new grammar schools.

The government has already ruled out publishing its planned white paper until after the election, but is likely to put some detail of its selection plans into its manifesto to make it easier to pass reforms in parliament.

Meanwhile, Corbyn pledged to keep class sizes down, claiming children were



Jeremy Corbyn

currently being "cramped in classrooms like sardines".

Labour analysis of Department for Education data released in January shows that more than 500,000 primary pupils are now taught in "super-size" classes of 31 or more.

Figures show the number of pupils in large secondary classes also continues to rise – up from 281,512 in 2015, to 304,691 in 2016.

Under current rules, infant class sizes are capped at 30 per teacher, but there is no restriction on how many pupils over the age of seven can be taught in a class.

However, the Conservative party said

the pledge was a "massive own goal from Labour", claiming the party had presided over an 18 per cent rise in the number of infants in large classes in Wales (Labour is the lead party in the Welsh Assembly).

Labour has also confirmed that its pledge of an extra four bank holidays per year will reduce the school year to 186 days for pupils, and 191 for teachers.

The new holidays would be on each nation's patron saint day: St David's on March 1, St Patrick's on March 17, St George's on April 23 and St Andrew's on November 30.

Schools are currently required to open for 190 days to pupils each year, and an

additional five days for teacher training.

Labour has also pledged to raise corporation tax to fund the reintroduction of the education maintenance allowance (EMA), which was scrapped in England by the coalition government in 2010.

Labour sources estimate that restoring EMA would cost £700 million in 2016-17, and plans to raise corporation tax by between 1 and 1.5 per cent to fund both the allowance and the £1.7 billion cost of university maintenance grants.

The party claims that HMRC data shows that a 1 per cent increase in corporation tax would raise £2 billion.

It is not known whether the new system will match the scrapped system, which offered means-tested weekly payments of £10 to £30 to pupils from households with incomes below £30,810.

Education has also been on the agenda for the UK Independence Party, which this week announced plans to place a moratorium on any new state-funded Islamic schools in England and pledged mandatory medical checks for schoolgirls at risk of female genital mutilation.

The Greens and Liberal Democrats are yet to make any big education announcements.

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Dealing with the doorknockers, page 18

Low ratings for grammar-sponsored academies

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Half of academies sponsored by grammar schools are rated as requiring improvement or inadequate, casting doubt on the effectiveness of government plans to get more selective schools running other nearby schools.

Data released by the government on the day it called the general election shows that eight of the 18 schools sponsored by grammar schools that have been inspected by Ofsted are rated as requires improvement, while two are inadequate. Seven are rated good, while just one is outstanding.

Ofsted's ratings for schools sponsored by universities and private schools has also led the former shadow education secretary Lucy Powell to question government plans to boost the involvement of these institutions in academies.

Ministers want universities to sponsor schools in return for the right to charge higher fees, while private schools should sponsor them to justify their charitable status. Grammar schools will also be encouraged to take on other schools if allowed to expand or to open new sites.

But Powell says that more than half of grammar-sponsored schools (53 per cent) and university-sponsored schools (57 per

cent) are less than good.

This compares with just one in five (22 per cent) of secondary schools nationally.

Private schools fared better, with only one third (33 per cent) of schools failing to achieve a good grade in their inspection, but this is still higher than generally across the country.

When releasing the data, Nick Gibb, the schools minister, did note that the "vast majority" of the grammar school-sponsored institutions included in the data "were previously underperforming".

All Ofsted judgments included in the data, however, are from visits by inspectors to see the current management. Of the 32 grammar-sponsored schools in the country, 14 are still awaiting a grade.

Heath Monk, executive director of the King Edward VI Foundation, which runs five grammar schools and one "good" non-selective academy in Birmingham, also cautioned against an expectation that all grammar schools would make good academy sponsors.

"The job of, say, taking on a school in special measures in a very challenging community is very different to that of running a grammar school, and the DNA argument, that there's something about grammar schools that you can just transplant into a failing school, does not stack up," he said.

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NEWS

NEW LOGOS HIDE INSPECTION DATES

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

Ofsted has removed the dates of inspection from revamped promotional logos for good and outstanding schools, but has denied it is because of "embarrassment" over lengthy gaps between visits.

The education watchdog has unveiled new logos for schools given a grade one and, for the first time, grade two ratings. But the revamped logos do not include the inspection year.

Schools rated outstanding have long been allowed to use an official logo, but allowing good schools to use an official logo on websites and in promotional material marks a policy U-turn. The watchdog previously threatened legal action against education providers using logos to promote this rating.

Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said it was likely the watchdog removed the dates because of "embarrassment" over the length of time between inspections for some schools.

Schools Week revealed in January that more than 1,200 schools in England have not



had a full inspection for seven years, with more than 100 given respite for longer than a decade.

Bousted said: "If I were Ofsted, I wouldn't want to be advertising the length of time between inspections because more schools deemed outstanding can go over a decade, which I don't think is an effective way to run an accountability system."

"The question must be asked why has Ofsted taken the dates off. Could it be because the date between inspections is an embarrassment?"

An Ofsted spokesperson said the date was removed "to update and streamline

our logos, and to simplify the process of acquiring one.

"The overall aim is to improve our digital practice, and make it easier and more inclusive for the providers we inspect.

"We don't think it makes it less informative. Anyone wanting to find out when a particular school was last inspected can still do that very easily."

Schools Week's sister paper *FE Week* revealed last summer that Ofsted threatened legal action if an unnamed training provider, which had a bogus Ofsted good logo on its website, did not remove it in 14 days.

Policy guidance, in place since 2000, says that Ofsted doesn't "issue a good logo". But an investigation by *Schools Week* found many schools graded good were using modified versions of a logo in various materials.

An Ofsted spokesperson subsequently said the "time was right" for a review of its policy. It then decided to launch a "good" logo following feedback from organisations.

But since the launch some schools appear to have been inundated by companies trying to sell new signage.

Just two days after Ofsted's announcement, Meadow primary in Cambridgeshire tweeted: "14 emails so far trying to sell me an Ofsted good banner for front of school."

The school, which did not return *Schools Week's* request for comment, said that it would "rather spend the money on our children".

Schools can download the logo from Ofsted's website. The spokesperson added: "We are conscious that parents and learners rely on Ofsted as a mark of quality."

"Therefore, only providers currently holding a good or outstanding grade for overall effectiveness can apply the relevant logo to their branding materials."

Most UTCs are half empty as pupil numbers dwindle

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

Most established university technical colleges (UTCs) are still more than half empty, a *Schools Week* analysis reveals.

And nearly two-thirds also experienced a drop in pupil numbers this academic year.

Ministers now face calls to scrap the "failing" project, just two years after the Conservative Party 2015 manifesto pledge to establish a UTC "within reach of every English city".

Janet Downs, from the Local Schools Network campaign group, said the figures showed UTCs were "not popular with pupils or parents".

"The policy should now be abandoned. This would avoid wasting more taxpayer money on a failing initiative at a time when schools are struggling financially."

Schools Week submitted freedom of information requests to the 26 UTCs that opened in 2014 or before asking for their 2016-17 pupil numbers.

Of the 20 that responded, 11 (55 per cent) revealed they were still at less than 50 per cent capacity.

UTC Plymouth, the emptiest UTC in the country, is at 24 per cent capacity, while Buckinghamshire UTC has 148 pupils, despite a capacity for 600 (25 per cent).

Schools Week also found pupil numbers fell this year at 13 of the 20 UTCs. The biggest dip was at Lincoln UTC where pupil numbers went from 302 in 2015-16 down to 214 – a drop of 29 per cent.

Paul Batterbury, Lincoln UTC principal, said the decline was a result of the local council cutting free transport for UTC pupils, many of whom lived outside the

UTC NAME	OPENED	PUPIL NUMBERS 2015-16	PUPIL NUMBERS 2016-17	DIFFERENCE	PERCENTAGE INCREASE/DECREASE	2016-17 CAPACITY	PERCENTAGE FULL
UTC Plymouth	2013	180	153	-27	-15	650	24%
Buckinghamshire UTC	2013	130	148	18	14	600	25%
UTC Swindon	2014	152	157	5	3	600	26%
Sir Charles Kao UTC	2014	177	142	-35	-20	500	28%
Watford UTC	2014	188	170	-18	-11	600	28%
Leigh UTC	2014	230	191	-39	-17	600	31%
Lincoln UTC	2014	302	214	-88	-29	640	33%
Heathrow Aviation Engineering UTC	2014	231	208	-23	-10	600	35%
Elutec	2014	230	251	21	9	600	42%
University Technical College Cambridge	2014	283	280	-3	-1	670	42%
Energy Coast UTC	2014	306	260	-46	-15	560	46%
University Technical College Norfolk	2014	301	302	1	0	600	50%
Elstree UTC	2013	413	341	-72	-17	600	57%
WVG Academy Coventry	2014	382	363	-19	-5	640	57%
Bristol Technology and Engineering Academy	2013	312	273	-39	-13	440	62%
UTC Reading	2013	314	394	80	25	600	66%
Silverstone UTC	2013	385	430	45	10	576	75%
JCB Academy	2010	582	557	-25	-4	728	77%
UTC Sheffield City Centre	2013	487	467	-20	-4	600	78%
Aston University Engineering Academy	2012	469	509	40	8	600	85%
Totals		6,054	5,810	-12	-5%	12,004	48%

catchment area.

Energy Coast UTC, which received a financial notice to improve last month had a 15 per cent drop from 306 pupils last year to 260.

Cherry Tingle, who became principal last September, said reasons included concerns from parents that the UTC had three interim principals last year.

Seven UTCs have now closed, or have announced closure. Each cost about £10 million to establish.

Other UTCs, such as in Guildford, and Burton and South Derbyshire, have been scrapped before they opened.

Sixty per cent of UTCs visited by Ofsted have also been rated "inadequate" or

"requires improvement" – with a recent grade 4 report for Bolton UTC stating the college had knocked the confidence and aspirations of pupils.

Michael Gove, the former education secretary and a key architect of the UTC programme, admitted earlier this year the experiment had failed.

Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said there had been a "number of errors made in terms of the way UTCs have been brought into place". A complete overhaul was needed to make the scheme a success.

"UTCs and the curriculum they offer need to be part of an overarching area wide strategic plan for pupil places," he said.

"This would involve secondary schools, sixth-form colleges and FE colleges. The whole provision needs to be thought out strategically to ensure that youngsters within a region have access to the full range of curriculum possibilities."

He added that recruitment at 14 also needed to be reconsidered.

A spokesperson for the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, which holds responsibility for overseeing UTCs, admitted it was "taking longer to fill UTCs than we would like".

"Recruitment for most schools is improving steadily each year as the programme becomes more established. It is indeed challenging for UTCs to recruit at 14 as the concept of transfer at this age is not what parents are used to."

The Telegraph

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NEWS

Trusts fail to take on struggling

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Academy trusts handed cash over a year ago to transform failing schools in the north have yet to take over a single school.

Figures obtained by *Schools Week* show 65 trusts were given a combined £9.5 million to boost standards in northern regions.

But documents seen exclusively by the paper reveal more than a third of the 65 have yet to take over a single school – despite being handed £2.7 million between them.

By contrast, two trusts in the same time period have taken responsibility for more than ten schools – Astrea, formerly Reach4 (15) and Enquire Learning Trust (11).

The northern hub funding formed part of the Conservative party's "Northern Powerhouse" pledge at the last general election to invest in the north so it could "complement the strength" of London.

The funding was given to 65 trusts who, in total, have taken over 141 schools, an average of two each.

But 23 have yet to take on any new schools. Some say they do have schools waiting to join from September, while others say they are waiting for the government to line up suitable takeover schools.

Meanwhile, a report published last week by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) found the Lancashire and West Yorkshire region – one of the areas targeted under the project – actually had more failing schools than sponsors available to take them over.

And the Interserve Academies Trust, which was managing one school in West Yorkshire, has returned the school back to the government, although it received £50,000 for the takeover.

Bright Tribe academy trust was also given just under £1 million to set up an academy hub to boost standards in Northumberland. However, it has not taken over a single school in the region.

Angela Rayner, Labour's shadow secretary of state for education, labelled the "so-called" Northern Powerhouse as "nothing more than hot air" after seeing the figures.

She said millions were being given to trusts to support the north, but they were not following through with support.

The £10 million funding was announced by chancellor George Osborne in 2014. Grants ranged from £10,000 up to £1.4 million for trusts to take over schools in targeted areas of the north.

In November 2015, five trusts were given a share of nearly £5 million to build "academy hubs" (see page 7).

Another funding round in March last year offered trusts up to £100,000 to take over an underperforming school, with



an expectation the takeover would be completed by last month.

Yet 23 of the paid sponsors are still without any new schools.

United Learning, which received £700,000 but so far has opened no further schools, said the cash was used to build capacity, with four schools lined up to join in September.

The Darlington-based Carmel Education Trust (£100,000) said it is in talks with three additional schools, and is awaiting more information from the schools commissioners this term.

Chris Duckett, a director at Gosforth Federated Academies, which was awarded £100,000 but is yet to take over a school, said Gosforth was committed to evolving carefully without being "predatory", and had been named as the preferred sponsor for one school, with others keen to join.

Brighter Futures, which got nearly £94,000, said it had talked with schools, but none had joined the trust. The money had been spent on activities that included staff training, trust development and legal costs.

A spokesperson for Ormiston Academies Trust, paid £72,850, said it hadn't been "matched" with a school yet, but was committed to expansion. Most of the money had been held back for future projects.

Interserve, which gave up Crawshaw Academy, said it would now support local schools as an employability and skills partner. Half of its £50,000 northern funding had been spent, including on a free

THE NORTHERN FUND TRUSTS GIVEN £50K OR MORE - BUT YET TO TAKE ON ANY NEW SCHOOLS

Trust	Funding	Number of existing academies in the north
Bright Tribe Trust	£995,000	2
United Learning	£700,000	15
Carmel Academy Trust	£100,000	7
The Gosforth Federated Academies	£100,000	2
Southmoor Academy Trust	£99,050	2
Brighter Futures Academy Trust	£93,995	3
Abbey Multi-Academy Trust	£83,600	3
Ormiston Academies Trust	£72,850	4
Airedale Academies Trust	£50,000	4
Cidari Multi-Academy Trust	£50,000	7
Interserve Academies Trust	£50,000	0
St Paul's (Astley Bridge) CofE Primary School	£50,000	2
The Keys Federation	£50,000	4
Zest Academy Trust	£50,000	1

school application taken forward by others.

A trust spokesperson said: "The remaining funds have been returned to the Department for Education".

In a FOI response, the department said progress made by northern fund recipients would be evaluated "in due course".

