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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2017 | **EDITION** 116

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## DFE'S 'VAGUE' PLAN TO FIND £1.3 BILLION

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government still hasn't found all the savings it needs to give schools the additional £1.3 billion funding it has promised over the next two years, the Department for Education's top civil servant has admitted.

Jonathan Slater, the DfE's permanent secretary, told MPs that he has yet to identify £800 million of savings from his department's resource budget and central school improvement funds, almost three months after they were announced.

Addressing the public accounts committee on Thursday, Slater accepted the department's

plan was "vague", but said work was underway to find savings, including efforts to merge different funding pots available for school improvement.

Justine Greening announced in July that schools would get an extra £416 million in 2018-19 and £884 million in 2019-20. The department will use £420 million from its capital budget and £280 million in savings from the free schools programme, but it also needs to find savings from its resource budget, totalling £250 million in 2018-19 and £350 million in 2019-20.

It will also "repurpose" £200 million of funding from central school improvement funds, it said.

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NEWS: WCAT

The eight sponsors to take over WCAT...

**ALIX ROBERTSON**  
@ALIXROBERTSON4 **Exclusive**

Eight academy chains will take over the 21 schools currently owned by Wakefield City Academies Trust which will then close entirely, the government announced this week.

At the start of September, WCAT announced it was voluntarily folding and had asked the Department for Education to find new sponsors for its 21 schools.

In response, education secretary Justine Greening said "swift action" would be taken to find groups willing to take over.

However, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal the trust had already been planning to give up some of its schools nine months before the announcement – under pressure from then regional schools commissioner,



Jenny Bexon-Smith (pictured).

A report written by WCAT's interim chief executive Mike Ramsay for a board meeting in December 2016 states that "The RSC's [sic] remain of the opinion improvements are too late... It is clear that they will rebroker some schools.

A report written for a second board meeting in January 2017 includes a diagram showing plans for the staggered rebrokering of 10 academies across the trust.

It states that it is "crucial" that "WCAT take ownership to deliver the RSCs preferred



option before this is leaked".

However, it wasn't until September 8 this year that WCAT released a statement saying it had asked the DfE to "place [all] our academies with new sponsors" after a full evaluation of the organisation found it did not have "the capacity to facilitate the rapid improvement our academies need and our students deserve".

*Schools Week* approached WCAT but the trust declined to comment.

The eight "preferred sponsors" named on Tuesday as the chains most likely to take over the 21 schools are: Outwood Grange Academies Trust, which will take eight schools, Delta Academies Trust with four, Tauheedul Education Trust with three,

and Astrea Academy Trust, Which will accept two.

Inspiring Futures, Aston Community Education Trust, Brigantia Learning Trust Sheffield and Exceed Learning Partnership will each take one of the schools.

However the DfE said it wants to hear the views of "interested parties" on the choices before confirming final decisions.

Four schools handed to Delta Academies Trust would make for a remarkable turnaround.

In late 2015, Delta, formerly known as SPTA, was stripped of three of its schools in Nottingham. At the time, officials also expressed concerns about three of its schools in Doncaster.

Rebranded as Delta last year following the appointment of a new chief executive and new directors, the group have worked closely with Outwood Grange Academies Trust to improve capacity.

All four of the schools they are expected to takeover are based in Doncaster.

...and the secret transfer plans

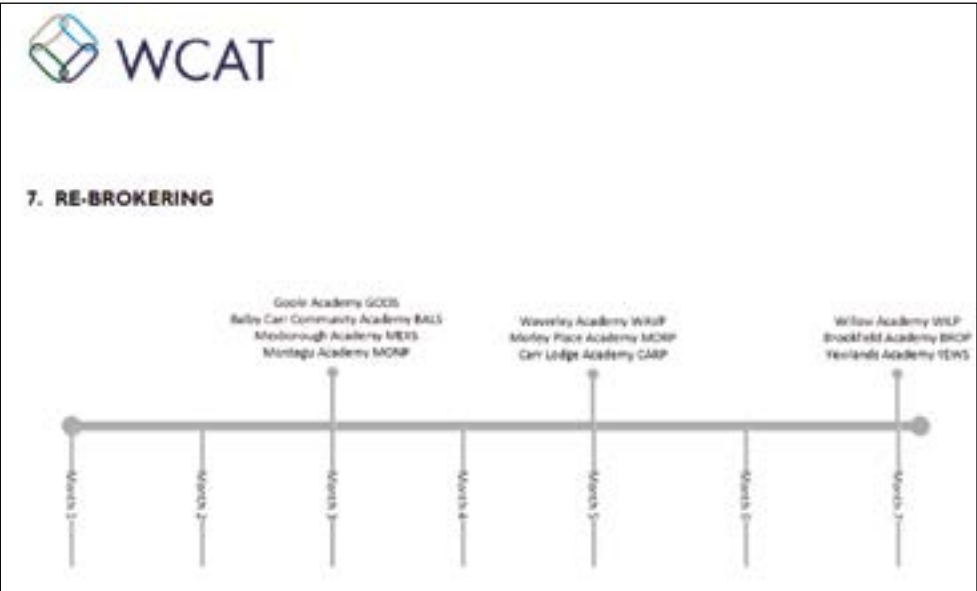
The January 2017 report includes a diagram showing the 10 academies the trust expected to pass on to other sponsors.

The list includes Goole Academy in Hull and Montagu Academy in Mexborough, South Yorkshire.

"It is our understanding that the financial position of each academy transfers to the new sponsor whether this is a surplus or deficit position," the report said.

"Due to a number of academies having year on year deficit position this should provide more financial stability moving forward for WCAT. The executive are working on modelling, redundancy evaluation and professional fees, impact and staff retention."

By March 8, however, the situation had escalated. Ramsay wrote in another board meeting report that "the trust should rebrand", that he would not be applying for "the substantive CEO post", and that "if the RSCs had the evidence to support a breakup



this is the route they would focus on".

He also quoted "the RSCs" as saying that "even the best trusts in the country would find it hard to improve all [WCAT's]

academies".

It is not known when the decision was made to change from having 10 academies rebrokered to all academies.

£5M NORTHERN HUB FUNDING

Questions remain over the funding that WCAT received as one of the flagship "northern powerhouse" groups given £530,000 by the DfE a year earlier in December 2015.

The grants were awarded to "drive up standards" in the north and were only handed to "top-performing" trusts.

In March 2017 *Schools Week* reported the trust had opened three schools, but walked away from two others. At the time, the trust said the money would be used to drive "sustainable improvement".

Justine Greening sidestepped questions in Parliament on the handling of the northern hub funding during education questions last month, and instead praised the government's "swift action" to complete the rebrokering.

However, the documents suggest the process has been in planning for longer than previously known.

HOW DO WE SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE PURDAH?

The unexpected general election earlier this year caused problems for the attempted restructure at Wakefield City Academy Trust before its collapse in September, according to a report by the trust's interim chief executive in June.

Chris Pickering, previously CEO at Diverse Academies Trust in the east Midlands, took the lead at WCAT in May with a brief to "review, realign and rebuild" the trust, in the hope of creating "sustained academy improvement".

But in a confidential report on the operation and viability of WCAT, seen by



*Schools Week*, Pickering wrote that the realignment process was put on hold "due to the lead up to the general election".

He said that while the delay had not "prevented the reviews taking place nor accurate conclusions being drawn", it

had produced "a significant period of uncertainty on behalf of employees both corporate and academy based".

It raises problems highlighted before by *Schools Week*, that pre-election purdah periods, which limit civil service activity, are disruptive to academies.

Regional schools commissioners, who oversee academies – including transfers – are employed as civil servants, and are therefore hamstrung during purdah.

Free schools, requiring sign-off for their buildings and land, were also told they would have to wait in the run up to the

general election.

Pickering wrote in the report that he was battling rife speculation regarding the future of WCAT and whether its school numbers would be slimmed.

"I have obviously been unable to confirm either way. This has made one-to-one meetings more challenging," he said.

The report's overall analysis of WCAT's problems was damning, including conclusions such as "leadership and management of the organisation is inadequate" and "the trust is financially insecure".



REVIEW INTO TEACHERS  
WORKING LATER DELAYED

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@PIPPA\_AK

A second report into the implications of teachers retiring later is expected to find that older teachers are capable of continuing work, but may need extra support.

The ‘Teachers working later’ review was set up in October 2014 to ensure pension age-changes do not have a detrimental effect on the teaching workforce. However, it has been beset by delays.

An interim report originally scheduled for February 2016 was not released until March this year, after it waited almost a year for ministerial sign off.

It is unlikely that the final report – originally expected last autumn – will be revealed until the start of 2018 at the very earliest.

Members of the steering group confirmed to *Schools Week* that a meeting to consider a draft final report is due to take place at the end of November, but that a release is unlikely this year.

“The publication date is not in our hands,” said one.

Another member of the group, who did not want to be identified, said: “We’re hoping to get the report out as soon as possible but it depends on the DfE.

“The things that have come out of the work are generally positive for teachers in the sector. There’s nothing to suggest that teachers approaching 70 will be impaired in any way or struggle more than other teachers in any way.

“We want to make sure teachers are fully supported, however old they are and however long they want to stay in their career.

“We don’t think that people in their 60s can’t do the job, but we recognise there could be additional flexibilities to make sure teachers are supported as fully as possible. When people say ‘flexibility’, you tend to think of part time working, but we want to look at things around job sharing or part time classes or extra support as well. But we realise other pressures on the sector might make this difficult.”

It was the second of 14 expert groups sent up by the coalition government in the run-up to the 2015 general election.

It is the only expert group yet to report its findings. Last month the Rochford Review on assessment of pupils with special educational needs was finally published.

Members to the working long review group are hopeful their recommendations will be implemented by the government and other stakeholders.

The Department for Education was approached for comment.

MATs could fall foul of competition laws

ALIX ROBERTSON  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Multi-academy trusts risk being investigated by the Competition and Markets Authority if they come to dominate their local areas, *Schools Week* understands.

As academy trusts continue to expand, with some focusing on specific areas, parents’ choice may end up limited to a set of schools run by the same organisation.

*Schools Week* understands that the CMA can intervene if a trust’s prevalence in an area leads to complaints, and if the problems reported match its criteria for anti-competitive conduct – for example if local competition is poor.

So far, however, the CMA website shows no investigations into schools.

Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the situation was “concerning”.

“When schools run by the same trust then adopt the same curriculum model, the same teaching and learning approach, the same behavioural management policy – some of which are contested both in the public sphere and also by parents – if you’re not in tune with that then actually you have very little choice, if any,” she said.

It is increasingly common for academy trusts to run a number of schools in the same area, as part of a wider strategy to protect schools from the impact of isolation.

For example, Wakefield City Academy Trust gave up all of its 21 schools in September and eight of these, all based in

Wakefield, are expected to go to Outwood Grange Academy Trust, which already runs 22 schools in the north of England.

Oasis Community Learning has five primary academies and three secondary academies in Bristol, and earlier this year won a bid to open two new secondary schools in the area.

John Murphy, its chief executive, told *Schools Week* that his trust’s academies “intentionally work closely together”.

“Our staff share resources, best practice, and expertise, while we also receive training together and offer career development pathways,” he said.

He added that “local and regional clustering” means the trust’s pupils “benefit from improved teaching and learning”.

While there are benefits to schools being able to collaborate closely, parental opposition to academy chain expansion has been widespread.

In May the BBC reported that councillors on the Isle of Wight had agreed on plans to oust England’s largest academy chain, Academies Enterprise Trust, from the island all together, after complaints from parents and children about the trust’s intentions to merge two schools.

The problem of trust dominance goes back several years. In December 2011, a parent from Bromley wrote to the Local Schools Network, saying: “Parents in Penge, south London, who want to send their child to their local school are being effectively denied any meaningful preference since the Harris Federation now runs the four main



secondary schools that serve the area.”

The Harris Federation now runs 44 schools in and around London, and insists its schools are “a federation, not a chain”.

“Each academy is run and led by its head in a unique way,” a spokesperson said.

“Twenty-seven of our academies were failing or in great difficulty before joining the federation and now most are ‘outstanding’. It is hard to see how that is a worse choice.”

Examples of anticompetitive activity include businesses agreeing not to compete with each other, abusing their “dominant position”, or having long-term exclusive contracts with customers.

James Goffin, a spokesperson for the Inspiration Trust, which runs 14 schools around Norfolk, said that in rural areas, the academy trust in charge was not the main concern for parents.

“Focusing on which trust is running a school is a bit of a red herring in many rural areas, where population, geography, and transport are the really important factors governing parental choice,” he said.

“It also assumes that all schools in a trust have to be carbon copies of each other, which certainly isn’t the case at the Inspiration Trust.”

Confusion reigns over double-science pass thresholds

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Science teachers need clarification on what counts as a “strong” and a “standard” pass in the combined science GCSE because they cannot predict outcomes, policy experts have claimed.

Pupils taking the double-award combined science GCSE will get two numbered grades, such as a 5-4, rather than just one, when they sit their papers in 2018.

This is to reflect the fact the combined science should count as two subjects rather than three.

Individual numbers will not relate to any particular paper, but the system is meant to “more accurately” differentiate marks across a 17-point grading system, rather than just nine, according to Ofqual.

But while the broader range of marks is fairer in terms of differentiating between pupils’ progress, according to the ASCL’s David Blow, schools and unions are unclear about what counts as a strong or standard pass – that is, whether a strong pass is represented by a 5-4 or a 5-5, and a standard pass by a 5-4 or a 4-4.

Richard Needham, chair of trustees at the Association for Science Education, said the lack of clarity was causing teachers “a lot of anxiety” because many senior leaders were still insisting they predict the grades of pupils.



“Why don’t we have a 4 or a 5, and then we know where we are?” he asked, pointing out that schools should try to put the issue of where the exact boundary might fall “into perspective” and concentrate on teaching to the best of their ability instead.

Anne Heavey, a policy advisor at the National Education Union, guessed the strong pass would be a 5-5, but said that school leaders needed “absolutely clarity” on the matter.

“Science leaders and heads should probably work towards the assumption that a strong pass is two 5s,” she said. “But at the moment teachers are flying blind.”

Science teachers on Twitter have also expressed worry EBacc pass rates could be affected, placing heads of department under yet more pressure, if pupils who would have been within the 5 boundary in other subjects do not count as having a strong pass in combined science.

Under the current system, a pupil who moves into the 5 boundary by a few marks will get a 5-4. Those who are in the upper half of the 5 boundary get a 5-5, *Schools*

*Week* understands.

If a 5-5 is what counts as a strong pass, pupils just within the boundary of a 5 won’t count as having one. However, Blow, a headteacher, pointed out that the EBacc will move to an average point score in 2018, which is when the new combined science exam will be sat by pupils.

As such, the strong/standard pass boundary will not matter in terms of EBacc measures, he said.

The system also allows for a more accurate Progress 8 measurement, he said, “because it differentiates between pupils to a greater degree”.

When *Schools Week* approached Ofqual, a spokesperson directed us to a document on changes to GCSE science, in which the regulator said it “understands the concerns about the possible complexity of a 17-point grading scale”.

However “it is important that the grades for combined science reflect the fact that it is a double-award GCSE”, it added.

To award two numbers that are the same – such as 3-3, then 4-4, 5-5 and so on – would mean pupils “gain or lose two whole grades at each grade boundary”.

“We think a system that changes only one grade at each grade boundary is fairer,” it concluded.

*Schools Week* has approached the Department for Education to confirm which numbers count as which.

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## NEWS: Apprenticeships

# Teacher apprenticeships are go

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

Exclusive

The government has officially rubber-stamped proposals for a new apprenticeship for teachers, *Schools Week* can reveal.

