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DAMIAN HINDS

MAY APPOINTS GRAMMAR
AND FAITH SCHOOLS FAN TO
TAKE THE REINS AT THE DFE
AFTER JUSTINE GREENING'S
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- 'BACK DOOR' EXPANSION OF GRAMMARS CONCERNS COMPREHENSIVE HEADS

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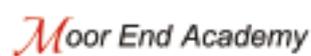
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NEWS

Government 'complacent' on unregistered religious schools

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Investigates

A London council struggling to crack down on unregistered religious schools operating in its area wants the government to introduce tougher laws to help ensure the safety of pupils.

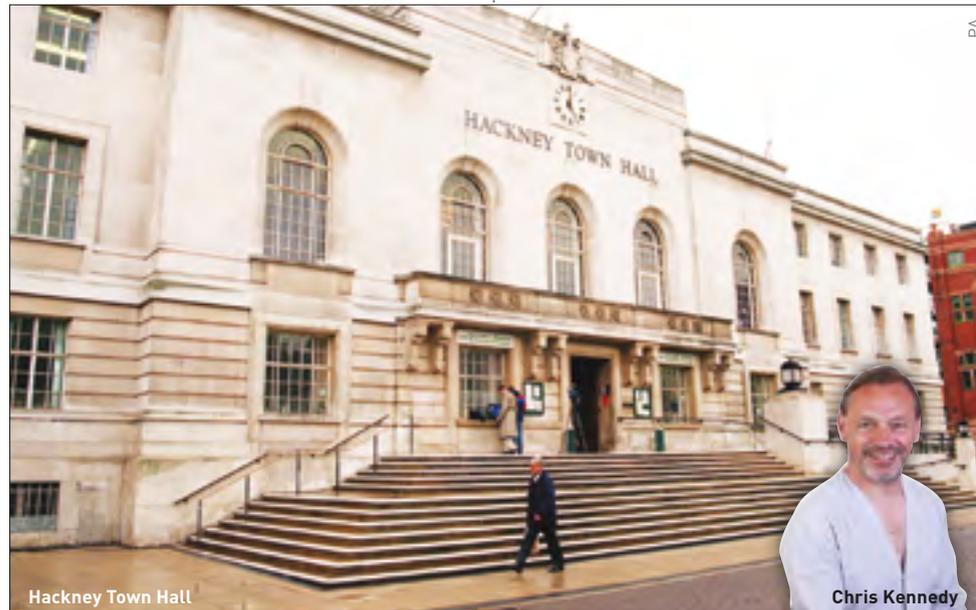
Hackney council has accused ministers of "unacceptable" complacency on the issue, after a year-long investigation found that hundreds of boys from the Charedi orthodox Jewish community were taught in settings that were not subject to Ofsted inspection or government safeguarding laws.

According to a report by a council commission, 29 unregistered Jewish yeshivas – religious schools – in the east London borough currently offer teaching to between 1,000 and 1,500 boys from the Charedi community.

The investigation identified concerns about the lack of safeguarding, the narrow educational focus and the absence of interaction with safeguarding professionals.

Many of the yeshivas claim not to be schools at all, but providers of additional activities for pupils who would otherwise be home-schooled. But the council believes they should be forced to register as schools and be subject to mainstream rules and intervention.

The council is calling on the government to tackle "patchy" and



"contradictory" legislation around how certain educational settings are registered.

According to Department for Education guidance, an independent school is one in which full-time education is provided to at least five pupils, or at least one child with a special needs plan or looked after by the council. Any institution operating for more than 18 hours a week counts as providing 'full-time education' and as such can be inspected by Ofsted, it says.

Russell Holland, a barrister at law firm Michelmores, said the powers of inspectors and councils to intervene become legally "messy" where institutions

only provide part-time education to children who are otherwise being "home-schooled".

In that case, "there's no one who can clearly say that education is unsuitable".

The Hackney investigation was prompted in part by an incident where a group of boys at an unregistered school had to be rescued from rising tides on the Kent coast in 2016.

Chris Kennedy, the councillor who chairs Hackney's commission on children and young people, said the council's research brought to the fore the "fundamental clash between parents' wishes to educate their children at these

settings and the rights of children to a broad education, where their safety is paramount."

He insisted the government "holds the key to enable local and national agencies to bring unregistered settings into compliance".

The campaign group Humanists UK has welcomed the report, and called for a central register of home-schooled pupils so officials can identify children taught in unregistered and illegal settings.

The proportion of pupils being home-schooled has more than doubled in recent years, and although the government has proposed tougher rules on home education and more powers for councils, ministers have indicated they will not change the law on what constitutes a "registered" school.

Richy Thompson, from Humanists UK, said a central register of home-schooled pupils "must be a priority for the government".