Funding could be clawed back from any trusts falling "significantly short" of meeting pledges. This would be at the

department's discretion and would be "reviewed in the wider context of the trust's current status and evidence of progression".

A spokesperson previously said it recognised there was "more work to do in particular areas" to build sponsorship capacity. "We are continuing to work with the school system to address those challenges."

NEWS

ng northern schools

THE FIVE TRUSTS GIVEN £5 MILLION TO SET UP ACADEMY HUBS

Nearly half the northern funding was handed out to five trusts so they could establish academy hubs in five areas identified for low standards: South Yorkshire, Bradford, Greater Manchester, Northumberland and Tees Valley.

Then education secretary Nicky Morgan, speaking in November 2015, said the five trusts were "top performing" sponsors. But what progress have those trusts made nearly 18 months later?



ASTREA ACADEMY TRUST (FORMERLY REACH4), £745,000, 15 SCHOOLS

The trust was set up as a spin-off of REAch2 after it secured the northern hub funding. It has since taken over 15 schools in South Yorkshire – 13 of them in September last year. Most are primary schools.

A spokesperson for Astrea said the funding enabled a new trust to be set up from scratch and for it to run schools in

quick time to "deliver on our commitment of an education that inspires beyond measure".

Schools Week revealed earlier this month the trust had been renamed to Astrea, with new members and directors appointed, to mark its independence from founders REAch2.



BRIGHT TRIBE TRUST, £1 MILLION, 0 SCHOOLS

The trust was identified to set up an academy hub in Northumberland. But takeovers for two schools – Haydon Bridge and Haltwhistle – have been held up over complications relating to Haydon's privately owned boarding wing, Ridley Hall.

Northumberland County Council has said the trust is unwilling to take on the lease for the wing. Minutes from a council meeting in January state the delay is resulting in "frustration" for parents and becoming "increasingly demoralising" for staff and students.

A Bright Tribe spokesperson said both schools have to come across to the trust as a "cluster", and said it is working to resolve the issue.

The trust is funding a regional team to drive improvement at the schools. The northern hub funding has also been used to complete "considerable" due diligence before the takeovers.

A government investigation published last year found Bright Tribe had breached rules over payments to trustees. However, no financial notice to improve was issued.



OUTWOOD GRANGE ACADEMIES TRUST, £1.4 MILLION, 6 SCHOOLS

Outwood took over two secondaries in 2015, and four more schools last year – four of which are in Barnsley and Doncaster in South Yorkshire.

The trust said one of its schools, Outwood Academy Carlton, posted record GCSE results last year, increasing from 29 per cent of pupils getting five A*-C GCSEs, including English and maths, to 64 per cent. The

other five schools have either posted or forecasted grade increases.

Katy Bradford, chief operating officer, said OGAT had also used the extra funding to run school improvement contracts at two more schools, and provide senior staff on long-term secondments to support the Delta Academies Trust.



WAKEFIELD CITY ACADEMIES TRUST, £530,000, 3 SCHOOLS

WCAT was due to take over five schools in Bradford, but pulled out of sponsoring two – Hanson School and University Academy Keighley.

The trust has not said why it walked away, but said Ofsted documented that improvement support it previously provided at both schools had a "significant impact".

WCAT has faced financial issues, with the Education Funding Agency producing a financial management and governance review that is yet to be published.

The trust also breached finance rules over payments to a firm connected to its interim chief executive Mike Ramsay, according to annual accounts for last year.

Payments between the trust and Ramsay's IT firm, Hi Tech Group Limited, rose from £140,605 in 2015 to £295,926 in 2016. Last year's payments included IT and software development, plus trust adviser and interim chief executive services.

But auditors said some of those services were not provided "at cost" and did not follow appropriate procedures as they were approved by a member of staff who reported directly to Ramsay.

WCAT said it has tightened procedures to ensure full compliance. The northern hub cash would drive "sustainable improvement" from this year, a spokesperson added.



TAUHEEDUL EDUCATION TRUST, £1 MILLION, 6 SCHOOLS

Tauheedul was given cash to open hubs in Greater Manchester and Bradford. Department for Education figures show it has taken over two schools in Bradford, with four in the north west.

A trust spokesperson said a number of these schools were "long-term under-performing", adding: "We are proud to be a

trust that is raising standards of education at these schools, and in these communities, for thousands of children and young people."

The trust, which originally ran Islamic faith-based schools only, has since opened a "non-faith division" and plans to expand further.

IN brief

ACADEMY TRUST CHANGES IT NAME

A spin-off academy trust of one of the country's largest chains has changed its name from Reach4 to Astrea.

The trust, which runs 15 schools in South Yorkshire, was set up by REAch2 to run schools in the north.

The name change signals that the spin-off will now operate independently.

Four directors – including REAch 2 chief executive Sir Steve Lancashire – have resigned with three new directors appointed.

The trust will continue to be led by Libby Nicholas.

It has been named Astrea after the Greek goddess of justice, which has a "particular resonance with the values that go to the very core of the organisation", the trust said.

EXAMINERS' DETAILS HACKED AT AQA

Tens of thousands of examiners had their personal details hacked when exam board AQA was the victim of a cyberattack last month.

Data relating to 64,000 current and former examiners stored on the board's online systems was stolen, including names, addresses, personal phone numbers and passwords.

However, the hackers could not access any bank details, pupil data or exam materials.

The Information Commissioner's Office is now investigating.

David Shaw, AQA's chief information officer, said: "We're really disappointed that this has happened despite our huge efforts to keep our systems secure. We're very sorry that our examiners have been affected."

'SUGAR TAX COULD END HOLIDAY HUNGER'

A cross-parliamentary group of MPs has said "holiday hunger" would end if every local authority was given just over £100,000 a year.

A report by the all-party parliamentary group on hunger claimed three million children risk going hungry in the school holidays, although that figure is based on rough and much-criticised estimates.

Diverting a tenth of the £41.5 million funding expected to be given to schools via the sugary drinks levy would help to solve the issue, the MPs said.

It would provide £100,000 for each local authority, which could then co-ordinate local programmes.

This would allow for local flexibility, and for the voluntary sector to be "in the driving seat wherever possible". A bill outlining the duty is expected to be presented to parliament after the general election.

NEWS

WE NEED MORE CLARITY ON FREE SCHOOLS, SAY MPS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government should state the purpose for every new free school to allow their success to be properly evaluated, says a powerful group of MPs.

In a report published on Wednesday, the House of Commons public accounts committee (PAC) warned that funding for new schools was delivered through an "increasingly incoherent" system.

The government often paid "over the odds" for sites and building new schools without the "full suite of facilities".

The committee also said that while free schools helped to meet the need for new school places in some areas, they created spare capacity elsewhere, which affect finances.

Under new rules brought in last year, the government can wave through free schools if there is a shortage of places, a need for greater choice and diversity, or significant demand from parents in a particular area.

But the PAC said it was "not clear" precisely what the government meant when it said it aimed to provide parents with choice, and whether it was creating choice fairly and cost-effectively.

Nor was it clear how much spare capacity was needed to provide parents with "meaningful choice", or how choice was being provided in those parts of the country that needed it most.

MPs want the Department for Education (DfE) to "quantify and publish" the extent to which every proposed free school meets each of the three criteria – local need for new school places, greater parental choice and improved educational standards.

The department should also set out "how it weighs up the costs and benefits of choice in assessing applications", and how it makes sure that it creates choice in a cost-effective and fair way across the country.

The report draws attention to the high cost of acquiring land for free schools, noting the DfE pays on average about 20 per cent more than official valuations.

This is partly due to the scarcity of land pushing the cost of some free schools into the tens of millions of pounds – with four sites costing more than £30 million each.

The report is also highly critical of the maintenance of the rest of the school estate, claiming the department has an "insufficient focus" and addresses only urgent needs rather than preventive work.

The PAC also raised concerns that housing developers may not be paying their fair share towards new school places, and has called for joint efforts by the DfE and Department for Communities and Local Government to crack down on any loopholes that let developers off the hook.

A-level languages adjusted to correct under-grading

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Investigates

Grade boundaries in modern foreign language (MFL) A-levels will be adjusted to take "native speakers" into account for the first time, allowing more pupils to achieve higher grades and suggesting a historic under-grading in the subject.

Ofqual announced a one-off upwards adjustment to grades to account for the advantage of native speakers after research found they had a "small, yet important" impact on grade boundaries.

Unions, language associations and independent schools have said the move went some way to addressing the "severe" grading in A-level languages.

They said fewer pupils took A-level German and French because higher grades were harder to achieve than in other subjects.

Ofqual's research formed part of a review into whether subject "difficulty" needed to be accounted for at GCSE and A-level, with some subjects seen as easier than others.

Although the exams regulator decided it was too difficult to adjust for subjects by their "difficulty", one-off adjustments would be considered "where there was a compelling case".

Some education leaders have also called for a reliable means of defining a "native speaker", especially after Ofqual admitted it was "impossible" to monitor native speaker



numbers accurately each year.

Some pupils grew up with a foreign parent but did not speak the language, while others had "significant exposure" to a language through regular holidays.

As a result, the watchdog said "routinely monitoring the presence of native speakers in A-level MFL each year would not be possible".

Campaigners have welcomed the A-level adjustment, but want changes at GCSE too.

David Blow, headteacher at the Ashcombe School in Surrey, who has worked on language grading for the Association of School and College Leaders, said he was pleased Ofqual had made the "significant and vitally necessary change" but said it was "disappointing they were not touching the GCSE".

The effect of native speakers at GCSE were less than at A-level, where their numbers were proportionately greater, but campaigners would continue to drive for this, he said.

Barnaby Lenon, chair of the Independent

Schools Council (ISC), whose schools place a high proportion of pupils through A-level and so could have been particularly affected by under-grading, welcomed the change.

"Independent schools, with other schools, have felt that the grading issue is making it harder to recruit good students to modern foreign language A-levels. This is a sensible change."

Ofqual found that more pupils who speak other languages were taking MFL subjects, while fewer pupils overall took up a language at A-level standard.

Brian Lightman, an education consultant and former German teacher, said native speakers might not have a significant advantage under new A-level specifications from 2018 because of a stronger emphasis on grammar.

Sally Collier, chief regulator at Ofqual, said the adjustment to languages this summer meant the watchdog was "better placed than ever to ensure standards in GCSEs, AS and A-levels are appropriate".

Retention rates fall for secondary heads

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Falling retention rates mean one in ten secondary headteachers now leave their roles every year, a new analysis has revealed, with large multi-academy trusts posting the biggest turnover.

A report by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), published today, found the retention rate for secondary heads fell from 91 per cent in 2012 to 87 per cent in 2015. In primaries, it dropped from 94 per cent in 2012 to 92 per cent in 2015.

Interviews with more than 20 heads also revealed rapid policy changes and the "panic" of being downgraded by Ofsted were often said to be a contributing factor.

The study, which analysed School Workforce Census data tracking the movement of 29,800 primary and 6,650 secondary heads, also found heads in large multi-academy trusts (MATs) were more likely to leave than those in small trusts.

The report said this could be because heads in larger trusts were more likely to move from a school-based to a central role (such as a director or chief executive).

But Samantha Twiselton (pictured), director of Sheffield Hallam University's Institute of Education, said more heads might stay in post as the rapid expansion of multi-academy trusts (MAT) and the number of central roles slowed.



Russell Hobby, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said MAT trustees sometimes wanted to "look like they're doing something" by firing a head.

The report said that while large trusts did tend to have a higher number of sponsored academies and so might need to "act more quickly" to remove a head, this didn't explain all the difference. Even after accounting for sponsored academies, more heads left MATs with between six and 30 schools than in single academy trusts.

The difference was especially marked in primary schools. Ninety per cent of primary heads were retained in trusts with fewer than six schools, compared with 83 per cent

in trusts with more than 30 schools.

Twiselton said the finding "resonated" with her experience of MATs making "rapid assessments" of headteacher performance.

But she added many heads might feel more supported in a large MAT – a finding backed by those interviewed as part of the research.

Hobby also pointed out that the historic challenge of recruiting for primary heads could now be shifting to the secondary sector, given that the report found primary heads were less likely to leave.

Schools Week has previously reported that a quarter of primary schools with a top vacancy were forced to readvertise for headship roles in the first three months of this year, compared with 10 per cent of secondary schools.

Lower pupil attainment and "inadequate" Ofsted ratings were said to be a predictor for heads leaving. "Headteachers report a 'panic' associated with a downgrade, and the vulnerability of their post that coincides with it," the report said.

However, heads hope that will subside after Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's chief inspector, said in November last year that grades were not a "fair way to rank headteacher performance".

Rapid policy change was also unhelpful, said 22 of the heads interviewed, echoing the education select committee that said in February schools should get a year's lead-in for new initiatives.

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NEWS: WHILE YOU WERE AWAY

More mental health 'points of contact'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

More than a thousand schools will be given a "point of contact" mental health expert as anxiety and depression levels rise among pupils.

An ongoing pilot linking experts in child and adolescent mental health services (CAHMS) to schools will now grow to five times its size since it was first announced in 2015.

Up to 1,200 schools will now take part in the trial to promote "better joined-up working" between schools and health services, the Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed.

Launched by former education secretary Nicky Morgan in 2015, and in partnership with NHS England, about £3.2 million was put aside for 255 schools to trial a single point of contact between a school and its local CAHMS expert.

The cash went to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), who received up to £85,000 each to link a school and CAHMS point of contact.

Under the new plans, schools across 20 areas will receive funding for the project, which is still under tender with the contractor not yet confirmed.

A spokesperson for the DfE said the government was "strengthening the links between schools and NHS mental health staff" and would announce more proposals for improving services later this year.

The conversation with *Schools Week* followed a report in *The Daily Telegraph* that a full-time NHS professional would be stationed "in every secondary school" on the back of Prince Harry and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge speaking out about the stigma of mental illness.

The DfE could not confirm the claim, but said a Department of Health green paper on mental health and young people had proposed training teachers in mental health issues.

The proposal has been backed by the prime minister, who said in January that a third of secondary schools would this year receive mental health training.

The final two-thirds of schools are set to receive the training over the following two years.

Nicola Blackwood, public health minister, also said the government was "looking at" demand for a mental health counsellor in every secondary school in England.

Ministers would weigh up whether a "point of contact approach" was more effective than individual counsellors in each school, she said.

One in ten pupils experience mental health problems and about 75 per cent of mental health problems in adult life had started by 18, according to NHS England.

Mental health experts have previously criticised government funding cuts to CAHMS. Unions have also claimed stretched teachers are being made to perform social and health care roles as a result of cutbacks to other public services.

RSC resigns to lead Suffolk trust

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

Regional schools commissioner Tim Coulson is stepping down to head up a multi-academy trust – leaving just three original RSCs still in post.