The Institute for Apprenticeships this week confirmed the “standard” for teacher apprenticeships – which sets out the content of the course – has been approved.

It means that the new apprenticeship, developed by a group of schools and pioneered by teacher training tsar Sir Andrew Carter, is now only awaiting its “funding band allocation” before it can be delivered. The first set of apprentice teachers will start next September.

The new route into teaching is an apprenticeship at level six, that is undergraduate level, but it will only be open to existing graduates.

According to Carter, the apprenticeship will last for four school terms, starting in September each year. Trainees will achieve qualified teacher status during the third term, and will complete their end-point assessment for the apprenticeship in the first term of their NQT year.

The assessment process for QTS will be the same as it is on other routes like School Direct, and continuing into the NQT year will depend on achieving it.

Trainees will then be assessed during

their first term of full-time work. This could involve an interview or lesson observation.

In order to get onto the apprenticeship, trainees will already need a degree, and will still have to pass the QTS skills test before they start, as they currently do on other routes.

It is the first teacher apprenticeship to be approved by the government, and follows the introduction of the apprenticeship levy. Under the levy, schools with a payroll of over £3 million have to pay into the levy pot, and can then use funds from it to train their staff.

Further details will not be announced until the funding band – the maximum amount schools will have to pay for the training – is confirmed.

Carter has hailed the standard’s approval as “a step-change in teacher education”.

“We now recognise that schools sit at the heart of teacher training,” he told *Schools Week*. “No doubt it will be adapted into all sorts of different routes, especially as we move into the possibility of enhanced QTS. If every school trained someone, we would have more than half of the new teachers we need. If every school trained two people we would have a surplus of teachers.

“People say there are a lot of routes, and it’s challenging. I don’t share that view. I think there are lots of routes so lots of different people can become teachers. It is

very exciting.”

Carter’s excitement, however, is not shared by the National Education Union. The 450,000-member teaching union is concerned about the impact the scheme will have on workload, pay and conditions, and is due to meet the DfE about the proposal shortly.

Kevin Courtney, the NEU’s joint general secretary, said the scheme “may be the straw that breaks the back” of an “already overburdened, off-putting and complex initial teacher training system”.

“This is being driven by schools’ need to recoup the imposed apprenticeship levy funding rather than any evidence that this route would provide sufficient numbers of high-quality teachers that the system

needs, a potentially expensive experiment for our schools, teachers and their pupils.

“We will be speaking to the department on both the structure and the implementation of this proposal as well as looking closely at how teachers will be financially rewarded and the impact on workload.”



Sir Andrew Carter

“The teacher apprenticeship has been approved but is awaiting final funding band allocation from DfE before it can be delivered,” said a spokesperson for the Institute for Apprenticeships.

“We anticipate delivery of the training from September 2018.”

## TEACHING APPRENTICES COULD BECOME NICE LITTLE EARNERS

The new teacher apprentice standard means some schools and academy trusts will effectively be allowed to pay themselves to train their own teachers – and may even make money in the process – under current rules.

Usually when recruiting apprentices, employers have to choose a provider to run their off-the-job training. They can pay another organisation to do it, or they can carry out the training themselves, providing they are approved by the government to do so.

Organisations approved to deliver apprenticeship training are listed on the government’s register of apprenticeship training providers. Several schools and trusts have already made the list, and more are expected to sign up in the future in a bid to use their levy funding.

Under the levy funding system, a school approved to run its own training will effectively be repaid some of the money it pays in each year.

And depending on how many apprentices they train, some schools could even get back more money than they put in, as providers are allowed to charge more than the cost of delivery.

However, schools set up as training

providers will not have a say in how their apprentices are assessed. End-point assessment is independent and has to be delivered in such a way that neither trainer nor employer can make any decision about the trainee’s competence.

Kevin Courtney, from the National Education Union, has warned that there are still “niggling questions” about who will assess and award the qualifications.

The new standard also paves the way for new degree apprenticeships in teaching to launch next September.

Sheffield Hallam University, Leeds Trinity University and the University of Hertfordshire have been granted government funding to deliver the courses, which offer trainees the chance to gain an academic qualification as well as QTS.

Now that the standard has been approved, all three universities say they will aim to launch their courses in 2018.

They will initially only offer degree apprenticeships at level six, equivalent to a bachelor’s degree, but Hertfordshire was at one point asked to develop a level seven qualification, which is equivalent to a master’s.

## ‘EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE’ WILL BE ONE OF THE FIRST T-LEVELS

Education and childcare will be one of the first of the new post-16 routes into technical education, the Department for Education revealed on Wednesday.

The T-level qualifications are being developed by industry professionals and will be offered as two-year college courses or as apprenticeships from 2020.

Three of the routes will begin in 2020 – education and childcare, digital industries, and construction – with a further 12 on offer by 2022.

Each of the qualifications includes a minimum of nine weeks spent on a practical placement so that students can apply their learning in a workplace environment.

The education and childcare pathway to roles such as nursery assistant, early-years officer, teaching assistant and youth worker.

Justine Greening said the launch was part of “transforming technical education in this country”, to help provide young people with “the world-class skills and knowledge that employers need”.

“As part of making sure that the

technical education ladder reaches every bit as high as the academic one, I want to see T-levels that are as rigorous and respected as A-Levels,” she said.

The government first announced T-levels in 2016, pledging £500 million every year for young people to study a technical qualification at level three, which is equivalent to A-levels.

The decision to introduce T-levels came after an independent panel on technical education, chaired by Lord Sainsbury, found in 2016 that the existing system of work-based training was too complicated and included too many qualifications.

However, the new T-levels will not replace general vocational qualifications, such as BTECs, and will instead be offered alongside them.

Responding to the launch, Lord Sainsbury said: “I am delighted the government is pressing ahead with these essential reforms to technical education.”

An action plan explaining how T-levels will be developed and delivered is available on the .gov.uk website.

# THE FUTURE OF TEACHER TRAINING

The advent of teacher apprenticeships is expected to open new routes into the teaching profession, both for existing graduates and non-graduates. Here, we look at the different routes available, and the differences between them...

## GRADUATE

### LEVEL SIX APPRENTICESHIP (FOUR TERMS)



- Paid
- Four work days + one off-site
- QTS
- No PGCE

### SCHOOL DIRECT (ONE YEAR)



- Sometimes paid
- No standard timetable
- QTS
- Possibility of a PGCE

### SCITT (ONE YEAR)



- Sometimes paid
- No standard timetable
- QTS
- Possibility of a PGCE

### TEACH FIRST (TWO YEARS)



- Paid
- Five work days
- QTS
- PGDE

### TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY “PGCE” (ONE YEAR)



- Not paid
- Placements
- QTS
- PGCE/PGDE

### NOW TEACH (TWO YEARS)



- Paid
- Four work days
- QTS
- PGCE

## NON-GRADUATE

### DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP (PROBABLY MINIMUM FOUR YEARS)



- Paid
  - Four work days + one off-site
  - QTS
  - Degree
- STILL IN DEVELOPMENT**

### BACHELORS OF EDUCATION (THREE YEARS)



- Not paid
- Placements
- QTS
- Degree

## THE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

### WILL IT AFFECT TEACHERS’ PAY AND CONDITIONS?

Unions and others are concerned about pay. Apprentices in their first year can be paid less than other employees because their minimum wage is just £3.50.

There are also questions about whether apprentice teachers will have the same rights as their counterparts, and whether they will be guaranteed a job at the end of their course (most apprentices are not).

### WHAT’S HAPPENING WITH THE LEVEL SEVEN APPRENTICESHIP?

Some providers have mooted the idea of a teaching apprenticeship at level seven, equivalent to a master’s degree. However, until a standard for such a course is approved by the government, those providers will have to stick to level six.

The government says it is not aware of any other teacher apprenticeship standards in development, so it may be some time before we see apprenticeships for “master teachers” come to fruition.

There are other questions about this route. Will it lead on directly from a level six, enabling schools to pay certain apprentices the £3.50 minimum for longer? Will it grant some kind of “enhanced QTS”?

It is thought these details won’t be confirmed until the government’s reforms to QTS are announced.



**\*Nerd box:** Other routes do exist but these were the most useful comparisons.



# Spielman: Schools teach too much to league tables

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The curriculum at both primary and secondary schools is narrowing in a manner that Ofsted has warned risks damaging pupils' futures.

Primary schools are placing "too great a focus" on preparing for SATs, an investigation published Wednesday found.

The watchdog also criticised the way some secondary schools are shortening key stage 3 to focus on GCSEs, meaning some pupils do not get to study history, geography or a language after the age of 13.

Ofsted first announced it would review the school curriculum back in March in response to allegations that schools were "gaming" the subjects they offered in order to improve league table results.

Extensive investigations by *Schools Week* had revealed some school leaders were being urged to enter vulnerable pupils into a qualification that could be "taught in three days", but which was worth the equivalent of a GCSE.

Preliminary findings reveal a "lack of shared understanding" among schools of what the curriculum requires, and a "lack of clarity" around the language used to describe it.

Chief inspector Amanda Spielman (pictured) said it was "unlikely" that any school had prioritised testing over



the curriculum as a "deliberate choice". However, for some schools, testing has come "inadvertently to mean the curriculum in its entirety".

This seems to have deterred lower-attaining pupils from taking EBacc subjects at secondary school, while at primary level, teachers have tended to focus on English and maths to the detriment of other subjects.

The review has also identified problems with finding staff able to help schools develop the curriculum, as this aspect of teacher training fell away after the introduction of the national curriculum.

"Primary school leaders reported that recruiting staff who could design a curriculum was becoming increasingly difficult," Spielman warned. "Some

headteachers thought that too much of what trainee teachers currently learn is focused on teaching to the English and mathematics tests."

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was "hardly surprising" that schools focus intensely on KS2 tests and GCSEs, "as that's how their performance is measured".

"If Ofsted wants them to focus less on these assessments, we would suggest it lobbies the government for a change to the accountability system rather than criticising schools," he said.

The first phase of Ofsted's review included research visits to 40 schools, a review of inspection reports and five regional focus groups with heads. Parent questionnaires and school websites were also considered.

In March, Spielman said that conflicts had emerged between heads' desire to give pupils the right education, and to improve their league table position.

"We know that there are some schools that are narrowing the curriculum, using qualifications inappropriately, and moving out pupils who would drag down results," she said. "That is nothing short of a scandal."

However, headteacher Liam Collins wrote in *Schools Week* in August that school leaders are struggling to meet the conflicting demands of test scores and a broad curriculum.

"Should a school aim for great outcomes on the Ebacc by focusing on a narrow curriculum that is suited to the intake, and risk a poor Ofsted report?" he asked. "Or opt for a wider curriculum and poorer outcomes, and face the RSC breathing down its neck instead?"

Spielman insisted the review had revealed "the depth of the challenge" on the curriculum and that school leaders need to recognise "how easy it is to focus on the performance of the school and lose sight of the pupil".

She did, however, acknowledge that Ofsted inspections "may well have helped to tip this balance in the past".

"Ofsted has a role in judging how well schools reflect the government's intentions and don't distort the aims that have been set," she said.

## OMBUDSMAN CLAMPS DOWN ON FOSTER TRANSPORT CHARGES

Foster families around the country are being forced to pay for what should be free school transport – but councils will now be warned against the practice.

The local government and social care ombudsman (LGO) recently discovered Warwickshire County Council had told foster carers to pay for transport out of their fostering allowance when children attended schools beyond the statutory walking distance, even though they should have been entitled to free travel.

LGO Michael King said he knows of "a number" of other councils charging the same and will be urging them to review the policy.

Children whose foster families had to pay were being treated differently to children living with their birth families and getting free transport. He said carers should not be "penalised" for trying to maintain stability by keeping children in the schools they are used to.

"I would now urge others to check their policies as a matter of urgency to ensure they are treating fosters carers, and the children they look after, fairly when it comes to school transport," he added.

A spokesman for Warwickshire Council said it was "never our intention to put any foster children at a disadvantage".

He said the council accepts the LGO's findings and is now reimbursing carers and "taking appropriate steps to review its policy".

## DfE still doesn't know where to find £1.3bn schools funding

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

CONTINUED  
FROM FRONT

This morning, Slater was grilled by Liberal Democrat education spokesperson Layla Moran, who called the proposal "really vague stuff".

He said she was "absolutely right" in the way she described the proposals, but claimed the DfE was "cracking on".

"That is a plan that we are constructing at the moment," he said. "When a government announces it is going to spend £1.3 billion, some of it you can find straight away, some of it you have to look further for."

The education secretary had tasked officials with looking at "all of the separate pots of funding" that schools can bid to for support with improvement, Slater said.

"The challenge that we've been set, which I think is absolutely deliverable, and frankly I think will be appreciated by schools on the receiving end, is rather than being a whole series of pots and funding regimes, each with their own bidding processes, can we simplify that region by region, and in doing so, take out a saving?" he said.

Slater appeared in front of the committee alongside Peter Lauener, the outgoing boss of the Education and Skills Funding Agency, to answer questions about the DfE's accounts for 2016-17.

They were grilled on academy spending, and in particular, payments made to private companies with links to schools and their leaders, known as "related-party



transactions".

When asked about one instance in which around £400,000 was written off after a free school paid it to a company that subsequently closed down, Lauener admitted his organisation could not prevent all such incidents.

"No system can prevent all abuse," he said. "But in perspective, it's a very small proportion of the total."

According to Lauener, cash losses by individual schools totalled around £1.1 million in 2016-17.

Questions also focused on whether the government was able to effectively monitor

the spending decisions of individual schools.

Slater said it was "not efficient" for schools to simply cut subjects like geography, as was suggested in one example by MPs. But he denied the government was meddling in how heads run schools.

"We obviously don't want to manage the schools from Whitehall, or even from the regional offices," he said. "We would want them to offer a rich curriculum, but equally, we would need to have an intelligent conversation with the headteacher about what was the right thing to do in the circumstances."



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NEWS

(SOCIAL) OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS: GRE

JUDE BURKE & FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Investigates

Independent partnership boards have been set up to boost children’s attainment in six of the government’s “opportunity areas”, and each has an action plan to help improve schools, under plans announced this week by Justine Greening.

Children in the six areas – Blackpool, Derby, North Yorkshire, Norwich, Oldham and West Somerset – will also be given at least four “encounters” with the world of work via partnerships with local employers.

The Education Endowment Foundation will also support schools in the areas by sharing best teaching practice, while the National Citizen Service will develop a programme of personal development and volunteering in each area.

Proposals for the first six opportunity areas were first announced at last year’s Conservative Party conference.

A further six areas – Bradford, Doncaster, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, Hastings, Ipswich, and Stoke-on-Trent – were added in January, and additional plans should be published by the end of the year.

Greening has said that she wants children living in the areas to “have access to a world-class education”.

“For too long, young people in these areas have been at a disadvantage because

of where they are growing up,” she said.

The programme, worth £72 million, aims to improve social mobility and young people’s life opportunities in the 12 areas which are all ranked as “cold spots” in the government’s social mobility index.

The plans unveiled today outline how schools will benefit from the opportunity areas funding.

The government has also set out how major employers, including EDF Energy, GCHQ, Barclays, Lloyds Banking Group, Burberry and Rolls Royce, will provide young people in these areas with work experience opportunities. The Careers and Enterprise Company will lead the programme.

Beyond the EEF and National Citizen Service support, an additional £22 million will also be available for Essential Life Skills programme funding. It will be shared between all 12 of the opportunity areas.

Jim Whittaker, a member of the West Somerset opportunity area partnership board and managing director of Channel Training, said the plan for his area “represents a unique and exciting move to make a lasting change in our community”.

“The work done, and relationships built, during the project will be making a positive difference here for many years to come,” he said.



BLACKPOOL

The chair of the Blackpool opportunity area partnership board is Graham Cowley, who works for Aldridge Education, a multi-academy trust.