A spokesperson for the DfE said the government was making progress on closing illegal schools, pointing to Ofsted's recent annual report, which said that of 38 unregistered schools found over an 18-month period, 34 have been closed.

A new joint team with the inspectorate will "step up" investigations into these schools, which will either be closed or brought to heel with help from the police or Crown Prosecution Service, the spokesperson added.

NSN chief forced to quit new university regulator role

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Toby Young, the journalist and free schools advocate, has resigned from his new role on the board of the new universities regulator just eight days after he was appointed – and questions are now being asked about his suitability to lead the New Schools Network.

He announced last week that he had left the board of the Office for Students, amid an outcry on social media surrounding the content of historic tweets and articles, many of which are now deleted.

He said the reaction to his appointment had become a "distraction" to the regulator's work, and that he wants to focus on his work as director of the NSN, a charity set up to help open free schools.

"Education is my passion and I want now to be able to get on with the work I have been doing to promote and support the free schools movement," he wrote in *The Spectator*.



"These schools have already done a huge amount to raise standards in some of England's most deprived areas and the next challenge is to extend those benefits to every area of educational underperformance."

But the National Education Union is now asking whether Young is suitable to lead the charity.

"Toby Young remains director of a charity which has received millions of pounds of government funding," said Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the union.

"Now that knowledge of Young's repugnant statements are public knowledge, questions must be raised about his continuing employment in this role."

Although some of the criticism centred on Young's perceived lack of credentials for the OfS, the government also came under pressure to fire him over numerous offensive comments he has made on social media, and for his views on some education issues.

These include multiple tweets about the size of women's breasts, and one in which he refers to a gay celebrity as "queer as a coot". Young deleted tens of thousands of his tweets as the backlash grew.

Robert Halfon, the Conservative chair of the parliamentary education committee, was among those who criticised Young for his "dark articles" about the disabled and eugenics.

TEACHER TRAINING CRISIS DEEPENS AS NEW CANDIDATES DROP BY 33%

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Teacher training applications have dropped by a third in the past year, a situation which school leaders have described as "real cause for concern".

Data released by UCAS last week showed 12,820 people had applied for teacher training by December 18, compared with 19,330 at the same time the year before.

Some subjects have been hit particularly hard: history trainees have almost halved in number since last year, while applications for English, maths and science dropped by around 25 per cent.

James Noble-Rogers, the executive director of the Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers, said it was unclear why there had been such a "significant drop".

"Usually if the figures dropped by, say, 10 per cent, I would say it was just a blip and we can cope with that," he said. "This is a different story. I wouldn't ignore this."

Although he said there is "no overwhelming consensus" on what has caused the drop in applications, he suggested it could be part of a "perfect storm" of concerns over problems like workloads, pay and career development coming together, and urged the new education secretary Damian Hinds

to honour Justine Greening's pledge to give more support to teachers at the start of their careers.

Malcolm Trobe, the deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, agreed the data was "particularly worrying" at a time when more teachers than ever are needed. The DfE is projecting that by 2025 there will be half a million more students in secondary schools in England, who will require an extra 30,000 teachers.

He added that a "remedial" solution is needed as soon as September 2018, with a "big push" ahead of September 2019 to recruit more teachers.

"We don't just need to replace teachers that are leaving, we need to bring in a lot more if we are going to cope. Getting a drop in applications at this stage of the cycle is very concerning," he said.

Ian Hartwright, a senior policy advisor at the National Association of Head Teachers, warned that the "teacher supply model is broken".

"Although care should be exercised when considering monthly data, the ongoing teacher-supply crisis means that it is imperative that government exercise regular oversight and monitoring of trainee numbers to resolve shortages," he said.

NEWS

Damian Hinds: The

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Damian Hinds, the Oxford-educated MP for East Hampshire, is the new education secretary, after a reshuffle that saw Justine Greening dramatically resign from the government.

Hinds's appointment was announced later than planned, coming shortly after 8pm on Monday, at the tail end of a major cabinet reshuffle fraught with communications blunders and rows between the prime minister and several members of her top team.

Greening spent more than two hours in Downing Street before her resignation was confirmed. She had been offered the role of work and pensions secretary, but turned it down to the "disappointment" of the prime minister, insisting she wanted to stay at education.

The former transport and international development secretary later tweeted that it had been an "honour and privilege" to serve in the government since 2010, and claimed social mobility mattered more to her and the country than her ministerial career.

"I'll continue to do everything I can to create a country that has equality of opportunity for young people and I'll keep working hard as MP for Putney," she said.

Hinds, a former employment and treasury minister already tipped for party leadership by the former education secretary Michael Gove, has taken up the role at a time of significant reform in education policy.