Coulson, commissioner for the East of England and North-East London, will become the new chief executive of the Samuel Ward Academy Trust in west Suffolk.

He's the fourth RSC to resign, including Sir David Carter who stepped up to become the national schools commissioner.

Coulson will take over from outgoing chief executive Howard Lay to run the academy trust of 15 schools with 8,000 pupils.

Samuel Ward was also one of the trusts given £200,000 by the government this month to become a new research hub.

Coulson said the trust was a "model of what a MAT should be and will be in the future".

"I was attracted to the fact that the trust is based around four towns in close geographical proximity and has those communities at its heart.

"It is also very important for individual



Tim Coulson

primary, secondary and special schools to retain their identity and this is something I want to foster and enhance."

Coulson added he was proud to have been one of the founder RSCs and "loved every minute of it".

He told colleagues in an email that he expects to move to the new role over the summer, adding he is working with Carter

to ensure there were no conflict of interests over decisions he was responsible for.

Jon Ward, acting chair of the Samuel Ward trust, said it was delighted to have attracted "such a highly regarded senior educationist".

"It is positive news for all our schools and students as well as across the whole of Suffolk.

"Tim will bring strong strategic direction to the trust and help drive our innovative and forward-thinking approach to local education."

Other RSC departures include Jennifer Bexon-Smith, for the East Midlands and the Humber, who was due to retire last month after just over two years.

Pank Patel, RSC for the West Midlands, stepped down in May 2016 to lead an academy for the Ormiston trust.

Paul Smith, RSC for Lancashire and West Yorkshire, resigned in early 2015 to join the Future Academies trust, which was founded by schools minister Lord Nash.

His replacement Vicky Beer had announced earlier this year she was also to quit, but then changed her mind after reflecting on the progress made in her region.

Training providers allowed to bump up recruitment

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

The government has made the unprecedented decision to allow teacher training providers to recruit an extra 25 per cent of trainees on top of their original allocations.

The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), an arm of the Department for Education, has written to initial teacher training providers to tell them of the unexpected change.

In an email, seen exclusively by *Schools Week*, the NCTL said that any teacher training providers that have already recruited at least 90 per cent of their allowed number of trainees, can request an increase up to 25 per cent beyond their original allocation, except in PE and undergraduate courses.

These extra places can be in addition to an existing 10 per cent tolerance threshold. This means some providers could recruit 35 per cent more trainees than they were originally allowed.

The email says the decision was made to "maximise recruitment in areas that have capacity to go further".

James Noble-Rogers, executive director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, said this is the first time he has ever seen the government allow extra places beyond original allocations.

He said the move "reflects the concern about maximising recruitment wherever possible to ensure the teacher supply problem doesn't get even worse".

The NCTL said it may even allow requests beyond the 25 per cent increase if there is "good evidence to do so", and these requests will be "considered on a case-by-case basis".



The email said the increase applies to universities (HEIs), school-centred initial teacher training centres (SCITTs) and all School Direct partnerships for the "category 1 subjects" of drama, history and primary (excluding PE and undergraduate courses).

It also applies to HEIs and SCITTs in all category 2 subjects: art & design, biology, chemistry, English and music. School Direct partnerships are not included.

Noble-Rogers welcomed the move "particularly in areas like primary where we think the allocations understate the actual need for teachers but in all my years I've not known this to happen before," he told *Schools Week*.

"If government stuck to their strict allocations then we would have the absurd situation where in a time of teacher shortage ITT providers would be turning prospective teachers away, even though there are jobs readily available for them. It would make no sense whatsoever.

"They [government] don't want ITT providers turning people away from their door when they know there is a demand for these people to teach in schools in the coming years."

Teacher training providers, including universities and schools, were told last September how many students they could take on to their programmes for the academic year 2017-18.

But, as previously reported by *Schools Week*, the government is under fire for its refusal to fully reveal next year's place numbers.

The figures have not been made public despite persistent attempts by experts and requests from members of the House of Lords.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "As part of our routine monitoring, we are allowing providers and schools who are recruiting well to recruit up to 25 per cent more candidates from these places. This is usual practice and allows us more freedom in our recruitment process.

"As education secretary Justine Greening made clear when she addressed the launch of the new College of Teaching earlier this year, she wants to see all teachers supported to become the best professionals they possibly can be, and to make teaching an even more attractive and rewarding profession to join."

GREENING APPROVES 111 NEW FREE SCHOOLS

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The education secretary Justine Greening has approved 111 new free schools, including one sponsored by a grammar school and another by England's largest state boarding school.

Twenty councils have also been granted permission to open new special schools. The councils will be required to select academy trusts to run the schools.

The government claims the long-awaited approvals mean it is on-track to meet its manifesto commitment of creating 500 new free schools in this parliament. But as *Schools Week* reported last month, many of the schools will open in September 2020, which misses the original commitment deadline.

Schools approved earlier this month include the 1,500-place non-selective Barton Court Academy Trust Free School in Canterbury, proposed by Barton Court Grammar, which the government says is an example of an existing high-performing school raising attainment more widely.

The government's impending education white paper is expected to set out how ministers will enact their plan to open new grammar schools and encourage existing selective institutions to sponsor non-selective schools.



Justine Greening

Other approved schools include Sapientia Primary Prep, proposed by the trust that runs Wyomndham College, the largest state boarding school in England, and The Flagship, a parent-led special school in Hastings.

The School 21 Trust, the group behind high-profile School 21, opened by former Labour adviser Peter Hyman, has also been

approved to open two new schools – School 21 Campus and School 21 Sugar House – in Newham, east London. They will create more than 2,400 places.

Rushey Mead Free School will provide 1,200 new secondary places in Leicester, which recently topped the list of local authorities facing the biggest pressure to create places.

When opened, the new schools will provide more than 69,000 places, including 4,000 for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Of the 111 free schools approved in this round, 27 will be in the south east, 18 in the east of England, 16 in London, 15 in the south west, 12 in the West Midlands, nine in the east Midlands, seven in Yorkshire and the Humber, five in the north west and two in the north east.

Greening also approved special free schools in Bedford, Blackpool, Bradford, Bristol, Cheshire East, Croydon, Doncaster, Enfield, Essex, Hampshire, Havering, Hereford, Hounslow, Manchester, Portsmouth, Redbridge, Sheffield, South Gloucestershire, Suffolk and Sunderland.

"We need schools that can bring out the best in every single child no matter where they're growing up, how much their parents earn, or however different their talents are," she said.

"That's why these new schools are so important – they give us the places we need for the future, and they also give parents more choices to find a great school place in their area that's right for their child."

Toby Young, director of New Schools Network, added the geographic spread of the free schools showed the "government's commitment to extending the benefits of the free schools policy to all parts of the country".

Good sponsors needed for failing schools in the north

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

There aren't enough good academy sponsors ready to take over the number of failing schools in Lancashire and West Yorkshire, a new analysis of regional school commissioner (RSC) data has found.

Other RSC regions in northern England are also just about managing to deliver enough sponsors, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) found.

However the new analysis revealed no such problem for southern regions. The South-East England and South London RSC area has more than three sponsors with adequate capacity for every school requiring intervention.

The NFER report says growing sponsor capacity is now a key priority for RSCs, with regional variations in the number of underperforming schools raising "potentially significant problems for tackling school underperformance".

Lesley Duff, NFER's director of research, called on the government to be "circumspect" about introducing further changes for schools until the "full implications and impact" of the new academy system becomes clear.

The report is the second study published by NFER into RSC areas. It also revealed the number of schools with poor Ofsted outcomes had decreased since 2014, when

Table 4.2 Potential additional capacity versus immediate need for new sponsors

RSC Area	Accessible additional capacity	Immediate need for new sponsors	Whether have sufficient capacity	Ratio of accessible capacity to immediate need ¹
North of England	63	59	Capacity	1.1 to 1
Lancashire and West Yorkshire	75	109	Need	0.7 to 1
East Midlands and the Humber	125	89	Capacity	1.4 to 1
West Midlands	126	84	Capacity	1.5 to 1
East of England and North-East London	102	57	Capacity	1.8 to 1
South-Central England and North-West London	108	71	Capacity	1.5 to 1
South-East England and South London	165	50	Capacity	3.3 to 1
South-West England	151	54	Capacity	2.8 to 1
England	915	573	Capacity	1.6 to 1

RSCs took up office.

But the report stated it is "not clear if this is due to the actions of the RSCs or is a result of other factors".

On sponsor capacity, the report found there were 915 sponsors with "accessible additional capacity" compared with 573 schools with an "immediate need" for a new

sponsor. That works out as a national ratio of 1.6 sponsors per every school requiring intervention.

However there are stark regional differences – from 0.7 sponsors for every failing school in Lancashire and West Yorkshire, compared to 3.3 for every failing school in South-East England and South



London.

The North of England RSC region also just about meets demand, with 1.1 sponsors for every failing school.

But the NFER stated that many RSCs would struggle matching suitable sponsors, as the capacity and need could be at opposite ends of the large regions they covered.

Researchers suggest one solution could be enticing some of the 1,300 "high-performing" single-academy trusts (SATs) to expand and meet demand.

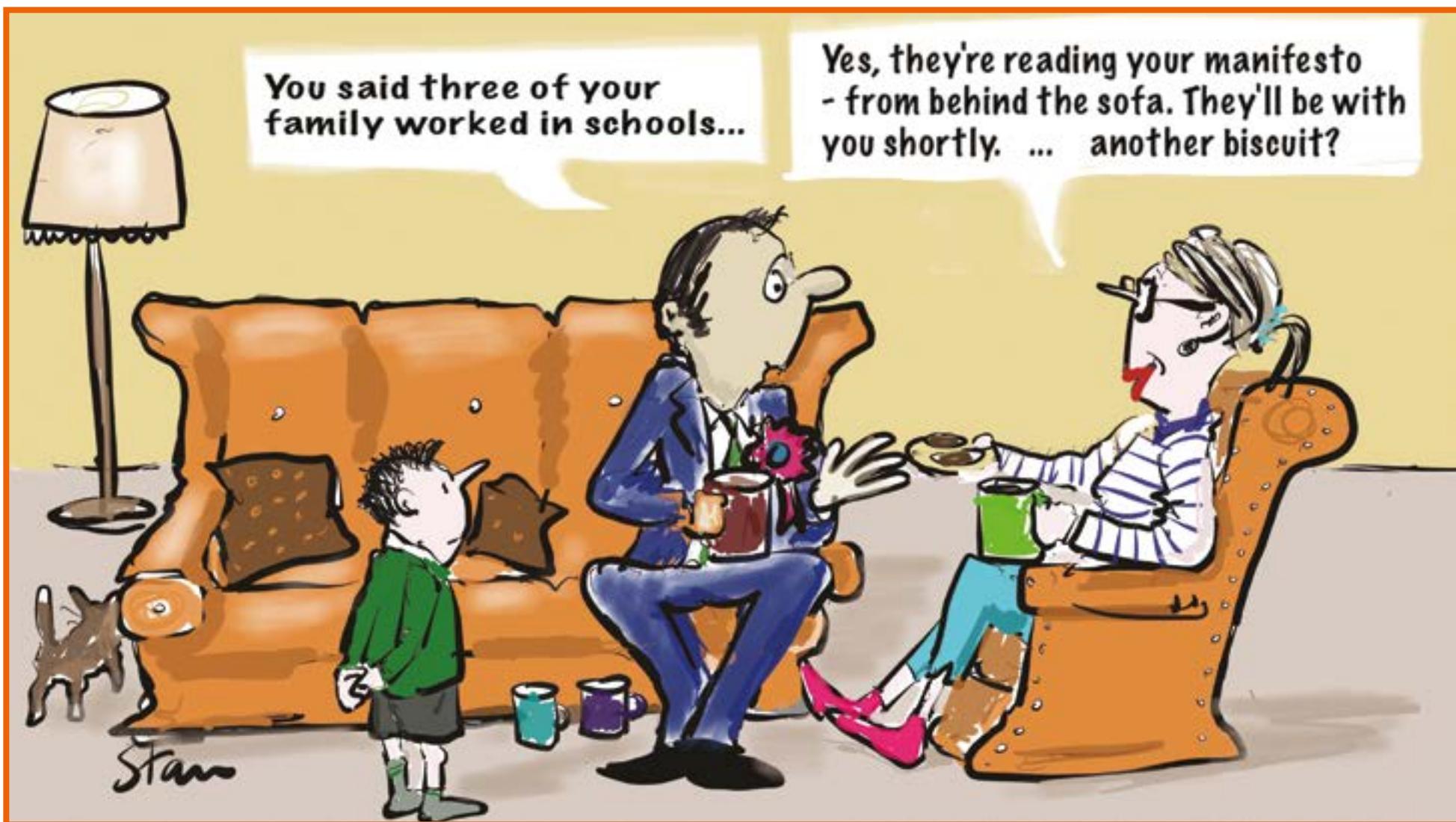
However, there were large regional variations – with more than 70 high-performing SATs in the North of England, compared with more than 250 in South-Central England and South London.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "As the report acknowledges we continue to build sponsor capacity at a national level but recognise there is more work to do in particular areas. We are continuing to work with the school system to address those challenges."

NEWS

You said three of your family worked in schools...

Yes, they're reading your manifesto - from behind the sofa. They'll be with you shortly. ... another biscuit?



EDITOR'S COMMENT

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

How you can have your say before June 8

A snap election during the summer term is about as welcome as a major football tournament. Both tend to disrupt pupils, who are usually more attentive to football, but become equally intrigued about this politics thing that the adults are banging on about.

Labour has focused on children from the off, with its first party political broadcast set in a classroom, and has rallied for the support of young people via "memes" – or "shareable things on the internet" as us old, uncool people might call them.

For the schools community at large, the election is a pain in other ways. Now that the education secretary is the de facto head of academies, and her disciples – the regional schools commissioners – are the ones with all the power over academy decision-making, it's not easy when the government dissolves and all those powers are put on hold.

I've spoken to a number of academy trust leaders in recent weeks awaiting key decisions that now won't happen until at least June, by which point it might be too late to start plans for, say, a takeover originally due in September.

Elections are also uncertain times, and that doesn't help anyone. Budget cuts continue biting, teacher recruitment seems to be getting harder, and there is a palpable fear about the return of grammar schools dominating conversations among headteachers.

No one wants a grammar to watch next door. It's like watching the horror of dog-eat-dog, which happened in many places as schools converted to academy status, all over again. "If we don't open a grammar, someone else will do it to us," is all I keep hearing. It is deeply depressing.

At the 2015 election, school leaders were able to use the advance notice of its date to make arguments about what they wanted. The snap nature of this election means manifesto influence is impossible. Labour has already laid out what its education policies are: free school meals for juniors, the return of the education maintenance allowance, a cap on class sizes.