A former executive director of Capita, Cowley is also chair of UTC@MediaCityUK and a director of the Lancashire local enterprise partnership.

He says the plan for his area will deliver “a significant and lasting impact” between 2017 and 2020.

Priorities for schools in Blackpool

- Leadership and governance improvement: national professional qualifications to be fully funded for local teachers. Tauheedul Teaching School to lead on strategic school improvement.
- Maths teaching: a local maths hub will be built and might extend support to post-16 providers.
- English outcomes: Ruth Miskin programmes fully funded in “up to six schools”.
- Improve STEM teaching: projects will be run by STEM Learning and the Institute of Physics.
- Improve MFL teaching: the British Council will do this, but it doesn’t say how.
- Improve teaching overall: a new research

school, St Mary’s Catholic Academy, will support others using the “best available evidence and research”.

- Strengthen collegial working: via a new secondary heads group.
- Improve transition: awaiting proposals.

Graham Cowley

DERBY

Professor Kathryn Mitchell is chair of the Derby opportunity area partnership board. She is the vice-chancellor of the University of Derby. Mitchell is a psychologist and the former deputy vice-chancellor of the University of West London.

“We want Derby to become a centre of excellence for education and employment in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics,” she said.

Priorities for schools in Derby

- Improve teaching and attainment through research: Wyndham Primary Academy, the local research school, will be funded to widen access to research findings.
- Tailored school improvement support: the DfE, Derby City Council, teaching schools and school leaders, will create school-specific plans.
- Maths teaching: embed maths mastery in primary schools supported by the local maths hub. Support for secondary schools and further education colleges will also be developed.
- Leadership development: TLIF programmes will run in schools. More than 100 teachers can take new national professional qualifications for free. Numbers of locally-based national leaders of education will be increased.

Kathryn Mitchell



# LEARNING'S ACTION PLANS ANNOUNCED

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COAST

Sir Martin Narey, a former adviser to Michael Gove, chairs North Yorkshire's partnership board. Narey is a former director general of the prisons service and ran the children's charity Barnardo's until 2011. Last year he authored an influential report on the state of children's residential care in England.

He is "proud of the ambition" in the plan, which will "focus on things we know will make a difference, because they have done so elsewhere".

### Priorities for schools on the North Yorkshire coast

- Maths teaching: a new maths centre, supported by the local maths hub and research school, will be identified. The local maths hub project will be extended. Every school will be encouraged to run two training events. There will be a project to assess the themes emerging from SATs results.
- Literacy: a new literacy campaign and hub will "nurture a love of reading". Work to improve support for teachers will be commissioned.
- Phonics: up to five primary schools will get a "significant training package."
- Secondary school improvement: a plan will be drawn up with the help of schools, the local authority and the regional schools commissioner. This will include help for



- academy trusts to access leadership support, securing "strong" sponsors for two 'inadequate' secondary schools, a "comprehensive CPD offer" and SSIF spending.
- Academic resilience: a review of whether a successful resilience project in primary schools can be expanded to secondary level.
- Parental engagement: secondary schools will be supported to commission evidence-based approaches to parent engagement.
- SEND: training will be provided for six SEND reviewers, and a SEND regional leader will be appointed.



Martin Narey

## NORWICH

The former regional schools commissioner for the east of England, Dr Tim Coulson, will chair the Norwich partnership board. Now chief executive of the Samuel Ward Academy Trust, Coulson's vision for the region is to create a system where "no child is left behind".

"We know that by working together with local and national stakeholders who share our vision, we can truly make a difference over the next three years," he said.

### Priorities for schools in Norwich

- Language development: new language development training for teachers in five to seven schools.
- Maths teaching: the local maths hub will develop "a range of training" for teachers in "all Norwich schools".
- Literacy teaching: Ruth Miskin Training will provide in-school support.
- STEM teaching: STEM Learning's "aspire to STEM" programme will be delivered in some schools.
- Professional development: leaders in primary schools will receive CPD.
- Physics teaching: Support from the Institute of Physics for specialist and non-specialist teachers.
- School improvement: SSIF-funded projects



- to help raise progress in maths among girls at nine primary schools, attainment at key stages 3 and 4 in four secondary schools, and reading comprehension for disadvantaged pupils at key stage 2 at three primaries.
- Research: Notre Dame High School has become a research school and will run events, provide training and CPD. New Norwich evidence-based practice fund to be launched for schools and colleges to implement evidence-based approaches.



Tim Coulson

## OLDHAM

James Kempton, a former council leader who sits on the board of Ofsted and is clerk to the College of Teaching, is the chair of the Oldham partnership board.

Kempton, a Liberal Democrat politician who led Islington Council in the late 2000s, says young people growing up in Oldham "find it much harder" to achieve their life ambitions.

"The opportunity area - working through the partnership board - is a promise, made by national and local government, education leaders and teachers, voluntary organisations and employers, to make change happen," he said.

### Priorities for schools in Oldham

- School readiness: Making it REAL, a National Children's Bureau programme aimed at increasing early literacy, will be scaled up and extended to include maths.
- Leadership: national professional qualifications will be funded for up to 150 participants in the first year. There will be training and support from Teach First for senior leadership teams, coaching and training for primary school leaders, and access to programmes and qualifications from the Institute for Teaching.
- Governance: support from the "inspiring governance" service, which links volunteers with schools.



- Phonics: "whole-school" training from Ruth Miskin, to be delivered over two years.
- STEM teaching: support from STEM Learning and the Institute of Physics, targeted at schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement'.
- Mental health: impact and needs assessment, plus baseline data, to be complete by the end of 2018. Schools will be supported to develop mental health plans.



James Kempton

## WEST SOMERSET

Dr Fiona McMillan, the former principal of Bridgwater College, has been appointed to chair West Somerset's partnership board. McMillan retired in 2011 having led the college since 1994. She is also a former president of the Association of Colleges.

"Our vision is to create a culture where all children in West Somerset have the best opportunities to learn, achieve and gain worthwhile and progressive employment," she said.

### Priorities for schools in West Somerset

- Maths teaching: intervention to improve attainment at key stages 1, 2 and 3, drawing on the local maths hub's resources. The board will support a SSIF bid to improve maths in at least six schools.
- Literacy teaching: specialist phonics expertise, linking to development of practice in the early years. TLIF-funded CPD in phonics. A review of phonics through the Somerset Literacy Network.
- Improve transitions: Somerset County Council will initially lead coordination between schools.
- SEND: a local consortium will help schools review their own practice and learn from others. Training for six SEND reviewers, and appointment of a SEND regional leader.



- Leadership: funding for at least eight leaders to take national professional qualifications, as well as efforts to identify heads, governors and schools with the potential to become national leaders of education, national leaders of governance and teaching schools.
- STEM teaching: a TLIF-funded programme to offer CPD in STEM subjects.
- Research: the Blue School in Wells is to become a research school.
- Teach First: West Somerset to be prioritised in future rounds of recruitment.



Fiona McMillan

NEWS

SCHOOLS MEET MORE CAREERS BENCHMARKS

Schools are falling short of government-endorsed standards for good careers advice, despite a slight improvement in recent years, new research has found.

Of 578 schools asked to rate their performance against eight benchmarks for good careers provision, just 0.5 per cent managed to achieve all eight in 2016-17.

More than a fifth of schools did not meet any of the benchmarks at all, according to the Careers and Enterprise Company.

Although the benchmarks are not official accountability measures, they were set out in the Gatsby Foundation's 2014 Good Career Guidance report, and received government backing at the time.

To meet all eight benchmarks, schools must have a "stable careers programme" which addresses the needs of each pupil and links curriculum learning to careers. They must also give pupils encounters with employers, employees, workplaces, further and higher education, and personal guidance, in order to fully comply with the measures.

In 2014, no school achieved more than five of the benchmarks. Now, however 2.8 per cent managed the feat.

The proportion of schools meeting half of the benchmarks has also increased, from six per cent in 2014 to 16 per cent last year.

Some benchmarks are harder to achieve than others. Just 4.2 per cent of schools met the requirement for a stable careers programme, while 45.9 per cent offered personal guidance to pupils.

GIBB BLASTED ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

School guidance on harassment is to be reviewed again, Nick Gibb (pictured) has said, after he came under heavy fire for a "lack of action" since the problem was raised by MPs a year ago.

The schools minister told a meeting of the Commons women and equalities committee on Wednesday that interim advice for schools concerning peer-on-peer abuse would be published this term.

A report by the committee last year recommended schools be forced to develop a specific policy for tackling sexual harassment and to collect data on incidents, but the government refused to change the rules.

The report found that 29 per cent of year 12 and 13 girls had experienced "unwanted touching" in school.

Almost 60 per cent of girls aged 14 to 21 in 2014 had faced some sort of sexual harassment while at school or college.

In the meeting on Wednesday, committee members blasted Gibb for failing to take significant action since the report was released.

Maria Miller, the Conservative chair of the committee, said she and her colleagues were "perplexed" about why the Department for Education wasn't displaying "more urgency" on sexual abuse of pupils by other pupils.

"The lack of protocol seems to be leaving

some headteachers flummoxed," she said. In particular, she raised concerns that perpetrators are not prevented from entering the same classrooms as their victims under the current guidance.

Labour MP Jess Phillips said the separation of victims and perpetrators had underpinned sexual harassment legislation "for the last 30 years" and should be specifically outlined in guidance to schools.

She also said the committee had seen a letter from the DfE to a solicitor which claimed new statutory guidance on the issue will only come into force in September 2018.

"Do you think it's acceptable to the girls or the schools that two years will have passed for this guidance to come into force, when we called for immediate action?" she asked.

Gibb said the general election had contributed to the delay, and claimed the government's "Keeping children safe in education" guidance had been updated with references to sexual harassment, and would be updated again in November.

The clearest reference to peer-to-peer sexual abuse in the guidance relates to the need for governors to ensure child protection policy reflects

the "different gender issues" that can be prevalent when dealing with such abuse.

These could include "girls being sexually touched/assaulted or boys being subject to initiation/hazing type violence".

Harassment is mentioned just once.

Meanwhile, the government's 'Preventing and tackling bullying' guidance only refers to sexual harassment in a list of contacts who may be able to support with the problem.

Phillips accused the government of simply "including the word sexual harassment" and giving schools a few charities with which they could talk.

Gibb argued that schools found to be failing on safeguarding would likely be placed into special measures, but was unable to say how many schools had been rated 'inadequate' specifically due to issues relating to sexual harassment.

He claimed moves to make relationships education compulsory for all schools showed the government's "commitment" to tackling the problem of sexual abuse in schools.

"I understand the education wheels move slowly, but we are talking about children being abused in schools on our watch," Miller told Gibb. "That just hasn't changed quickly enough from what we're hearing."



HEADTEACHER BOARDS: THE RESULTS

The 32 school leaders elected to advise England's eight regional schools commissioners


NORTH OF ENGLAND



**ELECTED**  
**Zoe Carr**  
(WISE Academies)  
**Chris Clarke**  
(Lunesdale Learning Trust)  
**Nick Hurn**  
(Trinity Catholic Trust)  
**Lesley Powell**  
(North East Learning Trust)

**RSC:**  
**Janet Renou**


LANCASHIRE AND WEST YORKSHIRE



**ELECTED**  
**Julie Bradley**  
(Tauheedul Education Trust)  
**Karen Bramwell**  
(Forward As One Church of England Multi Academy Trust)  
**Royston Halford** (The Rowan Learning Trust)  
**Duncan Jacques**  
(Exceed Academies Trust)

**RSC:**  
**Vicky Beer**

EAST MIDLANDS AND THE HUMBER



**ELECTED**  
**Peter Bell** (Community Inclusive Trust)  
**Anne Martin** (QEGSMAT)  
**Roisin Paul** (Chorus Education Trust)  
**Paul Stone** (Discovery Schools Academy Trust)

**RSC:**  
**John Edwards**

WEST MIDLANDS



**ELECTED**  
**Dame Mo Brennan**  
(Matrix Academy Trust)  
**Mike Donoghue** (John Taylor MAT)  
**Sinead Smith** (Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy)  
**Margaret Yates**  
(All Saints Catholic Collegiate)

**RSC:**  
**Christine Quinn**

SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND



**ELECTED**  
**Sally Apps** (Cabot Learning Federation)  
**Suzanne Flack** (The Redstart Learning Partnership)  
**Paul Jones** (Retired from First Federation Trust Academy)  
**Steve Savory**  
(Gloucestershire Learning Alliance)

**RSC:**  
**Lisa Mannall**

NORTH-EAST LONDON AND SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND



**ELECTED**  
**Brian Conway** (St. John the Baptist Catholic MAT)  
**Caroline Derbyshire**  
(Saffron Academy Trust)  
**Karen Kerridge** (Benflet Schools Trust)  
**Nardeep Sharma**  
(Thrive Partnership Academy Trust)

**RSC:**  
**Sue Baldwin**


NORTH-WEST LONDON AND SOUTH-CENTRAL ENGLAND



**ELECTED**  
**Sarah Bennett**  
(Inspiring Futures Through Learning)  
**Dame Sue Bourne**  
(Retired from The Avenue School – Special Needs Academy Trust)  
**Tom Rees**  
(Northampton Primary Academy Trust)  
**Claire Robins** (Sir John Lawes Academies Trust)

**RSC:**  
**Martin Post**

SOUTH LONDON AND SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND



**ELECTED**  
**Sir Andrew Carter**  
(South Farnham Educational Trust)  
**Jon Chaloner** (GLF Schools)  
**Paula Farrow** (Nexus Education Schools Trust)  
**Justin Smith** (The Primary First Trust)

**RSC:**  
**Dominic Herrington**



# Ofqual ‘refusing to engage’ on colour blindness

ALIX ROBERTSON  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Exam boards are producing scripts for GCSEs and A-levels that rely on coloured diagrams to convey information to candidates, even though this will make the content inaccessible for colourblind pupils.

Colour vision deficiency (CVD) on average affects more than one child in every UK classroom – one in 12 boys and one in 200 girls – but exam boards continue to use colours to explain details required to answer questions in subjects such as geography.

Schools Week has seen copies of GCSE and A-level exam papers which incorporate this type of content, produced by Edexcel (owned by Pearson), AQA, and OCR - with some dated as recently as this summer.

According to Kathryn Albany-Ward, founder and director of Colour Blind Awareness, the papers are simply “not suitable for colour blind people”, and she raised the issue with the exams regulator Ofqual in April.

“Ofqual was made aware of the problems for CVD students in external exams earlier in 2017,” she told *Schools Week*. “They agreed at a meeting with us that this is a problem they have overlooked but now they refuse to engage with us.”

But the regulator reopened discussions with Colour Blind Awareness after *Schools Week* raised the issue.

Following a week of correspondence with us, an Ofqual spokesperson acknowledged meeting with Colour Blindness Awareness earlier in the year and said it was “aware of their concerns”.

“Our regulations are clear that awarding organisations are required to minimise bias in assessment,” a spokesperson said.

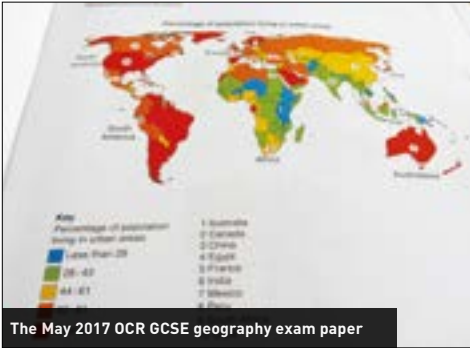
“We are not aware of any substantive concerns that arose during this summer’s exams but will continue to monitor the situation.

“We have also invited Kathryn Albany-Ward to meet our Access Consultation Forum to discuss the issues.”

Ben King, a secondary school geography teacher in Devon who is himself colourblind, told *Schools Week* he that sees “a couple of examples each year” of exam scripts that are “totally inaccessible” to colour-blind pupils.

“I have seen inappropriate use of colour combinations to show patterns on maps and graphs, where different lines or categories appear to me to be the same colour,” he said. “It is important for exam papers and resources in general to also include labels, patterns or numbering.”

King achieved A grades throughout GCSE and A-level, except in one A-level geography paper, in which he received an ungraded result that he believes was down to the coloured resources in the exam.



“Every day in my classroom I have to ask for clarification from my students regarding a map or graphic,” he said. “What do students do if they are shy? What if they don’t even know about their hidden disability? Many will just think that they are ‘stupid.’”

Children have not been screened for colour blindness in schools since 2009, meaning many go undiagnosed. Research by Colour Blind Awareness has shown that 80 per cent of year 7 pupils have never been screened for CVD. At least 50 per cent of colourblind students are estimated to be undiagnosed by the time they sit their GCSEs.

Michael Turner, the director-general of the Joint Council for Qualifications, told *Schools Week* that all exam boards “make sure that colour blind students aren’t disadvantaged”.

“Schools and colleges have several options and can use a colour overlay sheet, have



an invigilator explain any colours, or print exam papers on coloured paper,” he said. “Schools and colleges should know about these options, for which they don’t even need permission from exam boards.”

But Albany-Ward believes these arrangements are inadequate.

“The Department for Education has tried to put the onus for seeking and supporting CVD pupils onto schools but has not ensured that schools are aware of the issues nor that they are equipped to deal with them,” she said.

In response, a DfE spokesperson said: “A child with colour blindness may be considered to have a special educational need if it means they need additional support and resources from their school.

“Schools and colleges must make reasonable adjustments where a child has an impairment or disability that affects their ability to take part in everyday activities.”

## MORGAN: NO COMPULSORY CHARACTER LESSONS

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Former education secretary Nicky Morgan has said teachers should not be measured on how they improve their pupils’ character, but experts have warned that regulation is needed if pupil development is to be taken seriously.

Speaking to teachers at a wellbeing conference last Friday, Morgan said her department had debated “endlessly” about whether to set requirements on character education, but her “instinct was we shouldn’t try to measure it”.

“Frankly we would have spent the entire time debating the list of traits to measure,” she said, admitting she was not “not entirely convinced” that character lessons should be on the national curriculum.

But Sara Fletcher, the vice-principal of Babington Community College, an 11-16 school in a deprived area of Leicester, said her team designed a programme called ‘Building Character for Learning’ which runs across all lessons, extracurricular activities and school reports.

Pupils receive a termly “character” grade instead of an effort grade, with those grades translating into points totted up at the end of the year.

Pupils with the highest points are rated on a scale that runs from diamond down through gold, silver and bronze. Diamond pupils give a presentation to their peers on



their progress, and the school records how many pupils move up from bronze.

Teachers are also trained to include a character-building objective alongside each lesson objective.

For the first time this year, pupils will also undergo formalised testing three times annually, using a resilience test developed by the school. Results will be mapped against a national standard for resilience and support put in place where needed, Fletcher told *Schools Week*.

Having such a structured system of measurement means developing pupils’ personalities “actually happens”, she said. “If we don’t formalise it and make sure it permeates every area, then it won’t achieve our aim.”

However she pointed out that a single way of developing character or wellbeing

is unlikely to be as effective as schools developing their own.

Emma Gleadhill, an educational trainer in wellbeing and emotional intelligence who works with schools, disputes the notion.

Gleadhill said headteachers should be encouraged to measure wellbeing or character either through “government regulation” or the inspection framework, and she wants Ofsted to look at “safeguarding and well-being” measures, rather than just safeguarding.

Her words follow a government-commissioned survey of schools which found that only 44 per cent of maintained schools and 49 per cent of academies collect data about pupils’ mental health needs – compared to 77 per cent of alternative provision settings.

Also arguing the government should make it compulsory for schools to measure wellbeing was Gus O’Donnell, an economist who led the civil service under David Cameron and three other prime ministers.

He told the conference he had tried to persuade Morgan and her successor Justine Greening to formally begin measuring wellbeing or similar standards.

“If there were one thing Justine should be doing, it’s saying to Theresa May that doing this would make a difference,” he said.

The “fact that Ofsted aren’t measuring wellbeing” is astonishing, he added. “So what’s it all about, then? We’re too obsessed by GDP and exam results.”

## PUPILS PICK SUBJECTS ACCORDING TO ENJOYMENT

Subject difficulty is the least considered factor by pupils when choosing what to study, according to a report from the exams regulator Ofqual.

It found that pupils focused more on enjoyment and usefulness of subjects, rather than difficulty, when choosing which subjects to take as exams.

Ofqual’s latest report looks at perceptions of subject difficulty and subject choices. It asks whether the two are linked, and if so, how.

The watchdog interviewed 49 teachers and 112 pupils from 12 schools across England.

The research found that subject choices appear to be “primarily driven by a triad of perceptions: enjoyment, usefulness, and difficulty”.

Although perceptions of difficulty did influence pupils’ subject choices, they are “perhaps the lesser of these three concerns”, the report concluded.

According to the research, advice from teachers and school curriculum policies were more influential on subject choices.

In some cases, schools choose not to offer certain subjects because they are “seen to be too difficult”. Teachers also sometimes discourage pupils from taking subjects that might be too difficult for them, but said this is mostly done according to person-specific subject difficulty, “as opposed to more general notions of subject difficulty”, the report found.

# NEWS

## DFE INVESTIGATES EXCLUSION RATES

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

The Department for Education is to launch an external review into the links between pupil ethnicity and exclusions, focusing on “disproportionate” exclusion rates among some ethnic groups.

It’s part of an audit by Number 10 into how people from different ethnic backgrounds are treated across all public services.

The DfE says it will “take forward an external review to improve practice in exclusions”, which will “focus on the experiences of those groups who are disproportionately likely to be excluded” and share best practice.

School exclusions data shows that pupils from black Caribbean backgrounds are three times more likely to be excluded than white pupils, at a rate of 0.29 per cent compared with a rate of 0.1 per cent.

Pupils from Irish traveller or Roma/ gypsy backgrounds have the highest rate of exclusions of any ethnic group, at 0.49 per cent and 0.33 per cent respectively.

Boys in both groups are particularly likely to be excluded, and are being told to leave schools at the highest rates ever, according to previous *Schools Week* analysis.

In 2012-13, Irish traveller boys were excluded at a rate of 0.5 per cent of their total, and this rose to 0.75 in 2015-16. Roma and Gypsy boys have also been excluded more, from a rate of 0.34 per cent three years ago to 0.54 per cent last year.

Meanwhile, analysis by The Difference, a teacher training programme for the alternative provision sector, has found that in inner cities, where populations tend to be most diverse, local pupil referral units have disproportionately high numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.

“In our cities where we believe we have the best schools, and the most diverse populations, actually what you see within the PRUs are many pupils from those diverse backgrounds,” said Kiran Gill, the group’s founder.

Dave Whitaker, the executive principal of Springwell Learning Community, an alternative provision and special needs school in Barnsley, said the issue of pupils from certain ethnicities being excluded was “geographical”, and pointed out that most pupils he deals with are from poor, white, working class backgrounds.

The review is “very timely”, he added, as “something needs to be done about exclusions, and alternative provision, full-stop”.

The government’s education attainment data shows “there are disparities in primary school which increase in secondary school”.

It notes that Chinese and Asian pupils tend to perform well, but white and black pupils do “less well, particularly those eligible for free school meals”.

A new website called Ethnicity Facts and Figures will also have thousands of statistics covering more than 130 topics in areas including health, education, employment and the criminal justice system, said the release.

A spokesperson for the DfE told *Schools Week* that more information on the review will be launched in due course.

## EXCLUDED PUPILS ‘TWICE AS LIKELY’ TO HAVE UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Excluded pupils are twice as likely to be taught by an unqualified or supply teacher when they reach their alternative school, a new report has shown.

The analysis, published by the Institute for Public Policy Research, found the proportion of unqualified teachers at alternative providers has risen by nearly four percentage points over the past four years – more than double the increase in other schools. The number of temporary staff has also doubled.

The report makes the case for a new teacher training programme, to encourage outstanding teachers to work in alternative provision for a period before reentering the mainstream.

Lead author Kiran Gill (pictured) said the situation is made worse by the leadership vacancies in the sector.

“It’s a real worry if there are a lot of unqualified staff, but not enough leaders to help train them – how do we quality-assure what’s going on?” she said.

Overall, 48,000 pupils are taught at alternative providers – with many in unregistered settings not eligible for Ofsted inspections, as a *Schools Week* investigation recently found.

A “whole classroom” of 35 pupils are excluded from school every day, the report notes, with 6,685 told to leave last year.

However, the number educated at



alternative or pupil referral units is five times the number of official exclusions. Earlier this year, *Schools Week* revealed how some pregnant pupils were passed to alternative providers.

This figure is also increasing; while permanent exclusions almost halved between 2006 to 2013, they rose 40 per cent over the past three years.

Alternative provision units are therefore expanding and several new ones are in the pipeline using government funding recently announced by Justine Greening. The expansion is putting substantial pressure on recruitment.

In response, Gill is launching The Difference, a teacher training programme in which teachers qualified for at least three years train in an alternative provision unit before returning to a leadership roles in a mainstream school.

Despite a sometimes maligned reputation, 81 per cent of pupil referral units are judged

‘good’ or ‘outstanding’, compared with 75 per cent of all schools, the report states.

But a “frightening postcode lottery” sees some areas offer only ‘inadequate’ provision.

In Newcastle and Gateshead, all 368 alternative provision places are ‘inadequate’.

In Dudley, Sheffield, Reading, Stockton-on-Tees, Barking and Dagenham and Cheshire East no providers are ‘good’ or better.

Seamus Oates, chief executive of the TBAP multi-academy trust, which runs eight AP academies and has a teaching school, said “inadequate pockets” of alternative provision across the country often reflect poor mainstream provision where many pupils are kicked out.

The PRUs may also have failed to present themselves as part of the “career continuum” for teachers in an area, he said. Proper government funding for the sector must be invested alongside training schemes such as The Difference.

Alison Ryan, exclusions and behaviour expert at the National Education Union, said it was “really worrying” that unqualified teachers were working with AP settings.

“There’s a real worry about quality by employing unqualified teachers,” she said. “There’s nothing to say they’ve had a particular level of training. They won’t be learning properly about teaching and could end up just doing a certain amount of crowd control.”

Interested parties can sign up at The Difference website to find out more.

We’ve been getting requests from all over. Everyone comes to us and says ‘what can we do’ and we’re just a small group of people in Nottingham doing all this work.

“The DfE has been really supportive, but we need national figures and leaders to take a stand and say this needs to happen and take it on. If someone like Justine Greening would take a lead and work with authorities and Ofsted on this, it would make a real difference.”

A spokesperson for the DfE said that alleviating pressures on teachers “remains a priority”.

“We know excessive workload contributes to teachers leaving the profession which is why we continue to work with unions, teachers and Ofsted to challenge unhelpful practices that add to teacher workload,” they said.

“We have already published a range of examples about how schools are managing workload in our teaching blog and have awarded grant funding to 11 groups of schools to carry out collaborative research projects into efficient and effective approaches which reduce workload related to marking, planning and resources and data management.”

The Nottingham EIB is hosting a school workload conference on November 17, with speakers including Dr Mary Bousted, Stephen Baker and Professor Sir David Greenaway.

## Nottingham’s overtime cap wins praise, if not adherents

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@PIPPA\_AK

Exclusive

Nottingham council’s pioneering approach to capping overtime for teachers has won plaudits across the sector – but the number of schools committing remains low.

The city’s education improvement board launched its “Fair Workload Charter” last autumn, urging local schools to cap the work teachers are expected to perform in their own time at two hours a night.

The EIB’s lead on school improvement, David Anstead (pictured), believes the charter will help alleviate the crisis of teachers quitting the profession.

In February, an education select committee report recommended the approach after Mr Anstead presented it last October, but despite initial excitement, very few schools have actually adopted the charter.

Of the 100 or so schools in Nottingham only nine have signed up, and another 10 to 15 are in the pipeline.

“Headteachers need to feel reassured not only that this is allowed but that it’s essential. It’s just not a priority for heads right now and unless we can make it a priority things are unlikely to change,” Mr Anstead said.

“Unless we all do something about teacher workload we will continue to have this recruitment and retention problem. It’s absolutely critical. All the national evidence



points to workloads above everything else as being the main reason why we are seeing all these teachers leave.”

He insisted the charter is not an expectation that teachers must work two hours longer but rather a cap on the otherwise unlimited hours they can be expected to spend planning and marking once the school day is finished.

And although he confessed he is “disappointed” by the number of Nottingham schools that have adopted the charter so far, he is surprised by how many local authorities which contacted the EIB for advice on how to implement the scheme.

“We started in Nottingham doing this for the benefit of Nottingham schools, to make them a better place to work and make Nottingham stronger in the recruitment market. It was completely selfish,” he said.

“It wasn’t our intention to make it a national issue but it just sort of happened.



NEWS: School performance



DELVING INTO THIS YEAR'S PERFORMANCE DATA

-  THE LANGUAGE BARRIER  
EBACC MUST SURMOUNT
-  THE 9-1 EFFECT ON  
GCSE RESULTS
-  BOTTOM OF THE LEAGUE FOR  
STUDIO SCHOOLS AND UTCs

Ebacc entries drop amid Progress 8 pressure

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ Investigates

The proportion of pupils entering the EBacc has dropped for the first time, new data shows, and experts claim the pressure for high Progress 8 scores is causing schools to avoid “risky” EBacc subjects.

Whereas 39.7 per cent of pupils entered the EBacc last year, that proportion dropped by 1.5 percentage points to 38.1 per cent this year, according to provisional key stage 4 data. This is the first fall in five years.

A smaller proportion of pupils also achieved the EBacc this year. Whereas 24.7 per cent of pupils passed the five “core” academic subjects of English, maths, science, history or geography and a

language last year, that figure fell to 23.5 per cent this year.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, insisted more pupils were taking core academic subjects.

“Since 2010, the proportion of pupils taking GCSE science has risen from 63 per cent to 91 per cent, and 21 per cent more students are studying maths at A-level,” he said.

He also pointed out the “outstanding” Progress 8 scores of converter academies and free schools, which came joint top of all school types. Analysis by *Schools Week* has since revealed a more mixed picture, with a third of free schools scoring -0.2 or less.

However teachers and unions have called for Progress 8 and the EBacc to be scrapped in the wake of today’s report.

Tom Sherrington, an education consultant and ex-head teacher, said schools were avoiding entering pupils for “high-risk” subjects such as modern foreign languages for fear of threatening their Progress 8 score.

Progress 8 “overrides all the other measures”, he said. The EBacc pass rate is almost a “soft measure, an aspirational measure” while the Progress 8 score is higher-stakes.

The fact schools were choosing to enter pupils into fewer EBacc subjects demonstrate the “inherent paradox” within the government’s accountability measures, he added.

He called for both Progress 8 and the EBacc to be scrapped, and for schools to be inspected on a “case-by-case” basis on their

outcomes in all subjects and the depth and breadth of their curriculum.

His words echo calls by Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman not to sacrifice rich curriculums to hit accountability measures this week.

Susan Coles, of the National Society for Education in Art and Design, demanded once again that the EBacc be scrapped, pointing to a report by the Education Policy Institute that showed a continuing decline in the number of children enrolling into arts GCSEs last month.