I'm not sure where the Conservative manifesto is at the minute, but my guess would be that it is hiding in a drawer where it will remain until such a time that it looks reasonable

to believe it was "suddenly" pulled together by Theresa May after she amazingly woke up and thought "oh my goodness, how strange, I think we should have an election".

In either case, both pledge cards have sailed. Hence, if the schools community wants to use this election to have any influence on politicians – and it should, as schools are not in a good way – then it is going to have to be done on the doorstep. Over the coming weeks, MPs and party campaigners will be doorknocking, leafleting, polling, phoning, and this is your chance to explain what you want.

Here at Schools Week we hear that what drives you crazy is not so much the policies, but the parties' lack of knowledge about what is happening on the ground in schools. That's why we are publishing an abridged version of the Headteachers' Roundtable Doorstep Manifesto (page 18). This two-page guide gives questions to

ask of those MPs and would-be MPs when they come calling. It has facts to present. And policies to suggest.

None of us may be able to change national policies, but getting a local MP to commit to fighting on your side will be worth it. And, if nothing else, maybe you will educate a doorknocker – from any party – about the true picture of school life.

As the profile interview of Jonathan Simons this week reminds us (page 14), no government is perfect. Labour had issues when in power. The Coalition was not beloved. I cannot say our readers have embraced May.

But we cannot moan about politicians' lack of knowledge if we do not at least attempt to educate them. And if we can make exams seem important in the face of major football tournaments, I'm pretty certain the community can make politicians understand why a profession serving 8 million children should be a top priority.



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- Be ready to work with parents and other stakeholders to build the school's standing within the local community.
- Have a successful track record at either Head, Deputy or Assistant Head level.

Charles Warren Academy is part of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) network of 66 primary, secondary and special academies. In return, as a member of our network, we can offer you a professional learning journey, tailored to your individual needs. We'll support you with a comprehensive career development programme, as well as an attractive range of financial, health and well-being benefits.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the right candidate to make a real difference and lead the creation of an outstanding academy.

Visits to the Academy are warmly encouraged and can be arranged by contacting **Sandy Collura** at Charles Warren Academy on **01908 670074** or email admin@charleswarrenacademy.org

Closing date: Friday 5 May 2017

Interviews: Wednesday 17 and Thursday 18 May 2017

For an informal discussion or for an application form contact Tanya Bentham on **07990 538911** or email recruitment@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.

Four Dwellings Primary Academy

Deputy Headteacher

Salary: L12 - L16 £51,127 - £56,511

Location: Quinton, Birmingham



Four Dwellings Primary Academy
To make our best better

Come and be part of our aspirational learning community and help to maximise the development of each and every child

Four Dwellings Primary is a very special learning environment that provides a happy, caring community where everyone is encouraged and supported to achieve their goals. Our children are keen to learn and embrace our four drivers of 'Dream', 'Duty', 'Drive' and 'Dazzle'. We need a committed and passionate Deputy Head to help our school on its improvement journey.

As Deputy Head teacher you will be a key player within the Senior Leadership Team. You will join a brand new Leadership Team in September 2017 and you will be encouraged to bring your own special experience and ideas to school improvement and leadership.

We welcome applications from existing senior leaders or middle leaders that can demonstrate a proven track record of school improvement that will lead our school to become outstanding.

The successful candidate will:

- Nurture and cherish the children, promoting their safety, wellbeing and learning.
- Have a strong vision and ethos that supports our values and culture.
- Be creative, enthusiastic and resourceful with a passion for teaching and learning.
- Have a strong commitment to inclusion with high expectations for all learners.
- Be an outstanding classroom practitioner with the ability to inspire children to learn.
- Have a 'can-do' approach to the challenges of leadership in an Academy like Four Dwellings Primary.
- Value the engagement of parents and the community.
- Have a flair for analytical and strategic thinking in relation to Academy improvement

We can offer you:

- A 'family' school feeling at the heart of a thriving local community.
- A chance to work within an Academy community (locally and nationally) that promotes outstanding practice.
- A friendly supportive team of staff and governors.
- Parents who value the school and children who have a thirst to learn.
- A commitment to your ongoing professional development.
- The opportunity to lead and contribute to exciting whole Academy developments on leadership, learning and assessment.

If you feel you have the relevant skills, qualities, competencies and expertise and are energized by the prospect of being part of our leadership team, then we would love to hear from you.

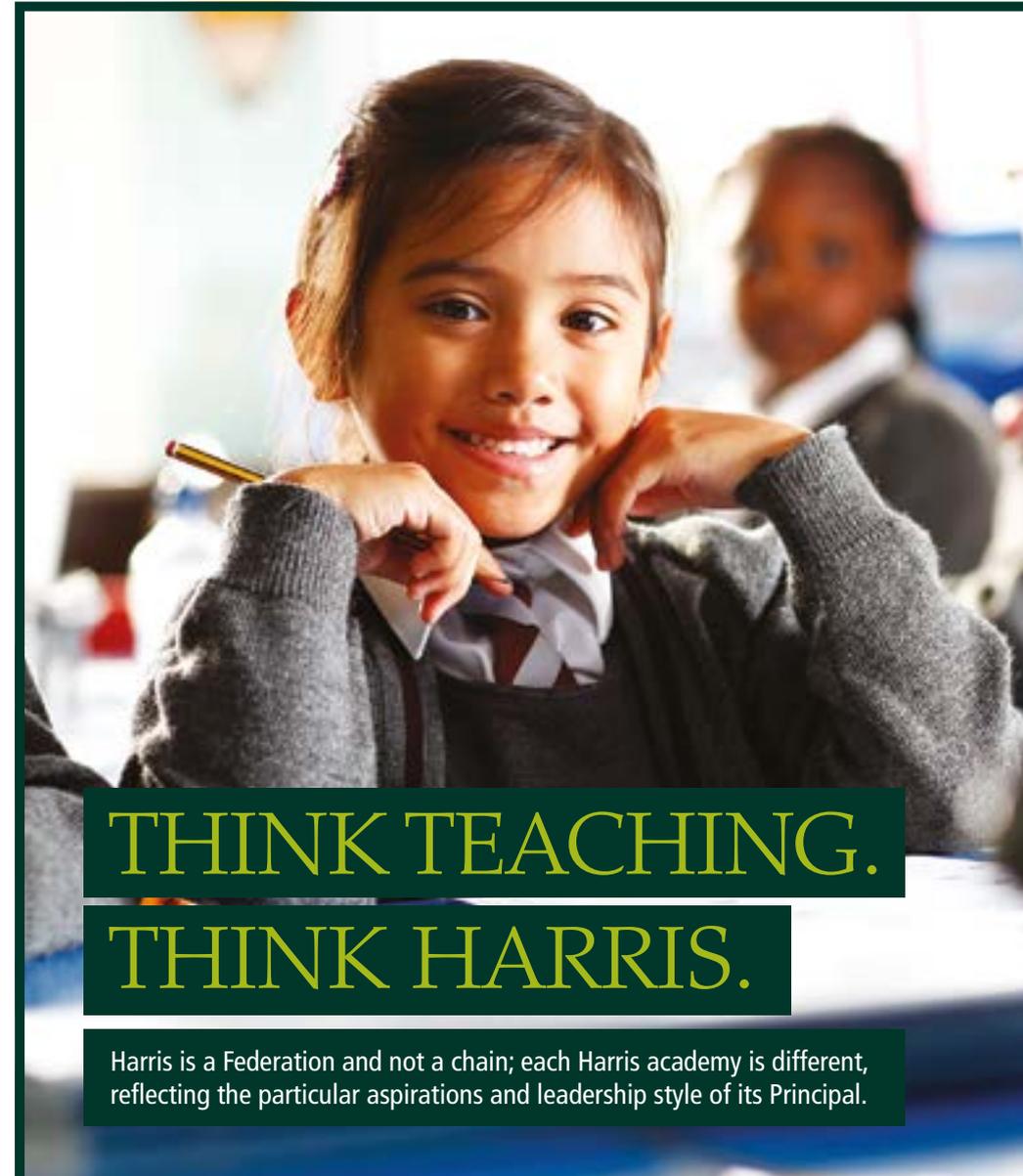
The position is due to commence September 2017. Interviews will be held on **Wednesday 24 May 2017**.

Closing date: Monday 15 May at 9 am.

To arrange a visit please contact Mrs L Piddington on **0121 464 3351** or email lpiddington@fourdwellingsprimaryacademy.org

For an application pack and/or an informal discussion contact **James Annetts** on **078 1554 5890** or email jannetts@academiesenterprisetrust.org

In line with our safeguarding procedure we are unable to accept CV's.



THINK TEACHING.

THINK HARRIS.

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

Harris Federation 

EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL

Start Date: September 2017 or January 2018

Substantial & generous salary based on experience and expertise + Performance Bonus + Private Medical Cover + Harris Benefits + Relocation Allowance

Our primary academies did better than schools in the best performing LA last year. The Harris Federation average of 71% of pupils achieving national expectations in English and Maths was 4% above the best LA and 18% above the national average of 53%. Would you like to work with us to continue to improve and maintain our position as the top performing Multi-Academy Trust?

We seek an Executive Principal who has a strong track record of high performance and can bring energy, drive and enthusiasm to their role in the Federation. You will join a highly collaborative team of Executive Principals, a Regional Director and Primary Director, taking responsibility for ensuring great outcomes in a group of our academies.

As a top performing MAT, we offer a highly supportive network of academies, directors, executive principals and mentors to help develop and progress your career.

To discuss in confidence please call Sabeena Hasan, Regional Primary Director, on: 020 8253 7777.

Closing date: Monday 8th May 2017

Interviews: Thursday 18th May 2017

Harris Federation, 4th Floor Norfolk House, Wellesley Road, Croydon CR0 1LH

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

[@HF_Careers](https://twitter.com/HF_Careers) [@HarrisFed](https://twitter.com/HarrisFed)



THINK TEACHING.

THINK HARRIS.

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



Harris Garrard Academy
Bexley

PRINCIPAL

Start Date: September 2017 or January 2018

Generous and negotiable 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 Garrard Academy. Previously known as the Bexley Business Academy, Harris Garrard Academy is an all-through 3-18 academy with approximately 1350 pupils on roll which joins the Harris Federation as a sponsored academy in September 2017.

The academy is based in Thamesmead in a purpose built building. It is a needy and disadvantaged area where students deserve the life chances that a transformational school can provide. If you want the scope to make the greatest difference in an area of need then this could be the opportunity for you.

This is a chance for an ambitious leader looking either to extend their experience of Headship, or to start their first Principalship in a highly supportive and rewarding environment. For first time Principals, we can provide support in the form of individual mentoring from an experienced Harris Principal; for existing Headteachers, there will be strong opportunities to progress to Executive Principalship in the future.

As a top performing Multi-Academy Trust, we offer access to a professional and supportive community of academies, fellow Principals, and mentors to help develop and progress your career.

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

Closing date: Friday 12th May 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



Curriculum Leader – Humanities

Salary: Leadership L4 – L9 (£41,978 – £47,492)

Do you want to join Rainford High on its journey to excellence?

Do you want to make a difference in a school where everyone Matters Everyone Helps and Everyone Succeeds?

Can you build on success and take it to the next level?

Rainford High Technology College opened in 1940 to serve Rainford and the surrounding area. The school has been fortunate to have had a rebuild under the Building Schools for the Future that was opened fully in September 2013. The new building provides an inspiring and modern learning environment for the students and the teachers to focus on learning.

The school site has state of the art facilities for Science, Design and Technology and ICT. The new learning environment for Art, Music and Drama will enable our students to produce work of an even higher standard and produce performances the school can celebrate with its community.

The Curriculum at Rainford High offers a breadth, balance and coherence of study that is underpinned by the requirements of the National Curriculum but also meeting

the needs of learners preparing for a rapidly changing 21st Century World. We strive to offer a personalised approach to study that allows students to focus on developing all round skills such as organisation, literacy, numeracy and team work alongside problem solving and planning that support academic learning and development across their journey to be life long learners.

Required from September 2017, a suitably qualified and visionary applicant for this important role in a very successful 11-18 school; with the ability to lead a large Humanities Department to improve outcomes for all students

Further details and application form can be downloaded on our website in the 'Staff section under Vacancies'.

Completed application forms should be returned for the attention of Mrs Jane Ledson, Principal's PA

Closing Date: 16th May 2017

Interviews to take place w/b 22nd May 2017

Higher Lane, Rainford, St Helens, Merseyside, WA11 8NY

Telephone: 01744 885914 Fax: 01744 884642

Email: info@rainford.org.uk

Website: www.rainford.org.uk

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SCHOOLS WEEK

Wallace is your go-to person for everything jobs-related. He will advise you on the best formats and channels to get your recruitment opportunities seen by people working in schools and the wider education sector.

Wallace joined the team in January 2016, having worked as a sales and marketing executive for leisure and hospitality company, Eclectic PLC.

He's here to help you share your roles with our audience of switched-on, engaged readers.

Searching for the right candidate with the right calibre, can be both challenging and time consuming, alongside trying to work towards a budget.

Schools Week offers cost effective approaches through proven advertising mediums, which are tailor-made to work in line with your budget and more importantly your expectations.

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Tel: 0203 432 1397

Email: wallace.williams@schoolsweek.co.uk

I'm here to make recruitment that bit easier

READERS' REPLY



EMAIL



TWEET



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

A-level entries drop as tougher GCSEs bite

Mrs C, address supplied

Some teachers have responded negatively to the changes at GCSE rather than search innovative ways of teaching. This, in addition to a lack of motivation, may be responsible for the lack of engagement among students. Perhaps the community should reflect on this and ways to support teachers and students.

@teacherwriterPJ

I'm not at all shocked. This is the post-2010 generation of learners voting with their feet. They've had enough.

'Unknown' number of foreign teachers face deportation

@Merrion

To what "problem", exactly, is deporting our children's teachers a solution? This is insane!

Bid delay squeezes next year's opening dates

Andrew Wilkins, Wiltshire

We need to have a long hard think about these proposed new free schools. If we look at UTCs, we see an experiment that has gone catastrophically wrong. Graham Taylor is not a qualified teacher, has never worked in a school and yet is being allowed to set up a secondary with a longer school day. How is he going to achieve this when other schools are struggling financially with a normal day? And now he's put in bids for a further three schools before showing his organisation is capable of running a single school. It should be noted that the results at his FE college are no great shakes. The progress on vocational courses is in the bottom 24 per cent of the country.

DfE hints at test-based primary assessment

@VioletAnnie1970

Formally testing young children at a time when they need to be building relationships, developing secure attachments?!