Meanwhile, Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the drop in entries “confirms the DfE must abandon the delusional expectation that 90 per cent of children will take it” by 2025.

NEWS

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

# EBacc hits languages barrier

JESS STAUFENBERG  
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Investigates

This year's fall in EBacc entries has largely been driven by a drop in the proportion of pupils choosing to study languages – undermining the government's intention for more pupils to study them.

Whereas 39.7 per cent of pupils entered the EBacc last year, that proportion dropped to 38.1 per cent this year, which is the first fall in five years, according to provisional key stage 4 data.

The 1.5 percentage point drop in EBacc entries overall is largely explained by a 1.7 percentage point drop in modern foreign language entries, according to the Department for Education's report.

This drop in EBacc languages will have impacted on overall EBacc entry," said the report.

The data shows that of those pupils entered into four of the five EBacc pillars, 80 per cent

failed to fill the final basket because they lacked a modern foreign language.

"Suzanne O'Farrell, a curriculum and assessment specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said a "widespread understanding" that languages GCSEs were "graded more severely" was discouraging both pupils and school leaders from entering.

These pressures mean the likelihood of pupils taking two languages is particularly "under threat", which is concerning as these school leavers are the future workforce of language teachers, she said, while many schools are also already struggling to recruit language teachers.

Education Datalab, a think-tank, suggested in May that if all schools were to enter 75 per cent of their pupils into the Ebacc, this would require an additional 3,700 language classes per year group.

A "national focus" on improving languages take-up is needed, according to O'Farrell,

who believes that the combination of pressures on schools is having a "severe impact which must simply be addressed."

Reduced government funding for language assistants from overseas is also limiting pupil contact time with native speakers, said Rene Koglbauer, president of the Association for Language Learning, which represents teachers.

A native speaker in the classroom is inspiring for pupils, and gives classroom teachers "an extra pair of hands and expertise" in the room, he said.

But many applying from overseas are having their applications rejected because schools are short of cash – even though assistants are not expensive members of staff.

Schools also do not need to enter pupils for them to fulfil the headline Progress 8 measure, he added.



According to Ofqual's GCSE data released in June, entries to German dropped by 12 per cent, French was down by 10 per cent, and Spanish fell by three per cent.

Vicky Gough (pictured), a schools adviser at the British Council, which runs international language programmes, said that there are fewer opportunities to practise fluency, particularly through foreign exchange trips, so fewer pupils stay on.

This chimes with previous *Schools Week* investigations which show foreign exchange trips are being "killed off" by safeguarding worries and unclear guidance about background criminal checks on parents.

Gough welcomed government initiatives to tackle the decline in uptake of languages, such as the introduction of compulsory language-learning at primary school, but said ministers need to do more to "champion" language learning until the impact of such changes were felt.

## New GCSE grades pushing down results

ALIX ROBERTSON  
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The shift to a numeric scoring system for GCSEs is playing havoc with this year's results, as Attainment 8 results drop and more schools fall below the Progress 8 floor standard.

The number of schools with a Progress 8 score below -0.5 has increased by 30 per cent this year, while headline Attainment 8 figures have dropped by four points for all schools.

This is being blamed on the Department for Education's "interim" points scale for 2017 and 2018, during which time certain subjects will be graded from 9 to 1 while others still use A\* to G.

The DfE claimed the fall in Attainment 8 was "expected from when we applied the 2017 point score scale to the 2016 data".

Analysis by Education Datalab concurs that the increase in schools below the floor standard is likely to be a result of this change. Dave Thomson, the author of the research, told *Schools Week* the increase is "not necessarily a deterioration in performance".

For exams in 2016, Attainment 8 and Progress 8 headline measures were calculated by awarding one point per grade rise – for example an A was worth seven points and a B six, while a G grade was worth one and an F was worth two.

But this year pupils jumping from an A to an A\*, a B to an A, or a C to a B are awarded 1.5 points, while the difference between a G and an F is just 0.5. All other grades are separated by one point.

Nick Brook, the deputy general secretary of

the headteachers' union NAHT, said year-on-year changes to qualifications and the way scores are calculated had made it "extremely difficult" to compare the performance of schools over time.

"What is clear is that a notional floor standard serves no purpose, other than to heap more pressure on schools already at breaking point, and to drive good people from the profession," he said.

"This will keep on happening unless we adopt fairer methods to hold schools to account, recognising that test and exam data are only part of the picture when judging a school's effectiveness."

Duncan Baldwin, the Association of School and College Leader's deputy director of policy, claimed the Progress 8 number alone "clearly does not tell the story about the school".

"This is a recalibration exercise rather more than it's a statement about standards, and against really a rather arbitrary line in the sand," he said.

Thomson pointed out "that not only was the DfE aware that more schools would fall below the floor if it remained at -0.5, but also that it considered this justifiable".

"I suspect some will disagree," he said.

The DfE said schools would not be judged on this data alone, but it may be used to target additional support.

Thomson also warned in 2016 that Progress 8 scores this year would "widen the gap" between selective and non-selective schools.

He now believes that this has indeed happened, and that Progress 8 scores at grammar schools have "superficially" improved.

GCSE GRADE	2016 POINTS	2017 POINTS
G	1	1
F	2	1.5
E	3	2
D	4	3
C	5	4
B	6	5.5
A*	7	7
A	8	8.5

Number of schools with P8 scores below -0.5 (excluding closed schools)				
2016			PROVISIONAL 2017	
	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BELOW FLOOR	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
GRAMMAR SCHOOLS	162	0	162	0
SPONSORED ACADEMIES	553	107	571	102
ACADEMY CONVERTERS	1171	34	1213	77
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	512	51	457	67
FOUNDATION SCHOOLS	252	28	229	40
VOLUNTARY AIDED	262	11	249	20
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED	33	2	32	3
FREE SCHOOLS	26	7	49	10
STUDIO SCHOOLS	25	15	29	18
UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGES	25	16	33	26
CITY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGES	3	0	3	0
FURTHER EDUCATION	12	11	NP*	NP*
TOTAL	3036	282	3027	366
*NOT PUBLISHED				



# NEWS: School performance

## WINNERS AND LOSERS

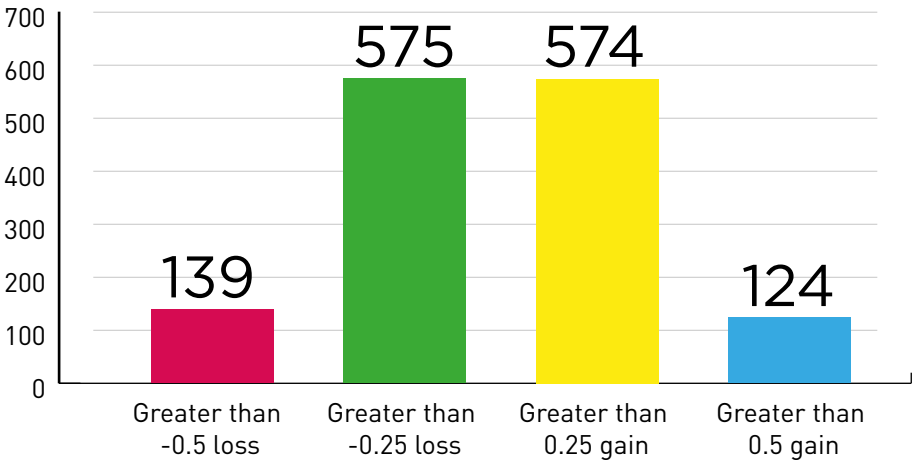


### A ZERO-SUM GAME

Because of the nature of Progress 8, the national score is designed to be zero. But schools are moving around that measure, with numbers almost exactly balanced between winners and losers. The biggest drops in Progress 8 scores compared

with last year were at Colyton Grammar School, Perry Beeches the Academy and Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys whilst Adelaide School, Bloxwich Academy and Manchester Creative Studio saw the biggest leaps forward.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WHERE P8 CHANGED DRAMATICALLY



### CHANGING THE MEASURE

Shifting the focus of school league tables from attainment to progress has led to big wins for some schools – but dramatic drops for others.

Fullhurst Community School was the biggest winner, with an A\*-C pass rate of 46 per cent but a Progress 8 Score of 0.67 making it 2,520th-best in the country according to the old measure but 200th

for progress under the new regime. Meanwhile, selective schools are feeling the pressure: two of the five biggest losers from Progress 8 were grammars, with Colchester grammar school pupils achieving a 99-per-cent five A\*-C pass rate but a negative progress 8 score of -0.3 putting it in the top fifty on the old measure but 2,232nd for progress.

### TOP 5 WINNERS

Fullhurst Community College

Holy Family Catholic Academy

St John Fisher Catholic High School

Djanogly City Academy

Harris Academy Upper Norwood

### TOP 5 LOSERS

Holy Trinity School

The Five Islands School

Colchester Royal Grammar School

Priory Academy

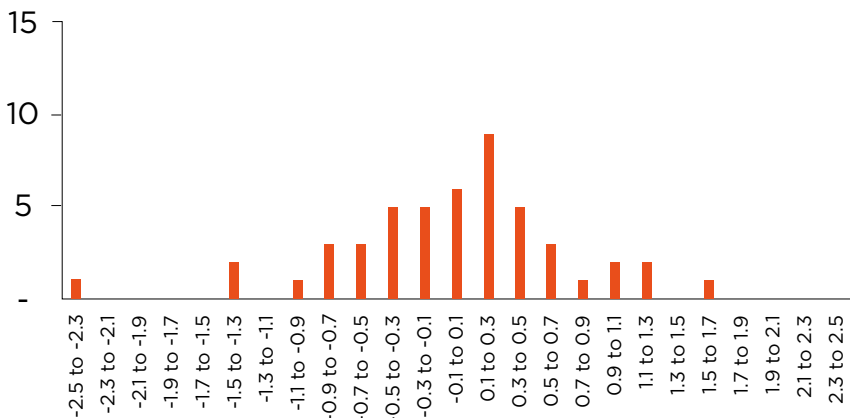
Oakwood Park Grammar School

### FREE SCHOOLS A MIXED BAG

The New Schools Network was quick to celebrate free schools coming joint top of the table for school type on Progress 8. Free schools advocate Toby Young described the results as “a ringing endorsement of the policy” and said “the data means that in every phase of education – primary, secondary and sixth

form – free schools are outperforming all other types of school”. However, analysis by Datalab later revealed a mixed picture with some free schools achieving sky-high results, whilst others languished well behind. *Schools Week* found that a third had scores of -0.2 or less.

DISTRIBUTION OF FREE SCHOOL PROGRESS 8 SCORES, 2017



### KS5 WOES FOR STUDIO SCHOOLS AND UTCS

University technical colleges have the lowest average A-level points score, according to the data.

The average score for UTCs, which often have a more vocational offer, was 20.7, equivalent of a D.

The second lowest score was at studio schools, which focus on creative and industry-related courses.

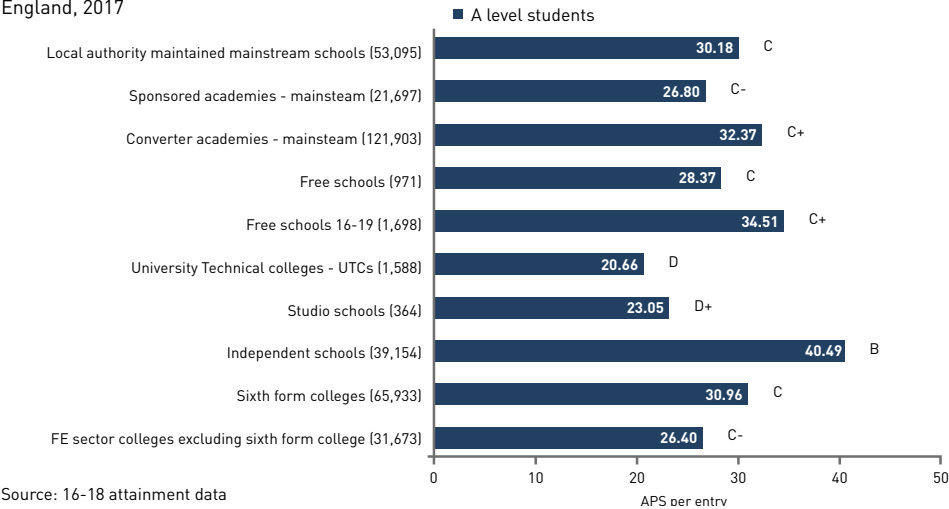
Pupils at these schools achieved a slightly higher score of 23, the equivalent of a

D+, still well behind results achieved at converter academies and 16-to-19 free schools. These notched up average A-level scores equivalent to a C+.

The picture for pupils leaving studio schools before key stage 5 is also mixed.

Destination data published this week shows that pupils who leave studio schools at 16 are almost three times less likely than the average pupil to be in the job or course of their choice by the following March.

Figure 10: Average point score per entry for A level students by institution type1 (table 1a) England, 2017



Source: 16-18 attainment data



## EDITOR'S COMMENT

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## Let's do the social mobility time-warp

This time last year, education was going back to the 1950s with grammar schools as the idea in vogue. This week, Justine Greening is taking us back to the 1980s, with her Youth Training Scheme for teachers (okay, apprenticeships), and back to the 2000s with her "social opportunity" areas.

Let's time-travel a little: it's summer 2004, Charles Clarke is education secretary, England's biggest problem is that Marks & Spencer is having a hard time flogging vests, and Britain only won nine gold medals in the Olympics.

In response to the death of a young girl called Victoria Climbié, the country has had a crisis of conscience about children's wellbeing and created a new policy called "Every Child Matters", compelling local organisations to work together to help make children safe, healthy and happy. New laws are on the way which will require local authorities to write "children and young people's plans" showing how key local groups will deliver great outcomes for all young people in the area.

If you've never seen one of these plans, you no longer need to dig into a dusty archive. Justine Greening's brochures, released this week for six of her social opportunity areas, will do just fine: they look almost exactly the

same. There's the annoying corporate front, a whizzy picture of the local area, and a foreword by someone important, though Greening is in these ones; local plans used to feature councillors or a pushy mayor.

Crucially there's a plan, with some money behind it, for new services or to target or link together existing services in new ways.

So far, so benign. Should people in a local area work together for the good of their pupils? Sure! We've all been saying this all along.

The question that Greening needs to address is why there has been such a big hole in place of these services over the past seven years since Michael Gove, practically overnight, swept away all that progress made back in 2004.

The second question is this: When is the rest of the country going to make such plans?

I understand that social opportunity areas have particular difficulties. But no one sensible can believe that all local organisations working together for the good of children is a bad thing? And if the government answer is "autonomy" then I wonder why they feel they have the right to impinge on the 12 areas they have landed in?

They can't justify it purely on the

grounds of outcomes: other parts of the country are far worse. As Mike Parker of Schools North East pointed out at an event, there isn't a single opportunity area in the north-east of England even though it has the worst secondary outcomes.

Still, that's enough of the 2000s for now. Onwards to the 80s!

Unfortunately, we have landed in the 1981 riots. New stop-and-search laws have caused unrest across the country, with riots occurring in Leeds, London, Birmingham and Liverpool. In response, the government has decided the youth need sorting out.

A policy first mooted by Norman Tebbit in 1980 for on-the-job training for older teens was implemented. Enter the much-maligned YTS.

The Youth Training Scheme – to give its full title – was an apprenticeship-style programme for all 16- to 18-year-olds. The government guaranteed the cost of training, delivered for at least 13 weeks per year away from the job, and trainees were given an allowance of £35 per week, equivalent to around £115 in 2016.

From the start unions worried about

the low wages and lack of rights for apprentices. They were right. By 1995 the scheme was in a mess; six in 10 left halfway through the programme. Of those who stayed, half were fired when they received their final qualifications, mostly so they could be replaced by another trainee.

And yet today we find ourselves faced with a new form of YTS – the apprenticeship. This time the scourge it will solve is Brexit, and though unions are again worried about wages and a lack of rights, we are apparently to believe that all will be okay this time. Our list of unanswered questions (see page 7) may suggest otherwise.

In fact, let's take one final whizz at the time-travel. Let's imagine it's 2027. Apprenticeships have matured. Brexit has happened. Marks and Spencer is probably still having a hard time flogging vests. But what does the world of schools look like?

I'll leave that for your imagination to decide.







# THE FRIENDLIEST PRIMARY SCHOOL IN OXFORD NEEDS A NEW HEADTEACHER.

- **Closing Date: (Noon) Monday 7th November 2017**
- **Shortlisting notification: Monday 13th November**
- **Interview Date(s): 21st and 22nd November 2017**
- **Job Start Date: April or September 2018**
- **Contract/Hours: Permanent, Full-time**
- **Salary: Leadership Scale L18-24**
- **Contact e-mail address: [vacancies@larkrise.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:vacancies@larkrise.oxon.sch.uk)**

Larkrise Primary School is a vibrant and caring school, proudly reflecting the diversity of the East Oxford community it serves, caring for 440 children and families; including a fantastic early years setting.

In partnership with a skilled governing body, a highly supportive community, and a talented staff we have developed a culture of school improvement that has demonstrated that it is possible to care for children, combine creativity with rigour, and get good results; without teaching to the test.

Our finances are healthy, our site is well maintained and we have an excellent reputation in the city. We've been doing a good job. But

we know we could be doing better - not just in comparison to local schools, but to national exemplars and against self-evaluations.

We are now looking for a headteacher who can shape and lead the clear vision for Larkrise, on our journey to outstanding. We are looking for a leader who recognises the importance of our 5C values and who is an effective communicator and expert facilitator of exceptional practice.

Please read the associated documents (our 'Candidate Brochure' and 'Selection criteria and Job Description') to learn in more detail about what we are looking for and why Larkrise might be right for you.

Most importantly, we'd urge you to look beyond the headlines, and visit the school in person. Do get in touch to come and see us. We're also happy to talk over the phone if that helps.

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

## Application Procedure

To apply, please complete the OCC application form, - and email your completed form to [vacancies@larkrise.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:vacancies@larkrise.oxon.sch.uk)

## Visit our website for more details

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



# Head of Psychology

(and Deputy Coordinator: Humanities for the right candidate)

**TLR (highly competitive salary, based on experience, with opportunity to become a Specialist Leader of Education, with further salary enhancement)**

**January 2018**



*'This is an outstanding school. Teachers have high expectations of their students, who respond by producing excellent work.'*

(OFSTED, June 2015)

High aspirations? Looking for an exciting new challenge? Our Academy is a vibrant and exciting place to work and was graded as outstanding in all areas by Ofsted in June 2015. In 2016, Magna achieved a Progress 8 score of 0.52, placing us well within the top 5% of highest performing schools nationally.

**We have a desire to be in the top 1%.**

Our systems ensure you can really focus on your core purpose – teaching, in a sustainable way, reducing your workload through:

- tight, robust and no-nonsense behaviour systems
- all detentions are centralised, including homework detentions
- a feedback policy focused on whole class feedback, eliminating the need for hours and hours of marking
- highly visible and supportive senior leaders



*'The behaviour of students is outstanding. They are exceptionally keen to learn, and show real enthusiasm in lessons.'*

(OFSTED, June 2015)

We are looking for an exceptional individual to play an important role in our unique and growing Academy. The successful candidate will be an experienced teacher of A Level Psychology, and also be able to teach, at least one of either, Sociology (GCSE/A Level), Geography or History at KS3 or KS4.

**This is an excellent opportunity for an ambitious practitioner, who wants to lead the Psychology A Level (which is very popular) and assist in the leadership of the Humanities Faculty, making a real impact on further driving up attainment and progress in Humanities.**

As a rapidly growing academy, that will be at full capacity in 2019, and as a newly designated NCTL Teaching School, you would be joining us at a very exciting time and become part of a vibrant learning community that will offer you fantastic opportunities for CPD, career development, future promotions and for you to be able to make your mark. You would be able to study for the NPQML/NPQSL and have excellent progression opportunities to eventually become an Assistant Principal as the Academy, Teaching School and MAT continue to grow. As a Teaching School, you would also have the opportunity to become a Specialist Leader of Education (SLE).

With great students who behave impeccably, an outstanding team of staff, state of the art facilities, and a very pleasant location in beautiful Dorset, Magna Academy offers an excellent opportunity for an ambitious, talented individual looking to develop their career. Ofsted highlighted our very effective staff training and support and outstanding CPD. We have a very comprehensive, and effective, development programme, bringing all subject areas together every week to share best practice.



We teach a challenging academic curriculum for all students. We are driven by a desire, at the core of Our mission, to get the best possible results for all of our students, no matter what their starting points or circumstances.

*'Students make exceptional progress.'*

(OFSTED, June 2015)

We would be delighted to show you around our Academy in order to fully appreciate our excellent learning environment.

## How to Apply

Application forms and further details on the role are available from: **[www.aatmagna.org/82/vacancies](http://www.aatmagna.org/82/vacancies)** or **Zoe Challis, [zchallis@aatmagna.org](mailto:zchallis@aatmagna.org)** or **01202 604222**

Closing date for applications: Apply immediately, interviewing shortly. Learn more about Magna Academy at: **[www.aatmagna.org](http://www.aatmagna.org)**





# Director of Finance & Operations (DFO)

## Permanent position

**Full / Part time**, dependent on skills and experience

**Salary** to be negotiated dependent on qualifications, experience and skills

The purpose of this role is to lead the delivery of outstanding operations across the Clevedon Learning Trust (CLT).

The role is designed for a high performing, impact driven person who is able to co-ordinate activity across multiple schools, providing efficient and effective operational services so that educational staff can maintain a core, unrelenting focus on teaching and learning. This person will also take a leading role in developing the strategic vision for the CLT and delivering this to secure high standards across the organisation that encourage other schools to join.

You will need to be able to motivate and bring together a team of financial and operational staff to ensure that they work as one central team for the CLT in ensuring value for money, policy compliance, budget adherence, site management and opportunities to generate income.

Reporting to the Executive Headteacher, the post holder will be accountable for the financial and operational outcomes of the CLT and as such will performance and line manage the staff operating in the Business, Finance, Site and Operational Management teams as well as other functional leads to ensure that their objectives are being effectively met.

You will be an ex-officio Director of the CLT Trust Board attending meetings and reporting on all aspects of Finance and Operations.

The role would support the Executive Headteacher in the CLT growth strategy providing expertise to manage the conversion processes for schools joining the MAT. This would involve liaison with the school, Local Authority, Diocese, DfE and RSC.

In addition, the postholder would play a leading role in major CLT projects e.g. building, IT to ensure successful and financially efficient completion.

You will ensure delivery of consistent, efficient and outstanding support across all Academies in order that the strategic leadership team of the CLT (Executive Headteacher, Director of Education and Director of Finance and Operations) can execute the School Improvement Strategy with the maximum available budget.

If you are interested in this post please contact John Wells on **01275 337404** to discuss interview arrangements or to arrange a visit to the Trust.

An application form and further details are available from:

**[www.clevedonlearningtrust.org.uk](http://www.clevedonlearningtrust.org.uk)**

**Tel:** 01275 337404 Fax: 01275 340935

**Email:** [recruitment@clevedonschool.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@clevedonschool.org.uk)

## CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

Friday 20th October 2017

*Clevedon Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and all applicants*

# Wellspring Academy Trust

## Head of Estates

**£42,000 – £50,000**

**Permanent/Full Time**



**WELLSPRING**  
ACADEMY TRUST

We Make A Difference



**Wellspring Academy Trust is a growing Multi-Academy Trust, currently supporting fifteen Academies. We are committed to making a difference to the lives and life chances of the young people and the communities we serve. We are an education charity with Academies in the Primary, Secondary, Special and Alternative Education sectors.**

We require a dedicated and passionate Head of Estates to join our talented and hard-working team. The post holder will take technical and managerial responsibility for Trust's estate, currently comprised of 33 sites and facilities of varying size, condition and construction. The Head of Estates will act as a key stakeholder in shaping and coordinating the Trust's investment of available capital resources.

Wellspring places great emphasis on the quality of its physical environments, actively seeking opportunities for continuous improvement and regeneration. In Leeds, the Trust is building three state of the art Special Schools, with a combined development budget of £45million. Also in Leeds, Wellspring is at initial design phase to construct a 420 place mainstream Primary School.

Across Lincolnshire, we are at the advanced feasibility stage in building four Alternative Provision Academies. These are exciting, innovative projects in which the Head of Estates will play a key role.

The continuing growth of the Trust offers exciting pathways for ambitious and dynamic individuals who are determined to make a difference. We value our people. Collegial working at all levels is central to our culture.

High quality induction training and ongoing professional development support are guaranteed.

We are interested in hearing from people who:

- Are self-motivated, customer-focused and organised.
- Enjoy working as part of an inclusive team.
- Have a commitment to supporting the work of education leaders and who are passionate about learning.

To download an application pack please visit

[www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk/aboutus/careers](http://www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk/aboutus/careers)

or contact Chloe Wormleighton via phone

**01226 720747** or email [c.wormleighton@](mailto:c.wormleighton@wellspringacademies.org.uk)

[wellspringacademies.org.uk](http://wellspringacademies.org.uk)

**The closing date for applications is Wednesday 18th October at 12pm. Interviews will be taking place on Monday 23rd October.**

[www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk](http://www.wellspringacademytrust.co.uk)





# READERS' REPLY



EMAIL



TWEET



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

## Harris academy chain to build 100 homes for teachers

**Martin Matthews, Oldham**

Great to see Harris Federation thinking creatively and finding a traditional solution from another sector. This is an entirely sensible idea to meet the demands of teachers for reasonable cost accommodation and schools for skilled teachers.

**Leon Cych // @eyebeams**

Could be a good idea or could be a new form of indentured servitude. Will all teachers in London be single in the future?

**Alice Woolley // @alicewoolley1**

Really interesting idea. And bound to have nice carpets/astroturf!

**Helen Wheels // @HelenWheels1**

Manchester did this 12 years ago – 'The Apple Building', refurbished flats for NQTs.

## Katie Hopkins' school tour not banned under Prevent

**Catherine Ann Coughlan**

Fantastic. Love a debate and love a different point of view – it is what democracy is all about. A dictatorship has only one point of view. Great to get our English language and literature alive again.

**Stephen Foster // @MrSRFoster**

Wondered where she would surface next. Would the EDF be allowed in a school or similar far left groups?

**Janice Rush // @Jan\_Rush**

But why would you even contemplate letting her through the door?

## Schools open three-year sixth forms to boost pupil numbers

**Ian H // @ha97lw**

How do they afford to do it in the budgets at the moment?

## DfE advertises jobs to push government's curriculum plans

**Nick // @outside\_left**

Here's a thing: don't pay these salaries; don't waste money on 'tsars' & vanity projects, pay teachers a decent salary!

## Academies (and prisons) are synchronising exams

**Louise Beasley // @loubesley91**

Makes absolute sense to me! Reduces workload and increases resource sharing,

including development of teachers – exactly what MATs should do!

**Alex Ford // @apf102**

To be honest, this sounds largely sensible. If MATs are going to train in house then having everyone on same board makes sense.

## Daventry council demands E-Act hand over sports sites

**Angela Webb // @Angie777712**

Our young people deserve the right decision promptly put into place. Being used as a bargaining tool is totally unacceptable.

## Teacher training deregulation doesn't solve the supply crisis

**Education State, address supplied**

There's another equally serious problem: retention. ITT has a crucial role to play here too. One way to improve retention is for universities and schools to refuse to work with organisations that actively encourage new trainees to see teaching as a temporary role. Better for retention to portray teaching as a long-term commitment. ITT routes might also be minded to be as honest and open as possible about the reality of teaching in their marketing, for instance, so that would-be recruits are fully informed about what they're getting into before they take the plunge. That can only help retention too.

## Extracurricular rap lessons improve pupil behaviour at Croydon secondary school

**Suzie Winter // @Suziewooziewong**

Can't wait to suggest this at our Monday meeting!! Maybe our senior leaders could swap detention for rapping!

**Ruth McCartney // @RuthieMcC19**

Music to the rescue yet again. The impact and value of music in education is far greater than advertised.

## Author and multi-academy trust CEO offers behaviour management tips on Twitter

**Anne Marie Gallagher**

Maybe if we had a supportive inspection regime and enough staff and less austerity – staff, pupils and parents would need less sticking plasters on gaping wounds? We used to have teams within local authorities that gave practical support.

## State and independent school teachers attend night classes together as part of CPD pair-up

## REPLY OF THE WEEK

**Jo Young // @joslyoung**

"We feel as an independent school that we want to learn from the state sector." We should see this being said a lot more often.

## REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



## DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

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

news@schoolsweek.co.uk  
020 3051 4287

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# PROFILE

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

**Tom Ravenscroft – CEO and founder of Enabling Enterprise, a social enterprise bringing a skills curriculum to primary and secondary schools.**

Tom Ravenscroft is perhaps the most quietly passionate proponent of a “skills” curriculum in education today – and if that rings alarm bells, keep reading.

He was just nine years old when he set up a little production line making greeting cards. His mum, a speech and language therapist, suggested he sell them at village fetes, which he did. At 11, he offered his services as a car washer around his town of Marlowe in Buckinghamshire, soon “rebranding as a car valet” to charge a bit more. In the same year, Ravenscroft’s father, an auditor with BP, helped him decide which secondary school to choose by listing his key criteria, such as “IT equipment” and showing him how to weight them mathematically. A five-mile run was treated with similar foresight, with goals worked backwards over several months.

The fruits of his parents’ support, and discussions at dinner with three bright brothers, are clear when you meet Ravenscroft, a former teacher who now runs a social enterprise working with schools. It’s not only that at Oxford he made a four-month plan for his finals, “actually stuck to it” and got a first, but that after training as a teacher for two years, he has committed the last decade to designing a formal framework for teaching what he learnt – how to plan, listen, persuade – to all pupils.

It’s called Enabling Enterprise, and he has finally put its principles in a book (“written mostly during my commute”) published this week. At his core is a belief that grew “like a hunger” while teaching year 10 pupils in Hackney as a BTEC business studies teacher – to teach them the skills they needed to access the curriculum properly.

“I’d set them to a task, and then I’d be there, pulling my hair out, wondering why they couldn’t get on with each other when I asked them to do something simple in the corner,” he admits.

The group got a full lesson on teamwork, including how to allocate roles, such as a facilitator, a note-taker and a time-keeper. Group work became civilised, and assignments to design business meetings were thoughtful. Next was how to stand up and present. More lessons were added, delivered in curriculum time over the year, to form the four key principles Ravenscroft describes now: presenting, listening and understanding; working in a team without falling out and leading others well; solving a problem and thinking creatively; and the self-management to aim for something and not give up when the going gets tough.

“By the end of the year, every single kid – no exceptions – was standing up and giving formal presentations about their businesses,” he says. He soon began to feel less “completely panicked” that his pupils would not get jobs.

But haven’t we heard it all before? The public is immune to the CBI saying, for the umpteenth time, that graduates need better skills – they still get jobs, don’t they? We already have the Careers and Enterprise Company, Business in the Community, Young Enterprise and many more rabbiting on about it, and it’s too late, anyway: “skills” has become an increasingly embarrassing word, a throwback to Sir Ken Robinson and the Blair years. Nowadays the Department for Education is run by believers in the knowledge-rich,

## "BY THE END OF THE YEAR, EVERY SINGLE KID WAS STANDING UP AND GIVING FORMAL PRESENTATIONS ABOUT THEIR BUSINESSES"

traditional curriculum. Apprenticeships and further education cover the “skills” question, separate to the work of schools.