@wingcramp

How can formal testing of five-year-olds be justified other than for convenience of comparison with later tests?

Saira Shahid

This is not good approach. Kids should be

checked halfway into school – like year 3 – then being taught accordingly to prepare them for year 6 SATs.

SATs tweaked to boost pupils' confidence

Terry Mern, Lancashire

I don't know about pupils being in tears, you should see the teachers – and I mean secondary as well as primary! We are judged on the progress they make from this fiasco!

Samantha Pugh

Good. Last year's experience for the children was disgraceful. Awful exam design.

Paula Goddard

Yes. Most exams I've written do this – at all levels even beyond A-level – so why not this one? Do we want to put kids off exams for life?

Schools switch redundancy tactics

Charlie Geogheghan-Breen

Before redundancies, people should check the salaries of management and whether they have had serious pay rises recently.

UTCs give pupils the choices they deserve

Rachel Brindle, address supplied

Parents will look around UTCs for the 14-plus route, but often there is no established track record so the risk is high unless the pupil is unhappy with their local secondary school and would benefit from moving to a different learning environment. Also, high-achieving pupils need close links with high-quality employers to feel safe in choosing this route. A route, I may add, that will lead to highly successful, cost-effective employment.

Contact the team

To provide feedback and suggest stories please email news@schoolsweek.co.uk and tweet using @schoolsweek

To inform the editor of any errors or issues of concern regarding this publication, email laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk with Error/Concern in the subject line.

Please include the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

UTCs give pupils the choices they deserve

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Sarah Thurlby, address supplied

There's a more fundamental problem with the UTC model and that is its reliance on pupils having to switch from their secondary school at 14. For many parents this is a very unattractive proposition. The fact that these are separate establishments, and very small by secondary school standards, goes to the heart of the issues about their viability. They are mainly too small to sustain a high quality offer over time unless they are part of a larger organisational structure. So the current model is flawed in its design, and until that changes, UTCs will continue to fail.

REPLY OF THE WEEK
RECEIVES A
SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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WWW.SCHOOLSWEET.CO.UK

PROFILE

LAURA MCINERNEY
@MISS_MCINERNEY

Jonathan Simons, director of policy and advocacy, Varkey Foundation

Jonathan Simons has been the pantomime dame of education circles for the past five years. As director of education at Policy Exchange, the think-tank started by Michael Gove, he often appeared on radio, television and conference panels to give a right-leaning view which – for many of education’s numerous left-wingers – was a challenge.

Yet despite enduring boos, insults and – at one point – a death threat, he has remained calm. His reports have prompted changes in the government and, as a governor, he quietly helped Greenwich Free School turn around its fortunes and, as a founding member, to set up the rapidly growing Astrea Academy Trust (previously known as Reach4).

Plus if the 6ft 3in “always big” (his description) influencer strikes you as the sort of Tory that spent his entire privileged life not worrying what others think, you would be wrong. Not only did a difficult time at school propel him to call ChildLine as a teen, he’s also not a Tory.

We meet at the Blue Boar, an opulent bar in the heart of Westminster that serves ironic fish finger sandwiches for a tenner. It’s a stone’s throw from the offices where Simons, 34, has served most of his career, including a stint at No 10 with Gordon Brown (told you he wasn’t a proper Tory).

Simons is well aware of how “establishment” the Westminster world, and his background, are. Born in Kent, educated at private prep school and then a grammar school, he is apologetic when he gets to the part about his inevitable application to study at Oxford. “I have no wonderful story about looking around at all the beautiful buildings and thinking how great it was. We were very, very well prepared.”

Yet, Simons has never advocated for grammars. At Policy Exchange he actually published a detailed blog outlining all the ways grammars were not a good idea.

Perhaps that’s because his memory of studying for the 11-plus is “really very depressing”. Week in, week out, he sat at his parents’ dressing table, completing question booklets, before doing the same all week at his “grammar crammar” private school “that advertised itself based on the pass rate”.

He understands why. Getting into a grammar saved his parents around £150,000 on private school fees, adjusting for inflation. “And I have a sister, so that was about £300,000 before tax. After tax, that’s half a million. That changes everything for a family. Where you can live, what jobs you do.”

Before he could take his place at Judd Grammar in Tonbridge, however, his parents moved to Leicestershire, where he again went to private school. Returning to Kent, aged 13, his parents begged Judd to let him take a place as he started year 9. They agreed, but this meant that his class had 31 children in it.

“That was really difficult. There were only 30 desks, 30 books, all the rest of it. It was horrible, because it’s always horrible being the only kid joining a cohort at any time. In Leicestershire, I was at a junior school that only went up to age 13. We were childlike. State school was a massive culture shock.”

He had not studied the national curriculum so

“I WAS 25 AND SIGNING OFF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS”

struggled academically. Feeling isolated and unable to fit in he called ChildLine a couple of times over the year until his confidence improved.

Gradually he ditched trying to impress the bad kids - “I realised that just wasn’t me” - and embraced his “inner nerd”. In his sixth form he took history, economics and politics A-level which he loved.

At this time he was very much a Conservative. He joined the party in 1994 for reasons he no longer remembers. “I was almost Ukip!” he says. “I queued to meet [right-wing journalist] Peter Hitchens. I went on ‘save the pound’ marches . . . I was your stereotypical young Conservative in every way.”

But two events took the shimmer off his gilded privileges. First, he didn’t get into Oxford. Second, he received a D for A-level history. He is philosophical about Oxford, but he knew the D grade was wrong. The paper was rushed back for a re-mark and was moved to a B, just one mark from an A. In the three days it took for the re-mark, he lost his place to study politics and history at Durham, but they extended an offer to study straight politics. He took it.

At university he “gave up all the Ukip crap” and became more centrist, in part because he has “zero time” for the Conservative’s stance on social welfare and the economy; in part because of his success as a competitive debater. At university, he made it to world and European finals, which required him to argue from any given perspective.

The skill helped when he entered the civil service fast stream which took him through secondments to the education department (“which I loved”) and eventually to working with Gordon Brown at No 10 on the full gamut of New Labour school policies, including personalisation and Assessment for Learning.

While he believes some of the policies were worthwhile, he is scathing about the process.

“The idea there were other ways of doing education were not remotely discussed. At that time, who met secretaries of state and their advisers? It was the trade union secretaries and a few headteachers. That was it.

“There was also a lot of money floating around and I was, what, 25? I was sometimes signing off hundreds of millions. That’s nuts! Some things were a good idea, like extended schools, but that was a billion pound sign-off and there was very little oversight.”

It is an alternative narrative to a view that Labour’s time in office was a high point of education policymaking before the Coalition took over. But Simons, who stayed on in No 10 when the new group arrived, points out that

JONATHAN

Coalition austerity cut a lot of programmes from the Labour era which were making private consultants very wealthy. Indeed, Simons’ next move, to outsourcing company Serco, was difficult for precisely this reason. The huge contracts of the Labour era were gone.

So, in 2013, he took the director job in Policy Exchange and began writing reports that suggested new ways of doing things – including making every primary an academy, reducing the time Ofsted spends in good schools and introducing performance-related pay.

He has, however, since changed his mind on some of the issues. “I wouldn’t write the performance-related pay document now,” he says. “I wrote it to shock, and got a huge amount of pushback, most of which was pretty aggressive, but there were grains of truth in it. After a lot of years, I can say ‘yeah that was right’.”

He also talks for the first time about receiving an antisemitic death threat (his father is Jewish). It shook him, especially as he has two children, but he wouldn’t let it stop him speaking up about matters that he felt important.

Hence, Simons took his new job at the Varkey



IAN SIMONS

Foundation – which has Bill Clinton as its honorary chair and which runs the annual \$1 million Global Teacher Prize – because it's a "once-in-a-lifetime" chance to work in a global organisation that influences education policy in governments across the world, not just in England.

But he is also clear on what he wants in future. "I want to work in a multi-academy trust," he says, "Not now, because I am not ready. I don't have the skills. I haven't yet run something with a multi-million budget. But that's what I want to do."

He grins, "By then it will finally be time for me to do a proper job."



With his wife Jane and two children, Alex and Charlotte



World championships debating final 2002 in Toronto



At his wedding in 2008 to Jane



The long and the short: with Sam Freedman of Teach First

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What is your favourite book?

If it's fiction, *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Non-fiction? *The Political Brain* by Drew Westen; it's shaped a lot of my thinking.

If you were invisible for the day, what would you do?

I would probably people-watch in places that you could never normally go to, like Buckingham Palace. That would be cool, because no one would talk to you. You could just watch.

Which animal would you most like to be?

A dog. That's a boring answer. But they're fairly lovable and mainstream. They are centrist. (Pause.) That's a terrible answer.

What was your most memorable party as a child?

I remember the first teenage house party that I went to and feeling like a fish out of water. I'm not old enough for this, I thought. It was horrible and I hated those parties, but I had to go to them.

ELECTION GUIDE

What the parties said in 2015 (and now)


Conservatives
DONE (SO FAR)
Continue to expand academies, free schools, studio schools and university technical colleges

Yep. There's more of them.

Not allow state schools to make a profit

No state school has been allowed to make a profit. Yet.

£18 billion for new school buildings

The government allocated £23.2 billion for school capital funding in the 2015 spending review.

Continue to provide the pupil premium protected at current rates

George Osborne, the former chancellor, pledged in the 2015 spending review to continue with the pupil premium.

Continue providing free meals to all infants

This continued, but the government cut its annual £2,300 grant to help small schools fund the meals.

Least-well funded authorities have already had increases in funding, and this will be the baseline for future funding

Note how they didn't promise a national funding formula...

Introduce bursaries for the most "in-demand" subjects

Generous bursaries for maths and science are in place. (They don't really keep anyone in teaching, but they did it).

Pay good teachers more

Performance-related pay has allowed schools to do this, but an overall 1 per cent cap on rises means uplifts beyond 1 per cent always come at the detriment of other staff's payroll.

Support an independent College of Teaching

The college officially launched earlier this year.

Increase the number of teachers able to teach Mandarin

£10 million went into the Mandarin Excellence programme, which is training teachers in 15 schools.

Expect every teacher to be trained in serious behaviour and stopping low-level disruption

Two behaviour reviews tell teacher trainers this is expected to happen.

Encourage the growth of Teach First

Teach First has grown over the past two years, and the government has praised and supported it.

MOSTLY DONE (OR PROBABLY WILL BE BY 2020)
£7 billion over the next parliament to provide good school places

£4.691 billion was allocated for new places between 2015-16 and 2016-17. Based on planned future funding, the government will meet its £7 billion target by 2020.

Train an extra 17,500 maths and physics teachers over the parliament

In 2015-16 and 2016-17, the government only recruited 92 per cent of the teachers needed if

it was to make this by equally recruiting people over the five years. So close, but not quite the full cigar.

Introduce new powers forcing any school receiving a "requires improvement" rating to be taken over by new leadership unless it has an improvement plan

This happened, in a way, as part of the "coasting schools" legislation in the 2016 Education Act.

MOSTLY NOT DONE
Require all pupils to take GCSEs in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects – English, maths, science, a modern foreign language, and history or geography

This was supposed to start for the current year 8s. But the government still hasn't published the response to its consultation. Over 18 months on...

Limit Ofsted ratings for schools that "refuse" to offer all EBacc subjects. They will only be able to get a "good"

This would have linked into the target for

everyone to take the EBacc. Which, as mentioned above, is delayed.

Reduce the "burden" of Ofsted inspections

There is no statistical evidence this has happened.

Every 11-year-old to know times-tables by heart, do long-division and multiplication, read a book and write a short story

Some, like the times-table check, are planned for 2019. The short story thing? Read a book? No specific plans for that.


NOT DONE (AND PROBABLY WON'T BE BY 2020)
The amount of money following your child into school will be protected

This has been broken. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, schools face a real terms cut in funding of 6.5 per cent by 2020.

Open at least 500 new free schools during the parliament

This target has not yet been reached, and the government has shifted its deadline to September 2020, rather than May 2020. One hundred and twenty four free schools have

opened since 2015, and a further 373 are "in the pipeline" according to the government, but no one knows how long the pipeline is.

We will lead the world in maths and science

We are not leading the world in maths and science.

Reduce time spent on paperwork

There is no evidence this has happened. Unions report an increase.

U-TURN
If children do not meet level 4 in their "exams" at the end of primary school, they must re-sit at secondary school

The re-sits for 11-year-olds were scrapped in October last year by Justine Greening.

DON'T KNOW
Allow all good schools to expand, whether maintained schools, academies, free schools or grammar schools

Some good schools, including one grammar school, have expanded, but as we don't have easy access to decisions about expansions (because they are done by regional commissioners) we can't verify this one.

and what they did)



The 2015 manifesto

Early years

- Protect spending on the early years in real terms
- Restore the role of Sure Start as family hubs in the community, with an obligation to provide childcare and a focus on early intervention
- Extend free childcare from 15 to 25 hours for working parents of three and four year olds, paid for by an increase in the bank levy
- Give parents a legal guarantee of access to childcare from 8am to 6pm through their local primary school

Standards

- Protect schools spending in real terms, to drive up standards
- Tackle areas of underachievement, with new directors of school standards to support local schools to improve and respond to the concerns of parents
- Deliver smaller class sizes for five, six and seven-year-olds, paid for by ending the wasteful Free Schools programme
- Require private schools to partner with state schools, as a condition of receiving Business Rates Relief

Teaching

- Ensure all teachers become qualified
- Raise standards through new Master Teachers, expert in their subject
- Require all teachers to build their skills throughout their careers, as a condition of remaining in the classroom
- Improve school discipline by ensuring teachers are trained to control a class
- Support and improve school leadership with a new Leadership Institute and gold standard head teacher qualifications and training

Skills

- Re-focus existing spending away from low-level apprenticeships for older people, and towards a system where apprenticeships are focused on new job entrants,

- lasting at least two years, and providing level three qualifications or above
- Deliver a new gold-standard Technical Baccalaureate for 16 to 18-year-olds
- Ensure all young people study English and maths to 18.
- Raise standards in FE, with new Institutes of Technical Education
- Guarantee all young people aged 11+ face-to-face careers advice with a £50m divert from the higher education access and participation budget
- Give every young person that gets the grades has the right to a high quality apprenticeship
- Introduce new Technical Degrees delivered by universities and employers
- Equipping young people for the future
- Ensure all schools deliver age-appropriate sex and relationships education
- Update and strengthen the Citizenship curriculum
- Introduce compulsory work experience for 14 to 16-year-olds
- Give kinship carers access to support and give vulnerable children in kinship care priority in school admissions
- Give teachers better training in mental health awareness




The 2015 manifesto

School standards

- Protect the education budget in real terms from the early years to age 19
- Protect the schools' Pupil Premium in real terms and introduce a fair National Funding Formula
- Provide support and intervention to ensure that all schools become good or outstanding
- Expand the Talented Head Teachers programme
- Increase the number of Teaching Schools
- Ensure there is a democratically accountable 'middle tier' to support schools where problems are identified.
- Introduce a local Head Teacher Board, working with schools and local authorities
- Abolish unelected Regional School Commissioners
- Rule out state-funded profit-making schools
- Give local authorities responsibility for local school-place planning
- Only fund new mainstream schools in areas where school places are needed.
- Repeal the rule that all new state-funded schools must be free schools or academies
- Allow local authorities to select the school sponsor, where this is not the local authority itself
- Ensure a fair local schools admissions process
- Implement the Children's Commissioner's report *They Go The Extra Mile*
- Extend free school meals to all children in primary education.

Teaching

- Guarantee all teachers in state-funded schools will be fully qualified or working towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) from September 2016
- Introduce a clear and properly funded entitlement to professional development for all teachers
- Raise the bar for entry to the profession, requiring a B grade minimum in GCSE maths and English
- Establish a new profession-led Royal College of Teachers, eventually to oversee QTS and professional development.
- Continue to support the Teach First programme
- Establish a new National Leadership Institute
- Encourage primary schools to have at least one science specialist
- Curriculum and qualifications
- Ensure the core curriculum will be taught at every state-funded school

- Establish an independent Educational Standards Authority (ESA) entirely removed from Ministerial interference responsible for curriculum and examination standards
- Introduce a minimum curriculum entitlement – a slimmed down core national curriculum, which will be taught in all state-funded schools
- This will include PSHE, financial literacy, first aid and emergency lifesaving skills, citizenship, and age-appropriate sex and relationship education
- Religious education will be included in the core curriculum
- Improve careers advice in schools and colleges

Apprenticeships

- Double the number of employers offering apprenticeships, from 180,000 to 360,000
- Extend the apprenticeship grant for employers (AGE), delivering 200,000 extra payouts
- Expanding the number of degree-level higher apprenticeships
- Work with the apprenticeship advisory group to increase the number of apprentices from BAME backgrounds
- Ensure gender balance across industry sectors, and encourage underrepresented groups to apply

FE and lifelong learning

- Develop National Colleges as national centres of expertise for key sectors to deliver high-level skills
- Establish a cross-party commission to secure a long-term settlement for the public funding of reskilling and lifelong learning
- Review the VAT treatment of general FE colleges and sixth form colleges to ensure fair treatment in relation to the schools sector

Support for young adults

- A new young person's discount card for those aged 16 to 21, giving a 2/3 discount on bus travel, as resources allow
- Enable government departments, councils and businesses to add other offers to the card
- Review access to transport for students and apprentices in rural areas where no scheduled services are available
- Improve links between employers and schools

ELECTION GUIDE 2017:

How to challenge polit

What every child requires is a great teacher.

Our challenge was to provide a straightforward, useful document for everyone to use, on the doorstep, to help to ask candidates and campaigners of all parties the important questions on two key issues:

- Ensuring our schools are properly funded;
- Ensuring the supply of great teachers to our schools.

We hope the full guide (downloadable via

the Schools Week website) will help keep education the key issue in this election; our nation's children deserve it.

Stephen Tierney

Chair of Headteachers' Roundtable
Chief executive of BEBCMAT, Blackpool

John Tomsett

Co-author of Doorstep Manifesto
Head of Huntington schools



Abridged version of Headteachers' Roundtable Doorstep Manifesto

ISSUE 1

ENSURING SCHOOLS ARE PROPERLY FUNDED

QUESTIONS TO ASK PROSPECTIVE MPS/LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATES

- "How are you going to make teaching more attractive to our best graduates if, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies, you are cutting school budgets by 8 per cent by 2020?"
- "Spending on school may be at record levels, but that is because we have more children of school age than ever before and costs are rising. How will you ensure school budgets in their ENTIRETY are protected in REAL terms for the duration of the next parliament?"
- "Many schools now are looking to create super classes of 60-100 children in the school hall due to budget cuts. Will you prevent this? What is your maximum class size?"
- "The nation's children should be provided with a broad curriculum, great support and enriching activities. Is your party willing to fund schools properly so our children have the same opportunities as previous generations?"

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- Without adequate funding schools can't employ enough high-quality teachers and schools are having to make teachers redundant.
- This is likely to lead to children and young people being in large or very large classes
- The other way schools are balancing budgets is by reducing the number of subjects they teach. This narrows the curriculum pupils receive.
- Wider curriculum experiences are being reduced, such as sports and arts.
- Schools are also having to make many support staff redundant, who often work with children with additional or special educational needs.
- Some schools have leaky roofs, poorly maintained classrooms and, in some cases, unresolved health and safety issues.

KEY INFORMATION TO SUPPORT YOUR QUESTIONS

- The government says it is spending a record amount on schools, about £40-£42 billion. This is true. But between 2015-2025 another million pupils will be in England's schools; this additional money is for the extra pupils.
- School funding has been cash flat for years. This means that despite costs increasing massively, the amount of money schools receive for each pupil has stayed the same.
- The National Audit Office predicts schools will have a £3 billion shortfall by 2020, a reduction of about £500,000 for an average secondary schools and £100,000 for a primary school.
- The problem is worse for schools or colleges that have sixth-form pupils; the cut in their funding is much greater.
- In addition the education support grant (used to provide additional services to pupils) is being cut each year and will disappear totally next year. This has removed another £200,000 from a secondary academy's budget and £40,000 from a primary academy.
- The money used to maintain school buildings was significantly cut in 2010 and the backlog of major repairs is building up.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

- School funding should be increased and the real terms cuts in funding reversed.
- The government has wastefully spent millions of pounds on: some free schools and university technical colleges that closed a few years later; unnecessary academy conversions; Troops to Teachers; the National Teaching Service.
- While increasing taxes is not popular, people often support a rise in taxes if the extra funds raised are for a specific purpose. A 1p rise in all rates of income tax could raise £5.5 billion for education, reverse the current cuts and avert the potential problems.

Politicians on the doorstep

ISSUE 2

ENSURING THE SUPPLY OF GREAT TEACHERS TO SCHOOLS

QUESTIONS TO ASK PROSPECTIVE MPS/LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATES

- "Great teachers are at the heart of a great school. What is your party going to do to make teaching a more attractive career to our best graduates?"
- "Some teachers are working more than 60 hours a week. The average hours a week a teacher works is well over 50. How is your party going to reduce teacher workload?"
- "New grammar schools mean new secondary moderns. The research says new grammar schools attract the most experienced and better qualified teachers. What is your position on creating new grammar schools and, as a result, new secondary moderns?"
- "The current government has missed the targets for teacher recruitment for the past four years. What are you going to do to ensure your party would hit the teacher recruitment targets in the future?"

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- The best education requires the best teachers and the best support staff. Only great teaching in every school will make our country's education system great. It's that simple.
- To be competitive in a global economy our education system needs to be world class. Without great schools, for every child and young person, we simply won't educate a generation of young people to the standard we require as a nation economically.

KEY INFORMATION

- The government claims we have more teachers than ever before. However, with another million pupils in schools between 2015 and 2025, we don't have anywhere near enough.

AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

The full doorstep manifesto, written by Stephen Tierney and John Tomsett, is available on the Schools Week website from Friday April 28 as a free download.

Feel free to share with friends, colleagues, parents, grandparents and - yes - politicians!

- Many headteachers are reporting the number of people applying for teaching jobs is decreasing and candidates are variable in quality.
- Government targets to recruit teachers have been missed year after year and there is no government plan to meet recruitment targets in the future.
- About 10 per cent of teachers are leaving the profession each year; the main reasons, according to the education select committee, are workload issues created by too many government initiatives and excessive, unhelpful accountability.
- The current system for recruiting graduates to enter teacher training is complicated and increasingly confusing.
- Too many people train to become teachers but then never go into the classroom or leave within the first few years.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS

- More effort must be focused on reducing teachers' workload. Too many poorly thought-through government initiatives, including excessive concurrent changes to curriculum and examinations, are causing problems.
- Ofsted and the accountability system need to be more proportionate and recognise the effectiveness of schools, including those working in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the country.
- To enhance retention, introduce 10th-year funded sabbaticals for teachers in their 10th, 20th or 30th year. The sabbatical may be deferred for personal or professional reasons.
- All schools should offer a high-quality, research-informed professional development programme for all teachers.
- Enabling teachers to engage with research to inform their practice by funding additional non-contact time for defined periods.
- Schools, in partnership with initial teacher education providers, should deliver a two-year induction programme for all entrants to teaching with a five-year pathway to a professional qualification with master's degree equivalence and the potential to progress to doctorate level.

**HEADTEACHERS'
ROUNDTABLE**
DOORSTEP MANIFESTO
GENERAL ELECTION 2017



OPINION



EMMA WILLIAMS

Chief executive, PTA UK

Schools need to do more to engage parents . . .

Most school issues – from curriculum to uniform changes – affect parents. But often they are the last people to know, says Emma Williams

More schools are appealing to parents for donations to plug the funding gap. Headteachers and unions also have been lobbying parents to sign petitions, to join public meetings and to write directly to the government to highlight their concerns about the budget crisis.

This throws a spotlight on the way parents are considered in relation to schools and education. The finance debate frames parents as a source of income, rather than the principle stakeholder in seeing all children thrive. If schools want support from parents, they should consider matters from their perspective and take action accordingly.

Very few school issues do not also affect parents in some way, whether this is teacher recruitment and retention, shorter school days or uniform policies. Yet some schools keep parents at arms' length. Maybe because of the pressures on schools and teachers, or maybe because of a minority of parents behaving badly. The majority of parents, however, are a force for good.

As well as contributing a reported £99 million a year through parent groups, parents volunteer more than three million hours a year across England – for example, by helping to read with children at school; maintaining buildings and grounds; completing grant funding applications; giving their time to the school parent-teacher association; and by running after-school clubs. This kind of involvement can be more valuable than financial contributions alone.

Yet schools too often announce important curriculum, school-day or behaviour-policy changes (and even bigger structural changes such as joining a multi-academy trust) to parents as a *fait accompli* – not only excluding them from the decision-making process, but also making them feel alienated from their child's education. Establishing effective means of gaining parent feedback on the really important stuff would help.

If schools faced with funding challenges are seriously considering, for example, restricting the curriculum or altering school opening hours, parents must be consulted on possible options and solutions. This is even more important in MATs where decisions are made at trust level and more remotely from

the individual schools.

As echoed in the recent education select committee Inquiry into MATs, school leaders should encourage and support the development of more groups that give parents a direct line into the board of governors or trustees. We understand that more than 60 per cent of schools currently have a parent-teacher association and about 20 per cent have a parent council. We would like to see every school benefiting from a parent group.

One powerful way to make a school more parent-friendly is to focus on communication. Too many parents tell us

“**Parents are seen as sources of income**

of countless emails, out-of-date websites, changes to INSET days and last-minute homework requests that put pressure on them and home life. One recently received an anonymous text message announcing that a request to take their child out of school for a day had been denied, with no details of whom to contact to discuss the matter! This may seem insignificant, but it can give the impression that school leaders do not care about the challenges facing time-poor parents who work, or have caring responsibilities, or indeed about their relationship with their children.

We urge school leaders and governors to genuinely engage parents; to look beyond their value as sources of income and instead to seek true partnership in the education of our children where real gains can be achieved. Recognising that schools, although experts in education, may not necessarily have the experience of formally engaging parents, PTA UK is looking to work with the sector to build competence and confidence in this important area.

As partners with schools, and by having a voice, parents can help to ensure our children continue to receive the education they deserve. Teachers and school leaders should welcome this with open arms.

For further information on PTA UK's views about current financial pressures facing schools see: <https://www.pta.org.uk/News/PTA-UK-position-on-School-Funding-in-England>



NANSI ELLIS

Assistant general secretary responsible for policy, ATL

. . . believe me, we would – if only we had the time

The benefits of sharing information with parents are enormous, but it's difficult to know where the time might come from – teachers are already working more than 55 hours a week, says Nansi Ellis

Teachers and school leaders know that children learn best when there is a strong partnership between school and home. Research suggests two broad strands to this partnership: parents' engagement in the life of the school, and their involvement with their child's learning at home and school.

PTA UK is understandably frustrated by many schools' attempts to engage parents with the life of the school. But parents are busy people and making time to respond to surveys or to help with school trips often falls to the bottom of the pile. It is equally frustrating for teachers when attempts to develop partnerships meet with little response.

Parents often express concerns about the lack of regular information. But teachers aren't trained in newsletter production or web design, and even in schools where parents can volunteer those skills, creating the content takes time.

It's also hard to engage parents face-to-face. Finding time during the school day for an important chat means losing a break or stepping out of class; meetings after school take up important preparation time. Many parents can't get into school until the early evening, leaving teachers having to extend their working day and to miss out on their own family time.

But teachers do this, regularly holding parents' evenings, curriculum meetings, school concerts and governing body and PTA meetings until 9pm and later. But they can't come into work late the next day, and coming in tired can mean that children's learning suffers.

Home-school links are often well-developed in early years practice. Teachers here talk regularly to parents about what their child is working on, perhaps because there isn't much written work to see.

As children grow, schools sometimes try to use homework to engage parents with their children's learning. Unfortunately, the pressures of tests and targets can mean that homework becomes an added burden: a fight with your child to do a piece of work

that you don't understand well enough to help with and they can't remember enough to do on their own.

Developing family learning programmes can help to support children's learning, at least in English and maths. Parents are taught techniques to support their child and encouraged to improve their own skills.

Proper planning is vital. Teachers need training, particularly in engaging with parents whose backgrounds are different to their own. It also takes time, and time, for teachers, is in short supply.

We don't underestimate the amount of support that parents can provide. Wouldn't it be lovely if employers allowed parents time off to get involved with their child's school?

“**Teachers can't come into work late after evening meetings**

Parents, carers, grandparents who come in to share skills and experience are a lifeline for the busy teacher. And it's great when parents get a real view of school life rather than just the showcase assemblies and concerts.

To be real partners in their children's education, it's vital that parents understand how schools work: that they see the hard work that goes into teaching children, developing good behaviour and good learning habits; that they appreciate the frustrations caused by lack of money or not enough teachers.

That's when parent partnerships need to become a community and school partnership. As we move towards a general election, parents must ask questions about how the government and their local MPs will support their schools.

Teachers and school leaders know they could do more to engage parents. What we really need is to understand what sort of partnerships parents want.

That's where organisations like PTA UK can really come into their own: creating channels of communication and supporting engagement that makes sense to parents, and best supports their children. In the end, it's what we all want.