Perhaps, says Ravenscroft, but the skills debate has been a “mess”, according to his book – with buzzwords like “business skills”, “soft skills” and worse still, “21st century skills”, muddying the waters – resulting in “confusion” and “misconceptions” among teachers.

He has now developed a Skills-BUILDER framework, which leads schools through each of the four key skills step by step, with his book as a practical manual. At primary school, it looks like this: one lesson a week, focused on a specific skill, such as presenting. Each lesson works towards a long-term project, such as creating a radio show. There is also a day spent with an impressive local employer, and a “challenge day”; a favourite of his is running an election.

At secondary school, 10-minute sessions are delivered in form time, again with visits to an employer and a challenge day. By starting early, at three years old, and measuring the outcomes tightly, “you apply a mastery approach to building these skills”, he claims. His book is “the academic underpinning for why this is a sensible approach”.

As might be apparent from the fact he spent his boyhood savings on the sensible choice of car insurance while still a teenager, this 31-year-old values order and uses the word “rigour” so often in our interview he wryly notes my article will have it throughout. In short, everything about him screams the kind of methodical approach more commonly associated with knowledge-based or direct instruction advocates than with so-called ‘progressives’. Ravenscroft and his team of formerly ‘outstanding’ teachers train staff on exactly how to deliver the lessons, and have a vision of a “master skills teacher” in every school.

Skills lessons should not be mixed with curriculum content: one hour a week is enough. And they want measurable outcomes, wherein Ofsted checks they are being taught. Sitting there exuding contented self-control, Ravenscroft is also well placed to be this voice – he was schooled at the Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe and then Oxford.

But his drive for grades in Hackney was not producing the kinds of boys he and his brothers had become through their parents – his pupils only grew as self-confident when he gave dedicated time to building those “habits”, as he also calls them. For him, education should impart a holy trinity: knowledge, character and skills, and the last of these should not be neglected.

This may be, but Ravenscroft gives over a whole chapter to two obstacles in his path: the rubbish past initiatives he has to disprove, and teachers’ ideological opposition. One headteacher asked him if this was the latest “trendy, progressive fad”. The “ideological battleground” of English education, he says, has long been divided into the view

# TOM RAV

that knowledge is the “bedrock” for developing skills and the progressive view, which claims education should develop aptitude. He identifies Daisy Christodolou, who wrote *Seven Myths About Education*, as a flag-bearer of the former, but if you want to know what Ravenscroft is really about, the heading that ends the chapter reads “Bringing the two together”.

But even with 85,000 pupils working with Enabling Enterprise this year, and 3,500 teachers trained last year, those barriers have made themselves felt: after 10 years, just 300 schools are signed on, or 1.2 per cent of the country’s total. Moreover, 10-minute sessions in PSHE cannot have the same impact as he did in Hackney, when he was a dedicated teacher delivering whole lessons for his class. While Ravenscroft disputes this, the numbers do hurt.

“I have mixed feelings,” he confesses, adding that it “frustrates the hell out of him” that his system is not in more schools. For someone so able to achieve his own goals, whether it’s a five-mile run or a social enterprise, having to wait is hard.





Tom with wife Charlotte, 2008



Tom in New Zealand 2006



Tom mountainbiking, 2004

## IT'S A PERSONAL THING

**What is your favourite film?**

The movie that stuck with me the longest was *Inception*. I think particularly because I was at the end of Christmas Day and I had had some wine and it just blew my mind! "What if this is all a dream..."

**If you were on a desert island, what would you take?**

I'd have to take a massive photo album with me, of family and friends, if I'm marooned from them.

**Who are your family?**

I've got a three-year-old son, and our second boy is due in January. I got married just over five years ago – Charlotte and I met at university, in the second term, and had our wedding at the college! My parents are from south Wales. My brothers have good solid Welsh names: Rhys, Dafydd and Harri.

**What's your favourite book?**

The best book I ever read – it's the geekiest thing – I read this 1,000 page book about the 1988 US presidential election called *What it takes: The way to the White House*. It was fascinating because it followed the nominees for the Democratic and Republican race, and you felt like you knew them. The book was basically asking, who are these people who think they should be the leader of the free world?

**Who do you admire?**

A real mix of people, but I think Brett Wigdortz at Teach First, who really stuck with it to build the organisation even though it was tough. Somebody like Wendy Kopp who runs Teach For All [a global network of non-profit groups to expand education opportunities] for about 25 years, who has been hacking away at the same problem.

**What is your earliest memory?**

I can remember going to the airport when we flew off to live in Japan for a year and half when I was about five years old. I definitely remember being in Japanese kindergarten and basically making a break for it out of the classroom, and consciously thinking "I'll pretend I didn't hear them", and just running. I remember that vividly. Knowing that I was being naughty but I was going to get away with it.

But with a book coming, free video sessions now available for teachers, and work beginning with the Careers and Enterprise Company, Ravenscroft says his team is about to "make a breakthrough fast". Are they on the cusp? "Yes."

So the skills debate is back on the table, but this time with a stricter master. If the knowledge-rich schools get on board, and some already are, the face of English education could quietly, radically rebalance after decades of "polarisation". And you never know, he might finally even sort out careers guidance – so there's an incentive.



## OPINION

LUKE  
SIBIETA

Research fellow, Institute for Fiscal Studies

# How and when money matters in education

**We shouldn't just throw money at the system, says Like Sibieta; we have to use it smartly**

School funding was a source of much controversy during the recent general election campaign, and the Department for Education changed its spending plans soon afterwards, to enable a freeze in school spending per pupil in England between 2017 and 2019, and softened plans for a national funding formula. However, coming on top of real-terms cuts of just under five per cent between 2015 and 2017, school funding is likely to remain prominent.

People believe that cuts will reduce the quality of the education children receive. Most research to date, however, has not found a strong relationship between school expenditure and pupil outcomes. This is largely because it is quite a hard question to tackle. There are many other reasons why funding and pupil outcomes may be correlated, e.g. funding is often

“**Money matters and it matters more for disadvantaged pupils**

directly targeted at pupils and schools in disadvantaged circumstances. Recent pieces of research have shown that the context, the timing and the way resources are used all matter enormously.

A recent paper from the US looked at the consequences of court-ordered school finance reforms. Until the 1970s, American schools were almost entirely funded from property taxes levied on houses in the local area, which meant wealthy areas had higher levels of funding. The courts decided this was unfair and ordered states to provide more to less wealthy areas, which ended up having some very positive consequences. For children from poorer families, the research found that a 10 per cent increase in funding per pupil increased adult earnings by as much.

The effects for children from richer families were about half as large. A similar pattern emerges in the UK: Recent research has shown that a £400 increase in primary

school funding per pupil (just over 10 per cent) can improve key stage 2 test scores by about 10 per cent of a standard deviation, with considerably larger effects for schools serving poorer families. Money matters and it matters more for disadvantaged pupils.

There is now near-universal agreement that early investments in children's skills are important for cognitive development: children are more receptive at younger ages. Later investments are also likely to be more effective as a result; it is easier to teach a pupil who has already grasped the basics.

In a recent follow up to their paper on court-ordered school finance reforms, the same authors looked at the interaction between school funding and the roll out of a government childcare scheme for disadvantaged families in the 1960s and 1970s. The results are fascinating: when not preceded by the scheme, 10 per cent more school spending had relatively small effects on adult outcomes.

But when pupils from low-income families were exposed to it in full, a 10 per cent increase boosted adult earnings by 15 per cent and – even more dramatically – reduced the chance of incarceration by the same amount.

UK evidence also shows that investments in secondary schools are more effective for pupils who have achieved better outcomes at 11. Investments in the early years and schools are sometimes presented as competing choices. However, to have full effect, we should be doing both. Sustained investment can help break the link between family income and educational attainment.

A large amount of the UK's increase in funding in the 2000s was Spent On Hiring Extra Teaching Assistants. Some research, however, has found that TAs are deployed in relatively ineffective ways: the Education Endowment Foundation has built up a wonderful set of materials showing more effective ways they can be deployed. For example, structured one-to-one catch-up interventions delivered by TAs can boost literacy and numeracy by an additional three to four months of progress.

What should we take from these findings? First, resources do matter and they matter more for disadvantaged pupils. Targeting disadvantaged pupils, for example through the pupil premium, is likely to be an effective way to narrow the achievement gap. Second, investing early and sustaining this through school is an effective way to address the attainment gap. Third, these investments will only be effective if they are used in ways that have been proven to increase attainment.

JOANNE  
CROSSLEY

Teacher and former barrister

# From courtroom to classroom: One teacher's unusual journey

**Early last year, Joanne Crossley hung up her wig and joined Teach First at 46. It was a shock to the system, but not a bad one**

It was a dog that finally pushed me over the edge. A family that cares more about its pets than its kids doesn't deserve my help – no matter how much they're paying me. This is how I flounced away from the bar to become an English teacher in Bradford. How hard can it be, I arrogantly wondered as I swapped my wig and gown for an A-line skirt and a cardigan.

“**There are more similarities between courtroom and classroom the than you might imagine**

It's harder than anything else I've ever done in my life, that's how hard. And then a bit harder than that, with more hard on top. I'm not sure I could have written this article during my first half term as a teacher – I didn't stop crying for long enough. I emailed my tutor, asking “how is it possible to be this bad”. Now, starting my second year in the classroom (my NQT year), I can finally say that this is the best decision I've ever made.

In April 2016, aged 46, I found out that I had been accepted onto the Teach First programme. I had applied only a matter of weeks beforehand, having decided that it was now or never. I had always wanted to be a teacher and from time to time the dream resurfaced, although in later years it seemed much more like a fantasy.

When I left Oxford, my mum (then a primary school deputy head in Widnes) simply wouldn't hear of teacher training. She decided that I was destined for greater things, so wanting nothing more than to outdo my older cousin, a solicitor, I decided to become a barrister. She was happy with that choice.

There are more similarities between

courtroom and classroom than you might imagine: talking, persuading, showing off, mastering the brief. Getting to grips with paediatric neuro-radiology over the course of a weekend in order to cross-examine an expert on Monday has prepared me well for grappling with the byzantine nuances of a new-spec English curriculum in time for a hastily convened department moderation meeting. And no-one wants to work on Friday afternoons, from that restless year 7 to a snippy crown court judge. Both worlds also share a demoralised public sector outlook; the publicly funded bar feels every bit as dejected, underfunded and beleaguered as the teaching profession.

The differences, too, are illuminating. Whatever their reputation, no court of appeal judge has ever thrown highlighters at me, or rejected my submissions by shouting “You're shit, miss”. Unlike their pedagogical counterparts, barristers are quite relaxed about who uses which cup in the staff room. I will admit that it's been quite a stretch to get on top of all of the IT and data requirements: most days at the bar it was me, my notebook, my files and a pen. No data captures, no assessment windows, no spreadsheets, no projector failures. I felt very avant garde just being on Twitter.

The difference that has surprised me most has been school politics, especially line management, and the general lack of understanding of experience outside of the classroom. The modern bar is a well-managed, commercial operation. As part of the finance team in my chambers, I managed a successful multimillion-pound business. As head of department at a mid-tier law firm, I managed a large team of people. I also have decades of experience of dealing with families in the most difficult circumstances. This counts for nothing in school.

I'm not sure it should, really. I accept that to have any credibility in education, you have to be able to cut it in the classroom. I do wonder, though, whether schools could do more to exploit the experience that career-changers bring with them to build better connections with the world outside the classroom.

My husband complains that my new career means that it's like living with a breakfast TV presenter, up at 5.30 to do my morning show. At least now I jump out of bed, as each day brings challenge and joy in equal measure. I like to think that my mum would be proud of me.



## New data laws come into force next May. Theresa Kerr explains how to comply

A lot of schools are aware that the law on data protection is changing but are not sure what it will mean for them in practice. A school business manager recently asked even asked me if he should be losing sleep over it. My answer? Not really.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the new law that will apply to all organisations, including schools, from 25 May 2018. It will replace the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998) which governs the way organisations process personal data about people (students, employees etc), and the legal rights that individuals have in relation to that data.

There are proactive steps that schools will need to take in order to ensure their policies and procedures are up to date and compliant for when the GDPR comes in next year. One of the biggest challenges will be finding the time to make these preparations. But first, let's bust a myth about fines.

It's true that the fines that can be issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) will be increased to an eye-watering four per cent of worldwide turnover or £17 million – but don't let this throw you.

Elizabeth Denham, the current information commissioner, who has regulatory oversight over data protection, has written in her blog that "it's scaremongering to suggest that we'll be making early examples of organisations for minor infringements or that maximum fines will become the norm". Obviously there is a risk of incurring a fine for serious



# THERESA KERR

Senior education associate,  
Winckworth Sherwood

## How to prepare for the new data protection laws

breaches, but the ICO has stated that these powers will be used "proportionately". This should provide schools with some reassurance.

So, what will change?

### Timescales and fees

There will be changes to some of the processes that many schools are already familiar with under the DPA 1998. For example, the timescales for responding to a written request from an individual for a copy of their personal data, a "subject access request", will reduce from 40 calendar days to one month.

In addition, the £10 fee which schools can currently charge before they respond to a subject access request is being scrapped. There are also new rules about the timescales for reporting certain data security breaches, depending on the seriousness of the breach.

## Schools shouldn't have to lose sleep over this change

### Consent:

Another change relates to consent. Does this mean that schools will need to obtain consent before they can process any personal data? The simple answer is no. It's likely that schools will be able to rely one or more of the five other lawful bases for processing a lot of the personal data they hold in order to run a school, for example where it's necessary for compliance with a legal obligation.

If none of the five other bases apply to a processing activity, then it is likely that you will need to obtain consent, which must be

explicit, affirmative, fully informed and freely given. An example of where the issue of consent is likely to be relevant for schools is if you want to use the personal data you hold for marketing purposes.

### Transparency

Transparency is also a key theme of the GDPR. Schools will need to be clearer with their stakeholders about the personal data they hold. Privacy notices will be an important tool for communicating this information and should be updated to ensure they clearly demonstrate that personal data is used by the school fairly and transparently. The ICO has produced a code of practice which includes more detail about privacy notices.

### Compliance

There are a number of ways that you can satisfy the act's accountability requirement including, for example, providing training to staff, carrying out data audits and keeping records of data-processing activities.

Compliance will need to be integrated into a school's daily operations and policies and become part of the culture in the same way that safeguarding has for many schools.

A data protection officer must be appointed, and they are required to report to the board, which shows that compliance with the GDPR is expected to be a feature of good governance.

In summary, while the GDPR will inevitably have an impact on schools, staff and governors/trustees shouldn't have to lose sleep over this change to the law if they take appropriate steps to prepare for it.



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# REVIEWS

## TOP BLOGS OF THE WEEK

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



Our reviewer of the week is Andrew Old, a teacher and blogger @oldandrewuk

### The problems with grade forecasting

@AnthonyRadice1

This post makes an interesting argument against forecasting grades. Rather than focusing on the usual criticisms about accuracy and the danger of lowering expectations, the author points out that the activities that lead to the most accurate predictions are not the ones that lead to the most learning. Trying to accurately predict performance is simply the wrong objective for a teacher and a waste of everyone's time.

### The teacher perspective

@greg\_ashman

Perhaps this is one of the most obvious things you could point out, but if you want to find out about what happens in classrooms, you'd do well to ask a teacher. This post observes that teachers' perspective is often ignored, and discusses a number of situations where the most important insights about a school situation could easily be uncovered just by talking to one. He concludes by encouraging teachers to join the discussion and share their views.

### Teaching: if you aren't dead yet, you aren't doing it well enough

@JamesTheo

In the aftermath of World Teacher Day, this blogger challenges those who talk about teaching as if it were so much more than a job. This talk might be intended as praise for teachers, but it risks creating a culture where they are expected to destroy themselves for the sake of their vocation.

### Voice protection and projection for teachers (and for Theresa)...

@Trivium21c

Following Theresa May's croaky conference speech, drama teacher and educational thinker Martin Robinson tells us "I felt sorry

for Theresa May. Coughing, spluttering, losing your voice whilst trying to retain a semblance of dignity during a speech must have been quite a trial. It is a trial many teachers have been through and will go through. A teacher's voice is the most important tool in his or her armoury, lose it and it is difficult to teach." He gives some useful advice on looking after your voice.

### Charter academy: teachers teach, kids learn

@naveenfrizvi

There has been intense debate on Twitter about whether attempts to introduce a strict discipline system at a struggling school could ever actually work. Much of this debate focused on one school in Great Yarmouth, where we have an account from a visitor who concludes that with the right leadership, behaviour can reach the highest standards in five weeks. Many teachers might envy the orderly environment described here.

### Better behaviour benefits everyone. Why inclusion is good for all

@tombennett71

Also on the subject of behaviour, and the systems that help ensure that it is top notch, is this post from behaviour expert Tom Bennett. He argues that requiring good behaviour is actually more inclusive than tolerating disruption. Implementing consistent routines, with suitable accommodations where required, "is one of the most rational, rewarding investments a teacher or school leader can make in their community".

### The joys of transition

@thefish64

A post to amuse anyone teaching year 7 right now. This teacher describes all the delightful quirks of new arrivals at secondary school, including the way "it takes them five minutes to unpack their bags" and being asked "if you mind them using both sides of the paper in a test". Everything in this post is very familiar.

### Daft drafting in the classroom

@Xris32

I never much appreciated the fad for getting kids to redraft their work multiple times. However, I always assumed that this was because I'm a maths teacher, and that it made much more sense for, say, English teachers. It comes almost as a relief to see that an English teacher could have similar doubts. The author of this post argues that the best time to give feedback on writing is while the writing is underway, not after a completed first draft.

# BOOK REVIEW

## What does this look like in the classroom? Bridging the gap between research and practice

By Carl Hendrick and Robin Macpherson

Published by John Catt

Reviewed by Fran Lindau, humanities teacher and head of year



They had me from the intro, which basically goes like this: "We know you're suffering. We understand that the majority of your CPD over your teaching life (15 years, in my case) has been well-meaning but inapplicable to the classroom and generally forgotten the next day. We are here to condense the research into bite-size chunks and tell you what's real and what's junk."

The concept is that authors put questions that teachers actually ask to two experts in each chapter, to flip the "outside-in model of knowledge creation" by university researchers removed from the "day-to-day practice of schooling". Sometimes the two experts agree, but sometimes they approach the question very differently.

The authors told me to "dip in and out", so I'm going to start with something in the Learning Myths chapter that flipped a switch: Bloom's taxonomy is not a triangle! You don't have to build up each element sequentially. Bloom conceived them more as "tools in a toolbox", explains Pedro de Bruyckere. Thus, it is "possible (and often quite useful) to apply in order to understand or to evaluate as you apply".

But even once you've worked out what Bloom meant... it's all a little bit emperor's new clothes: there's no research to back it up. It's just "what Bloom reckoned". Yes, those are David Didau's actual words.

Dylan Wiliam and Daisy Christodoulou share some useful insights in Assessment, Marking and Feedback. "The best person to mark a test, is the person who just took it", says Wiliam. This is due to two factors: retrieval practice, and something called the "hypercorrection effect", which basically means that seeing you got something wrong (especially if previously convinced you were right) is a really effective way of embedding

the correct information.

As a head of year, I particularly liked the chapter on behaviour. Tom Bennett speaks sense about consistency over time; you have to be willing to stick it out until kids finally see you more as an "authority figure than an interloper into their culture".

Jill Berry gives a great example of research in action when she describes an intervention that targeted one entire year group on behaviour, going into lessons over and over and looking for what was actually working, before presenting their findings to the whole staff.

Having just launched a reading scheme for our year 7s, some of the insights in the Reading and Literacy chapter were invaluable. Alex Quigley's focus on "disciplinary literacy" as part of whole-school literacy makes a huge amount of sense: "how does a scientist read, write and talk?"

While not a proponent of ED Hirsch, having been indoctrinated for years in the US by his (middle-class white Anglo-Saxon Christian) "common culture", I finally found something I could agree with: "If language is the medium by which

you instruct and assess students, then it follows that precise, accurate and efficient use of language will have a significant effect on your students' learning".

"The elephant in the room, of course, is that many teachers are not confident in their own language skills," adds Dianne Murphy, who suggests language and literacy CPD as a remedy.

I found the quotes on the summary page at start of each chapter hard to read due to the font, but the short chapter introductions were helpful.

The experts show intellectual humility, which in an era of social media face-offs is kind of nice. It's more of a "here's the research that informs the answer" approach – with no dogma.

It's going in my office. Or maybe at home on my bedside table.

As a teacher from abroad, I now feel up to date on the debates of the day. As a mentor to a young teacher, this is the book I would give, also to a whole bunch of fellow middle leaders.

"Wouldn't it be great if, for an inset day, your head took you to a good library?" muse the authors at one point. This wouldn't be a bad place to start.







# Week in Westminster

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

## SATURDAY:

Sleeping off the Conservative Party conference

## MONDAY:

The world of education held its breath on Monday as it awaited six of the most important documents ever released by the government.

Actually, it didn't, but you could be forgiven for thinking that the release of six "opportunity area" action plans was a big deal, given the fanfare afforded to them.

Officials worked over the weekend to inform journalists that the reports were coming out, even drafting a press release about the fact they were being released.

However, the reports themselves were not sent out in advance, forcing us to write about the prospect alone – and wait until 12.15am on Monday to see the real things.

Embargo bugbears aside, Week in Westminster was pleased to see some familiar faces beaming up at us from the shiny and colourful reports (that remind us

very much of Ed Balls-era education policy).

Chairs of the new opportunity area partnership boards include former RSC Tim Coulson, ex-Islington council leader and Ofsted board member James Kempton and Sir Martin Narey, of 'The Narey Review of children's residential care' fame.

## TUESDAY:

Sleeping off our excitement over the opportunity area reports.

## WEDNESDAY:

Ofsted has realised that schools are teaching to the test, and the response from the schools community was exactly what you'd expect.

Some have welcomed Amanda Spielman's musings on curriculum, in which she warns schools are focusing too much on exams and not on things like enjoying reading.

But for many school leaders, the revelation that accountability measures are having an impact on the curriculum is not news. They've been saying this for years. The

question is, will it change anything?

Talking of change, the results the headteacher board elections are out.

Thirty two people have been elected to advise the eight RSCs on their never-ending quest for academisation, and there are some interesting names in the mix.

Sir Andrew Carter, the government-teacher-training tsar-turned-teaching-apprenticeships enthusiast, has been elected to advise Dom Herrington in the south-east.

Also elected, this time to help Christine Quinn in the west Midlands, is Dame Mo Brennan of the Matrix Academy Trust.

Matrix has been in the news recently, after it was ordered to review its governance arrangements and financial management by the government following a review of its finances.

The review found that the trust had been unable to justify staff trips, one of which cost more than £17,000, and had not ensured separation of powers between members and directors.

Week in Westminster wonders if that will come up at the first board meeting.

## THURSDAY:

The whole world may have come crashing down around Nick Gibb, but the schools minister was still in jubilant mood. At least he was in public.

Despite evidence that progress on EBacc entries is stalling, Gibb issued a glowing statement about the "excellent" results.

Meanwhile, there was a collegiate atmosphere at a meeting of the public accounts committee, where DfE top brass Jonathan Slater and Peter Lauener faced a grilling over the department's accounts. At one point, Lauener cut across his boss to correct him, when Slater said there was uncertainty about school budgets beyond 2019-20.

He meant 2020-21, a dutiful Lauener pointed out. Of course, Slater's statement still made sense, but it's good to know his finance chief is still on the ball.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



**Name** Ben Ward

**Age** 33

**Occupation** Maths teacher/assistant vice-principal for teaching and learning

**Location** Manchester  
Subscriber since May 2016



## FLY ON THE WALL

**Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?**

The profile section – some really inspiring stories and plenty of wisdom.

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

More funding please...

**Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?**

Estelle Morris – at least she had actually been a teacher.

**What is your favourite story or investigation reported in Schools Week?**

The investigation into rebrokering academies was very interesting, but there are so many to choose from.

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

Pass it on.

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

Borrow Laura's little black book of contacts; there must be a lot of very interesting people in there to meet for a coffee.

**If you weren't working in education, what would you be doing?**

I seriously considered studying musical theatre, but actually studied engineering, so maybe an out-of-work actor?

**Favourite book on education?**

Do I have to choose just one? Top four of the last 12 months (in no order) would be *Liminal Leadership* (Stephen Tierney), *Clever Lands* (Lucy Crehan), *Leadership for Teacher Learning* (Dylan Wiliam) and *Making Good Progress* (Daisy Christodoulou).

**What new things would you like to see in Schools Week?**

Maybe a spot celebrating the great stuff going on in education; the people making a difference and the great ideas that are changing young peoples' lives.

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

The education secretary Justine Greening.



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





## Pupil parliament provokes passion for politics

FEATURED

A primary school has appointed its own prime minister and cabinet as a way of getting pupils actively involved in school improvement.

At Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School in Derbyshire, pupils are directly involved with big decisions, with an elected prime minister, deputy prime minister, chancellors, MPs and speakers of the house in place across the school.

For the first time this year, the cabinet will be given its own budget to spend on things pupils feel are most needed, controlled by a chancellor of the exchequer, who has the final say.

"We're going through a rigorous school improvement journey at the minute.

In order to make sure that journey accelerates, you've got to bring everybody with you, and that includes the children," explained Lee Smith, headteacher at the school. "The main idea behind it is giving the children a voice."

Each member of the cabinet is elected by their peers, with a minister for reading amongst this year's newest recruits. Duties include promoting reading across the school, and overseeing which books are bought for the library.

A recent election for this academic year's prime minister had a 97-per-cent turnout, with the winning manifesto calling for a 'bring your pet to school' day, amongst other more practical suggestions.

"We set up a polling booth and the



Head Lee Smith and Helen Wheeler MP with the candidates

children came to vote and put a cross next to the picture of who they wanted," explained Smith. "We have stuck to what it is like in Westminster, with the fact that you have to be an MP before you can run for prime minister."

In attendance at the election was Helen Wheeler, the MP for South Derbyshire, who looked on as four year 6 pupils battled for the role of PM – each penning their own manifestos which were read out to voters.

"They had some really sensible ideas like maintaining the trees because it was looking untidy, and things they wanted to do at playtime to make it more enjoyable such as quiet areas on the playground as well as areas playing music," explained Smith.



The election

"It's important children learn to not only develop their own opinions, but respect the opinions of others. That's what parliament does – it makes children more appreciative of different viewpoints."

The National  
Young Mathematicians'  
Awards 2017

## MATHS AND THEN SUM

Primary schools are encouraged to enter their brightest mathematicians into the National Young Mathematicians' Awards 2017.

Run by Explore Learning in conjunction with the University of Cambridge's NRICH project, the free-to-enter competition challenges teams of pupils to complete a series of maths problems through teamwork, mathematical thinking and systematic recording.

Teams should be made up of two boys and two girls in year 6 or below, who will compete to win their schools' the grand prize, which includes £500 worth of stationery, a trip to London's Kidzania attraction and a Meccano M.A.X. Robot – as well as the title of UK champions.

It is the eighth year the competition has run, and last year's winners, Bilton Junior School in Rugby, beat 500 other teams from across the UK to take the top title.

The deadline for schools to register is October 20, with the first heats and semi-final taking place throughout November, and the grand final hosted at the university on December 13.

To register a team, visit:  
<https://www.explorelearning.co.uk/schools/national-young-mathematicians-awards/>



The fitness zone gets a thumbs up

## £17k fitness zone keeps pupils fighting fit

Gloucestershire primary school has installed a £17,000 fitness zone to improve the health of its pupils.

The new "trim trail" play area at Carrant Brook Junior School includes climbing frames, balance boards, rope swings and monkey bars in an effort to build pupils' overall fitness levels in their recreational time, alongside the daily mile the school already implements.

Funding for the equipment came from a £10,000 grant from the council's Active Gloucestershire initiative and £7,000 of the school's own budget, combined with money collected through PTA fundraising.

Maria Budd, the headteacher of Carrant Brook, decided to implement the trim trail to tackle higher than average obesity figures at the school.

"The pupils are really excited about the new trim trail. It plays another vital part of the healthy lifestyle choices we frequently encourage," she said.

"Our school has won a variety of awards for the steps it has taken in promoting healthy living, including an Eco-Schools Silver Award. We're now aiming towards Green Flag status, so are concentrating on getting children outdoors and engaging with the environment, which our new trail supports."

## Waltham Forest's cultural revolution



Backing the bid

Primary schools across Waltham Forest are backing a bid for the area to become London's first-ever "borough of culture".

Over the coming weeks, local schoolchildren will take part in lessons inspired by the campaign, and put forward their own ideas of what could be done to improve the area.

Pupils will choose a person, place or thing they think best represents the area, and design a digital plaque – inspired by English Heritage's Blue Plaque programme – for an online map collating pupils' favourite parts of Waltham Forest and their dreams for its future.

"The borough of culture team's new programme will bring an exciting element

to our classrooms over the coming weeks," said Maureen Okoye OBE, the chief executive of Arbour Academy Trust, which runs two primary schools in the borough.

Ideas put forward by pupils will help shape the borough's bid, which will be submitted to the Mayor of London on December 1.

"Children and young people are the creative future of the borough and schools are hotbeds of talent and imagination within our local communities," said Grace Williams, Waltham Forest Council's portfolio lead member for children and young people.

"It is essential to us that what we submit to the Mayor's Office in December is something that young people in the borough want and would benefit from."



## MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



### ANNA BALSON

Executive headteacher  
(primary), Arthur Terry  
Learning Partnership

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Headteacher of Mere Green  
Primary School (ongoing)

**INTERESTING FACT:** She swims outside most  
nights in either outdoor pools or local rivers.



### MARTYN HILL

Headteacher, South  
Craven School

**START DATE:** April 2018

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Head of school at  
South Craven School

**INTERESTING FACT:** He's a big Wigan Warriors  
fan and coaches his children's rugby team.



### ROWENA COLE

Headteacher, St John's  
School, Leatherhead

**START DATE:** September 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Headteacher at Dunottar School  
in Reigate

**INTERESTING FACT:** Rowena owns a husky, has  
driven a team of sled dogs and would like to have  
a go at the 1,000-mile Iditarod race in Alaska.



### JAMES NICHOLSON

Chief financial officer,  
Academies Enterprise  
Trust

**START DATE:** November 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Director of finance and  
resources at E-ACT

**INTERESTING FACT:** He is the vice-chairman of  
the FIAT Motor Club GB, one of the UK's oldest  
single marques car clubs, and has 10 old FIATs  
to look after.



### TIM LEUNIG

Senior policy adviser to  
the secretary of state,  
DEFRA UK

**START DATE:** October 2017

**PREVIOUS JOB:** Chief analyst and chief  
scientific adviser to the DfE

**INTERESTING FACT:** Tim opened his garden  
to the public on the National Garden Scheme  
for 10 years.

### Get in touch!

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

# future



# future



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## SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

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

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

Solutions:  
Next week

## Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

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

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

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



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