Pupils will soon sit the first new “big fat maths” GCSE. Joanne Morgan looks at the challenges that it presented – and those still to come

Two years ago we were uncertain about how our students would adjust to the demands of the new maths GCSE. We worried that many of them weren't equipped with the underlying understanding and resilience to tackle the higher level of challenge. We also worried that the increased timetable allocation meant that there simply weren't enough maths teachers to go around.

Although the government continues to downplay the scale of the recruitment crisis, maths teachers are still acutely aware of it. Job vacancies are often advertised for months, with no suitable candidates coming forward.

Staff from other subjects are teaching maths, but it's hard to find time to give them the necessary training. The least qualified or least experienced tend to be allocated to key stage 3, but this is not a sensible long-term strategy.

GCSE maths teachers have faced a number of notable challenges over the past two years. Tiering decisions have been particularly difficult. If a teacher decides to enter a student for the higher tier and that student doesn't manage to achieve many marks in their final exams, then it's quite possible that they'll get a U – they almost certainly would have been much better off on the foundation tier. The increased



JOANNE MORGAN

Mathematics lead practitioner

Gove's thwarted dreams for a country of mathematicians

uncertainty that comes with a new qualification means it's hard for teachers to make the right decision.

Understandably, parents want to know their child's predicted grade. It's relevant to A-level decisions and college applications.

We're in no position to share predicted grades, but most schools have asked us to do so anyway, resulting in wildly inconsistent predictions.

Some schools have said that 50 per cent at higher tier will get you a grade 6, others that 50 per cent will get you a grade 7. The truth is that we have no idea; being asked to invent predictions has concerned many maths teachers over the past two years.

The next set of challenges have become apparent in recent months. After years of strong uptake of maths and further maths at A-level, some students seem to have been put off the subject this year. We fear that numbers will fall. Understandably, our current year 11s have not enjoyed being the guinea pigs. Many have had their confidence knocked by low mock exam results. Our new A-levels launch this September and our students have had enough of all the uncertainty.

Even some of our stronger mathematicians have been put off by the new grading system. A student who achieves a grade 7 at GCSE is definitely

suitable to study maths at A-level, but because they've fallen short of a grade 9 and 8, grade 7 doesn't feel like enough. This is a bigger problem for further maths, where students who are outside the elite “grade 9” group may feel they're not suitable.

“**Inventing predictions has concerned many maths teachers over the past two years**”

Funding changes have also led many schools to move from four subject choices in year 12 to three. It's highly likely this will have an impact on the uptake of further maths. Few students want to use two of their three A-level options on one subject. Michael Gove's qualification reforms aimed to send a higher calibre of student off to study maths at university, but with the likely drop in further maths uptake that's not looking likely.

In the meantime we wait with bated breath to see how things turn out on results day this summer, and can only hope that our A-level classes are full to the brim with enthusiastic young mathematicians in September.

SCHOOLSWEEK 100th EDITION PRIZE RAFFLE

£100 gift voucher for Amazon

897

355

£50 gift voucher for Amazon

275

554

Bottle of champagne

906

2x Tickets to the Festival of Education

180

46

639

270

1 year subscription to Schools Week

479

127

934

738

Schools Week goodie bag

935

63

256

726

The first Schools Week prize draw took place over the Easter break and these are the winning ticket numbers.

If you have a winning ticket (and yes, the colours matter) then please email laura@schoolsweek.co.uk with a photo of your ticket, in order to claim your prize.

(And, that's right, no pink tickets came up. Unlucky you pinks!)

REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS
OF THE WEEK

To view individual blogs visit
www.schoolsweek.co.uk/reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is Harry Fletcher-Wood, associate director of knowledge development for Teach First @HFletcherWood

Assessment objectives: an Ofqual concern for Ofqual people; there is nothing for you here!

By James Theobald

James Theobald begins obliquely, perhaps unsurprisingly for those who know his blog, with a trip to the doctor. He's troubled to hear the problem is "prostaglandins. They are a group of lipids. When your cells are damaged they release them. You need to stop your cells from producing these prostaglandins." It turns out this means ibuprofen. "You could have just told me this straight away," Theobald says. "I have some ibuprofen in my pocket." The doctor explains, however, that it's important he knows the objective of the treatment.

Theobald likens such unwanted information to assessment objectives, which are nothing more than "vague catch-all concepts" that tell pupils nothing they need to know. He concludes that teachers should focus on teaching students how to respond to questions.

What I learned from my learning styles research project back in the day

By Penny Rabiger

In 2000, when she was working towards a masters, Penny Rabiger decided to test each of her student's learning style (and her own). "Amazingly, I then taught an entire class of 27 kids, with each using their preferred learning style as identified by the test." Students tried harder, did more homework and their grades improved, in her subject and in others. Rabiger attributes this to the enthusiasm, trust and metacognition that she and her students poured into their learning as a result, although she

"also learned that arranging every lesson in such a detailed, multi-faceted and involved way would kill me if I had to do it for every lesson and for every child". She concludes that "even though it might be hugely embarrassing now to admit that I ever dabbled in the dark arts of learning styles, I am really grateful that I did." The post does not seek to encourage teachers to imitate this: instead, it both evokes a past era and exemplifies the merits of meticulous examination of learning.

In praise of complex terminology

By Erin Miller-Coast

Erin Miller-Coast recently reread Mark Forsyth's *The Elements of Eloquence*: it spoke to her in a way that it did not when she trained to teach. "It's full of wonderful and majestic literary terminology; some obscure, some we unknowingly use all of the time. You will quiver in awe as you encounter terms such as 'epilepsis'."

Miller-Coast argues for the importance of using such terminology in teaching English. Teaching four different types of rhetorical question ("epilepsis, anacoenosis, hypophora and anthyphophora") helps her students to move away from generic responses such as "the use of rhetorical question makes the reader feel like they are being spoken to directly".

Instead, they are able to make "detailed and specific comments about the use of rhetorical questions, eg, 'The speaker's rhetorical question functions as a call and response with their audience, which can feel empowering due to the feeling of being united with one another'." A generic response was no longer necessary. Even if students forget the key terms, learning the questions helps them to consider the range of functions and effects of rhetorical questions more carefully. This post taught me new words, taught me more about rhetorical questions, and provided useful advice I've already passed on to a trainee: Miller-Coast proved all her points.

These high school journalists investigated a new principal's credentials. Days later, she resigned

By Samantha Schmidt

For a bit of light relief, I recommend finding out what happened when a group of high school journalists in the US began investigating their newly appointed principal and found some discrepancies in her credentials. Students "were at a loss that something that was so easy for them to see was waiting to be noticed by adults". This *Washington Post* story explains what their investigation revealed and the consequences.

The Enemy Within: A Tale of Muslim Britain

by Sayeeda Warsi

Published by Allen Lane

Reviewed by Dr Nasima Hassan



Regardless of your opinions about the Conservative party – and indeed Sayeeda Warsi in her various government roles – *The Enemy Within* is an important book because she writes with a level of authority that cannot be refuted. From 2010 to 2012 she was co-chair of the Conservative party, and was a member of David Cameron's cabinet before her resignation in 2014.

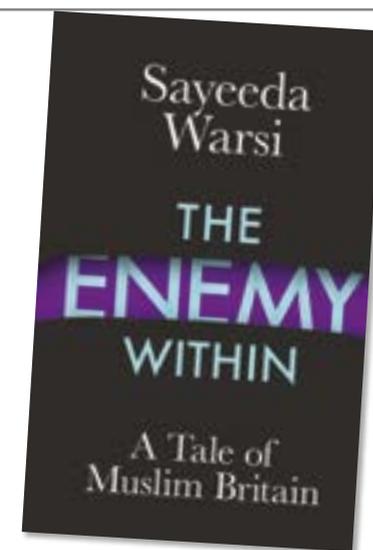
Referring to herself as "an outsider who became an insider", Warsi allows the reader to get to know her as each chapter unfolds. And herein lies the book's major strength: it is a personal account on every level, a narrative made up of experiential learning, eyewitness accounts, feelings, emotions, stories and happenings.

To illustrate, in "What Are British Values?" Warsi concludes that: "If the notion of British values is revisionist in its view of history, if the teaching of British values does not acknowledge the real journey we took to get here, if it fails to balance our successes as a nation against our failures and if it isn't honest and inclusive it will not act as the glue that binds our nation."

This brutally honest conclusion backs my own research findings into the teaching of British values in primary schools.

Another example: in "The Paranoid State", where Warsi recounts painful Machiavellian incidents about the failure of the Coalition government to engage meaningfully with Muslim communities, she states: "If we have decided to view ever-increasing numbers of Muslim organisations or individual Muslim activists with suspicion and to dangerously narrow engagement with British Muslims to a dozen or so people from a community of over 3 million people, then let's at least have the decency to say that's the approach we've taken. Let's abide by our values and tell those who we are not engaging with the reasons they are 'out in the cold'. Let them know the case against them and let them have the opportunity to defend themselves."

Here the book delivers on its promise of being "uncompromising" and "delivering necessary truths", making the first two parts a



compelling read.

Overall, it is eminently readable. The evidence is overwhelming at times; it can be a distraction to see a note at the end of most paragraphs, but this is a necessary evil that represents the second major strength of the book: it speaks with authority.

There is a lot to gain from reading the book chronologically – although there is a temptation to leap in at part three, "Press The Restart Button", because as educationists we want a route map to successful relationships with the hyper-diverse Muslim communities that are our neighbours, parents, governors and pupils.

But here, at the most critical juncture, the book loses momentum. I can appreciate why this might happen as the discourses are multi-layered and complex; they involve hearts and minds that have been massively bruised and damaged. But to ask the question (as Warsi does in the generically named chapter "The Muslims") "Who does represent the British Muslims?" and respond with "We must let a thousand flowers bloom", is indicative of a real lack of direction that is much needed by schools in the current era of safeguarding.

The Enemy Within allows us to gain an insight into the truth (according to Warsi) behind home affairs, education policy (in the shape of the British values agenda) and, indeed, foreign policy in relation to people who self-identify as Muslim.

And it's an ugly truth.

Next week:

Reboot

By Jay Ashcroft

Reviewed by Charles Wiley,
CEO of Zzish



A week in Westminster

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

THURSDAY:

An election looms, and with it, the ghost of education secretaries past.

Theresa May's decision to call a snap poll on June 8 has led to speculation about the future of Michael Gove and Nicky Morgan.

The New Statesman speculated that Gove – who “quietly opposes” May's flagship grammar schools policy – could keep quiet during the campaign to be in with a chance of getting recalled to the cabinet.

Meanwhile, *The Independent* hints that May could also extend an “olive branch” to arch-Remainer Morgan, who has been very critical of grammar schools and the PM's leather trousers.

Neither is likely to return to the education portfolio, however.

Rumours for a post-June Tory education line-up include Dominic Raab, Liz Truss and Damian Hinds. Raab and Hinds both went to grammar schools and are big fans, and Truss is well-known for really really liking maths. Make of that what you will.

FRIDAY:

As the school funding crisis comes to a head, it's good to know that the head of the New Schools Network, Toby Young, is certain that everything is fine.

“Don't think most parents will be up in arms about cuts to their schools. It's an imaginary crisis,” Tobes barked on Twitter, prompting a weekend of shouting from desperate heads.

Never mind that schools must cut £3 billion from their budgets, or that they are making key staff redundant and or that they are cutting spending on textbooks, mental health services and other support systems. Not a problem, according to the toadmeister, who said it was all “pretty small beer”.

When challenged, Young claimed that spending on schools in 2020 “will still be 8 per cent higher in real terms than it was in 2010. Funding doesn't feel like an election-winning issue to me.”

MONDAY:

As ministers flocked back to their homelands to prepare for government, the Lords have been left to run amok in Whitehall.

Government academiser-in-chief Lord Nash admitted this during a fascinating debate on school gardening this week. He responded with his usual good humour to a request from Labour peer and educationist Lord Knight for him to “dig through the weeds of the school funding formula”.

“I am most impressed with the noble Lord's ability to weave into this question something which might appear to be so off-piste, but he will know, from his experience of having done my job, that when all the MPs disappear to try to get re-elected it is the Lords minister who does all the work.”

Helpfully, purdah rules mean he can't do too much to schools anyway (see page 2) so our hearts are not pumping with empathy.

WEDNESDAY:

Cash-strapped schools have gained a new ally. Once-an-accountant-always-an-accountant Nick Gibb appears to have started offering free advice on how to be thrifty.

According to *The Guardian*, Gibb wrote to a Labour MP to tell him that schools could “buy cheaper photocopiers” and switch energy suppliers to save money.

No doubt business managers across the country will breathe a collective sigh of relief upon hearing this revolutionary idea.

Who knew schools could avoid the £3 billion of cuts with a few simple tweaks to their energy bills and stationery budgets. Gibb be praised!

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name

Kate Tod Forbes

Age

33

Occupation

Teacher/Coach

Location

Swanage, Dorset

Subscriber since:

May 2016

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



FLY ON THE WALL

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

I look after my son, Rupert, on a Friday so I usually read it on a play date. One eye on the soft play, one eye on the paper.

Which section do you enjoy the most?

Obvious answer, the news. There is so much you could read to stay up to date and Twitter is overwhelming. Reading all the education news for the week provides a sense of achievement.

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

Bit late, but I would slow down the key stage 2 testing. Even if primary teachers were ready to teach grammar at that level, most secondary English teachers I know are not ready to take it forward in year 7. We need to have a shared language; it was not long ago that a comma was a “little breath” in a sentence.

Who is your favourite education secretary?

I met Michael Gove once after writing an angry letter to my MP. In the Commons he referred to me as a “young teacher”. Surprising how a small amount of flattery can cure quite a few ills.

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

Burn it. Not out of malice, but for warmth. I am not sure what I'll do with them in the summer. The doctors' surgery is always asking for reading material.

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

Keep my head down and stay out of trouble. Delegate heavily.

Favourite memory of school?

I once tried to levitate my mate Gareth in maths. It caused a fair amount of disruption.

If you weren't working in education, what would you do?

I would have a small farm in Wales and fill it with rescue animals. Mainly donkeys, probably. This is still very much on the cards.

Favourite book on education?

Motivating Every Learner by Alan McLean. My mum (Janet Tod) writes books on behaviour and she recommended it to me. I mainly use her models and McLean's models when talking to teachers about student behaviour. I can't find anything better.

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

I can't think of one person I am really interested in who works in an office.



EVENTS

A WEEK IN CONFER

AS PARLIAMENT WENT ON HOLIDAY, WEEK IN WESTMINSTER DECAMPED TO THE TEACHER UNION CONFERENCES. HERE'S OUR REPORT

MONDAY, APRIL 10

It wouldn't be union conference season without a survey or five, and the first day of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' (ATL) conference in Liverpool was no exception.

The event began with the revelation that teachers are cutting spending on books, ICT, SEND provision, and non-EBacc subjects as schools struggle to balance budgets.

A joint ATL and National Union of Teachers (NUT) survey of almost 1,200 members revealed that 76 per cent said their budget had been cut this year, while 93 per cent were pessimistic about funding in the coming years.

Half of all respondents said their schools had bigger class sizes this year, rising to 70 per cent among secondary members.

Later, delegates overwhelmingly backed a motion that will force the union's senior honchos to lobby the government over "excessive" chief executive pay in academy trusts.

In particular, members want new rules and guidance for schools on what is appropriate.

Simon Clarkson, a teacher from Leicestershire, said a small number of people were treating education as "a gravy train" and were "milking schools, taxpayers and the funds that should be there for the children".

Schools Week recently revealed that Harris chief executive, Sir Dan Moynihan, is now paid more than £400,000 a year.

TUESDAY, APRIL 11

Another day, another survey. This time: cyberbullying.

ATL's poll of just 345 members (small sample, we know, but the anecdotes were illuminating) showed teacher concerns that social media apps such as Snapchat and Facebook are making it easier for pupils to abuse each other, with mild insults escalating into "serious threats" that disrupt learning.

One primary teacher in Wiltshire said a child had used social media for months to bully others into handing over "snacks and parts of a packed lunch".

In the West Midlands, a new pupil was bullied by a group of children, escalating into "minor violence and threats to hurt his younger brother".

On the same day, the union voted to raise awareness about the risks of the human papillomavirus (HPV) infection to boys.

A HPV vaccination, often referred to as the "cervical cancer jab", has been issued in schools since 2008 to girls, despite thousands of men diagnosed with the virus every year.

High-risk HPVs can cause a number of different cancers, including throat cancer, and ATL has added its voice to a growing campaign for a vaccination for boys – pledging to raise awareness of the risks the virus poses to all pupils.

They also called for schools to be better-equipped to deliver guidance to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.



Image: Kois Miah

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12

Day three and the ATL voted to "explore" a boycott of all primary assessment.

The exploration is less a reference to trekking through jungles and more related to the government's current consultation on scrapping SATs tests for 7 year olds in favour of a new baseline test for reception children.

Jean Roberts, a union member, said although teachers needed to "make our voice heard" in the government's consultation and say no to "already failed baseline assessment being brought back", she also had concerns about the lack of a mention of key stage 2 SATs.

"Those [KS2 SATs] will stay in place with the curriculum narrowed for so many pupils as schools work to ensure they reach an ever-rising bar, which means they are not deemed below the floor and labelled as failing," she said, adding that the time had come to "stop moaning about the test" and "put the nail in the coffin of testing".

Michael Catty said education in England was "in a pit that will get deeper and deeper, dug by the twin evils of testing and league tables.

"Combine those two and education just doesn't count. We can't do anything about league tables, but we can do something about testing."

A few hours later, general secretary Mary Bousted warned that if education secretary Justine Greening expanded the number of selective schools, she risked squandering the "talents and potential" of children, condemning them to a sense of self "undermined by failure and exclusion".

Bousted did, however, praise Greening for being "far more competent, far less ideological" than one of her predecessors, Michael Gove. That's faint praise and a rare thing from Bousted, who once engaged in a stand-up row with Gove.

FRIDAY, APRIL 14

A decampment from Liverpool to Cardiff and the NUT's pre-conference press briefing in which general secretary



Kevin Courtney

Kevin Courtney and the union's senior solicitor, Clive Romain, updated journalists on the union's legal bid against multi-academy trusts running "grammar streams" in their schools.

The NUT has written to several trusts asking for information about admissions arrangements that allow pupils to enter a class, separate from other children, and be given access to different, harder, subjects.

The union is aiming to "pick a test case" and find grounds for legal action against the streaming.

Courtney said that unless the government passed new laws on new grammars "there shouldn't be ways of sneaking around it, and that's what we think the schools are doing."

On the first day of its conference, NUT delegates heard a pledge from the shadow chancellor John McDonnell to "restore the role of the local education authority" and "fully fund" schools.

Note the phrase "local education authority" and not "local authority" – a distinction that has been in place since 2004. A slip of the tongue or a genuine wish to go back to pre-academy forms of school oversight?

McDonnell's only extra detail was that Labour's proposed "national education service" would mean schools were "democratically planned and provided for".

He was unclear on whether Labour would therefore return all schools to local authority oversight – including academies – or simply restore some education powers previously held by councils, such as the ability to run new schools.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15

Day two and research on the plight of young teachers. An NUT survey of 3,000 teachers aged 35 and under found that poor management and unreasonable demands from school leaders had prompted about half to consider

ENCE WORLD



Image: Kois Miah



MONDAY, APRIL 17

Another day, another delay to the vote on a boycott. The debate ran out of time again. [See reasons above.]

However, the NUT did back a ballot of members for a national campaign of strike action over teacher pay if talks with the government failed "to make progress".

The union wants an end to public sector pay limits and the restoration of all real-terms pay losses suffered by teachers since 2010, and will ballot its members for industrial action if no progress is made in talks over those proposals.

(Will they allow a confidence interval on that progress of as low as -0.25, as is done for schools? Verdict is out...)

The union will also campaign in favour of strike action and will seek the involvement of other teaching unions. However, any new ballot over action will be subject to the newer tougher rules for organisations that represent public sector workers. Ballots must have a turnout of 50 per cent and a vote in favour from at least 40 per cent of eligible members.

Asbestos was also on the agenda after a survey revealed that nearly half of school staff don't know whether it is in their workplace – despite the substance being present in 86 per cent of schools.

It follows a *Schools Week* investigation that showed there have been more than 90 incidents of exposure in schools over the past three years.

TUESDAY, APRIL 18

A vote on the motion calling for a ballot for a boycott of primary tests next summer was held – and lost – AFTER ALL THAT!

Kevin Courtney's address had to have a hasty rewrite after Theresa May's call for an early general election came about 20 seconds before he was due to go on stage.

Courtney used his speech to demand the government publish its response to the national funding formula consultation before June 8, and accused the government of breaking its 2015 manifesto commitment to "protect the money following your child into school".

And that was it for another conference season. Week in Westminster is now in bed with a bottle of Lucozade and some Alka-Seltzer. Oh wait? What's that you say about a general election? OK, OK, we're getting up again...



Image: Sarah Turton

Mary Bousted

leaving the profession.

Other reasons included volume of work (84.7 per cent) and constant change following government initiatives (65.5 per cent).

Just over 45 per cent of respondents raised mental health concerns.

[It is worth noting, however, that surveys almost always say about half of people are expecting to leave their job at any one time – and turnover rates have remained much lower and largely flat for the past 15 years, so this one may need a heavy pinch of salt.]

School funding cuts were also on the agenda, with the union voting to take steps towards regional strikes in the summer term, based

on a pre-existing ballot of its members.

This would use a ballot last year over strike action. The validity of that vote runs out on August 31, ahead of the NUT's merger with the ATL. But the NUT says the ballot can still act as a legal basis for strike action this summer, so wants to get a wriggle-on.

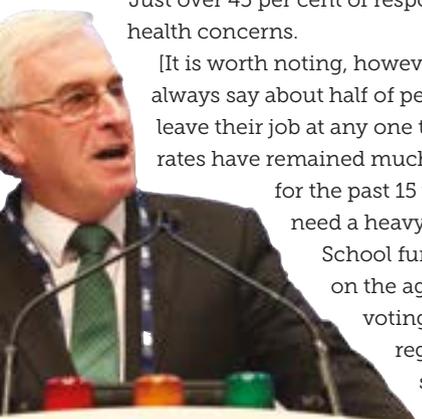
The union will now identify the regions where strike action "could be called".

SUNDAY, APRIL 16

After a lot of fuff, the union had to postpone voting on an official boycott of primary tests next summer because the session ran out of time.

Teachers warned that the current primary assessment system was "killing our children", and said schools were "faking it to make it" with the assessments they handed in.

[The fact so many people felt it necessary to repeat this point, many times, is partly why the session ran out of time. The irony.]



John McDonnell

Image: Kois Miah

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



Eddie the Eagle jumps into snowsport campaign **FEATURED**

Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards has helped to launch a national campaign that will encourage schoolchildren to try snowsports.

To launch the National Schools Snowsport Week campaign, the former Olympian and his fellow ambassadors, Olympic snowboarder Aimee Fuller, and former Olympic skier and TV presenter Graham Bell, took to London's Hemel Hempstead ski slope with pupils from Yewtree primary school in Hertfordshire.

Speaking to *Schools Week*, Edwards said he started skiing on a school ski trip "and it led to the Olympic Games. I've always wanted to encourage as many people – young and old – to have a go at skiing, so this campaign was the perfect vehicle to do that."

During the campaign, which runs until Sunday, April 30, 25 dry slopes across the country will give pupils the chance to try out a variety of sports without cost being a limiting factor.

Pupils can try skiing, snowboarding, rollerskiing, lugging – even sno-tubing – during a series of taster sessions. Some will be free, others up to £1 per pupil.

About 2,000 children are set to be involved.

Edwards – whose real name is Michael – gained fame the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics. Sharing his tips for pupils to overcome their fears, he said: "You're going to fall over, but relax and you'll be



Eddie the Eagle with Yewtree Primary School pupils
Inset: Eddie, centre, with fellow ambassadors Aimee Fuller, far left, and Graham Bell, far right



fine. Sometimes the fear of falling over is worse than the fall itself, and once it has happened, you realise it's not that bad and it'll give you confidence to go that little bit faster.

"You're not quite as frightened when you're little. When you get to 9, 10 and 11, then you realise what fear is."

If your schools wants to get involved, go to the National Schools Snowsport Week website. To find your nearest participating ski slope, visit: <http://www.nssw.co.uk/find-my-nearest>



The finalists on the podium at the Silverstone racing track

BRIGHT SPARKS CROWNED UK CHAMPIONS

A team of four from the WMG Academy for Young Engineers in Coventry will test their skills on a world stage after they were crowned the UK champions of the F1 in Schools challenge.

The global challenge pits young engineers against each other to make their own miniature Formula One cars that are then tested on a track.

The winning team – Eddie Hodiern, 17, Elias Khimasia, 15, Callum Kennedy, 16, and Abi Hirons, 16 – will now head to the world finals in Malaysia.

As UK winners they received a piece of Denford technology worth £10,000 for their school and tickets to the Grand Prix, including a tour of the Formula One paddock.

The team was also awarded two £5,000 annual grants for a mechanical engineering course at UCL Engineering. The students will decide who will take up the bursaries.

Eddie, the team manager, said: "It feels great to have won. We have a mix of experience, with me having been to the nationals three times, but never making it to the world finals.

"Persistence, giving up our social time and total dedication to the competition has really paid off."

New media school gets a royal launch



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry get a lesson in radio

A trio of royals were on hand to open a new state school in west London that prepares students for a career in the media.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, with Prince Harry, last week visited The Global Academy in Hayes, founded and operated by the media and entertainment group Global.

In a special assembly Prince William unveiled an original microphone used by King George VI to announce the outbreak of the Second World War.

During their visit the trio was given a tour of classrooms to see pupils learning about the science of sound and undertaking an audio project that included listening to



The microphone used by King George VI

EMI's vinyl recordings of early Royal Family speeches.

The new school offers academic and vocational training for students aged 14 to 19 who are looking to pursue careers in broadcasting and digital media. It hopes to reach its full capacity of 800 students by 2020.



Presenter Jeff Reines with Gary Owens, winner of the lifetime achievement award

Joanna Harvey, outstanding headteacher of the year

Ceremony celebrates Cornish teachers

Top teachers were recognised at the annual Cornwall Teacher Awards last week.

Hosted at Truro Cathedral, the event recognised educators across 13 categories, with accolades such as the lifetime achievement award, outstanding school, outstanding headteacher and governor of the year.

The lifetime achievement award went to Gary Owens, principal of Acorn Academy in Penzance, for the "positive impact" he has made in the schools he has worked in.

Mr Owens has 40 years' experience working in challenging schools, and supporting numerous vulnerable pupils.

The judges said every school "needs a

teacher like this".

Joanna Harvey of St Dennis Academy won the outstanding head award for her "resilience and fundamental commitment to raising standards, building a team and ensuring there is fun and excitement in learning for all pupils".

Now in its second year, there were nearly 300 nominations for the awards, with 37 teachers, governors and support workers making it to the shortlist.

Keynote speaker at the event was Shane Mann, managing director of LSECT and publisher of *FE Week* and *Schools Week*. Speaking at the awards, he praised the work of educators in the area, saying "Cornish teachers turn around children's lives."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

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

Patrick Brazier has been appointed chief executive of the Education Development Trust, formerly the CfBT Education Trust.

He joined the organisation in 2013 as an international director, following a 20-year career at the British Council where he was regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, developing educational and cultural programmes in response to the Arab Spring.

Commenting on his new appointment, he said: "Having worked for the trust for the past four years, I know what a great mix of people and opportunities we have to transform the lives of even more children and young people around the world and grow our business in the UK and internationally."

Philip Graf, the chairman of the trust's board of trustees, said: "Patrick brings his rich international experience and detailed knowledge of Education Development Trust's work to this role, which will allow him to build on the legacy left by Steve Munby who retires this year."

Jo Philpott is the new headteacher of City of Norwich (CNS) school, a member of the Ormiston Academies Trust since 2014.



Patrick Brazier

She is currently head of school and will take over from Jim Nixon in September when he steps down after 40 years in education.

She said: "I feel deeply privileged to have the honour of being the new headteacher at CNS and I'm looking forward to working closely with staff, students, parents and the whole school community."

Paul Fisher, the school's chair of governors, added: "We are delighted that Jo



Jo Philpott

Philpott will be the new headteacher. The final panel was unanimous that she was the right appointment."

The City of Norwich has about 1,500 pupils in its school and sixth-form centre.

Martin Knowles has been appointed principal of Essa Academy in Bolton.



Martin Knowles

the school until summer next year to ensure continuity.

Speaking of his plans in the new role, Knowles said: "I am passionate about improving life chances. I really believe in a focus on not just excellent exam results but, more importantly, in inspiring children to become good, well-rounded people."

He is currently head of the Oldham Academy North, which went from an Ofsted rating of requires improvement to good in just two years. Knowles was later praised by the former chief inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, in his annual report last year.

Essa's current interim principal, Patrick Ottley-O'Connor, will continue working at

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David Weston, CEO of Teacher Development Trust, speaking in the Chapel at Festival of Education 2016.

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

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

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:
EASY

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

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

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