Consultations on strengthening qualified teacher status and compulsory sex and relationships education are still ongoing, while a shift in priorities in the free schools programme is about to take effect, and the schools sector is still waiting to see the results of promised improvements to teacher workload, technical qualifications and careers advice.

DfE insiders reported a good atmosphere in Sanctuary Buildings as the Catholic school-educated Hinds addressed staff for the first time on Wednesday, indicating that their new boss had made a decent first impression on staff.

But a row over Hinds's appointment is already brewing, after the charity Humanists UK drew attention to his links to the Catholic Church and opposition to the 50-per-cent cap

on faith-based admissions to free schools.

According to the parliamentary register of MPs' interests, Hinds was given £5,116.25 by the Catholic Bishops' Conference in 2014 to hire an intern for his office. He was one of several MPs to benefit from such a donation, including the shadow schools minister Mike Kane and the sometime Liberal Democrat education spokesperson John Pugh.

Hinds has previously criticised the 50-per-cent cap – which the government pledged to scrap in its ill-fated 'Schools that work for everyone' white paper last year – but of which Greening was personally supportive.

In a parliamentary debate in April 2014, Hinds claimed that more inclusive admissions policies would "erode" the character of Catholic schools, and called for the cap to be scrapped.

"In light of the financial support that the new education secretary has received from



Justine Greening
@JustineGreening

Honour & privilege to serve in Govt since 2010. Social mobility matters to me & our country more than my ministerial career. I'll continue to do everything I can to create a country that has equality of opportunity for young people & I'll keep working hard as MP for Putney.

8:42 PM - 8 Jan 2018

the Catholic Church, questions must surely be asked about whether or not Damian Hinds has a conflict of interest in making a decision on the 50 per cent cap," said Humanists UK chief executive Andrew Copson.

There is also speculation that Hinds, a supporter of selective education, might encourage the expansion of grammar schools. Although any move to lift the ban on new selective schools will not make it through parliament, opponents of grammar schools are concerned he may seek to encourage them to expand their intakes and even open new satellite sites.

Beyond these issues, Hinds's policy priorities seem similar to those of his predecessor. Addressing DfE staff on Wednesday, the new secretary of state discussed his commitment to the social

Damian Hinds arriving for his first cabinet meeting on Tuesday Morning



Justine Greening exiting Number 10 after quitting

mobility agenda, signalling that Greening's flagship social media action plan, launched before Christmas, will still be implemented.

Hinds himself admits he has "big shoes to fill" following Greening's departure, as she had earned the respect of the teaching unions with her willingness to listen to the schools community. The move to replace her has been met with disappointment from union leaders.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the headteachers' union NAHT, said the DfE under Greening had been "building a strong relationship with the profession" for 18 months.

"Free from needless big-ticket policy announcements, significant progress has

been made lately on areas like primary assessment. We look forward to developing the profession's relationship with Mr Hinds, building on the platform created by Justine Greening, working collaboratively with the profession and treating school staff with respect," he said.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said his organisation was "very sorry" to see Greening's departure.

"She has tried hard to tackle the school funding crisis, without any help from the chancellor or prime minister. She has demonstrated an absolute commitment to social mobility, to addressing the serious

THE SIX BIGGEST ISSUES IN DAMIAN HINDS' IN-TRAY



1. SCHOOL FUNDING There will be no more money for schools and Hinds is going to have to sell that to leaders. One aspect he also needs to clear up is how badly hit some Conservative areas still are under the upcoming national funding formula. Hinds will be under pressure to tweak the formula so it benefits his own constituencies when another election looms.

2. TEACHER RECRUITMENT Numbers are now hitting crisis point and with the baby bulge about to hit secondary schools things could get very bad. Internally, the education department is working on the programme flat out, but the left hand is not always talking to the right. Hinds' background as a strategy consultant could come in very handy for knocking heads together and creating actual solutions.

3. GCSE GRADING The shift from A* to G in English and maths went smoothly-ish last year, but the revelation of increased numbers of re-marks means that when many more subjects shift this year there could be a wall of complaints and re-marks hitting the exam boards. If this happens, and confidence drops, Hinds will be caught pants down unless he quickly gets to grips with the technical issues behind exam changes.

4. FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT The roll-out of universal credit benefits payments is going to cause a massive headache for free meals eligibility, which has a knock-on consequence for comparing pupil outcome data in future. So far, no one has a solution. Hinds was previously the minister for employment and so has been deeply involved in the benefits changes. Hopefully he'll come up with a solution; he's got about four weeks to manage it.

new sheriff in town



EDUCATION MINISTERS: WHO STAYS, WHO GOES

Nick Gibb will continue to serve as the minister for school standards following Theresa May's reshuffle of her junior ranks.

The MP for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, who was dubbed "the immovable Nick Gibb" by *Schools Week* after he survived last June's post-election reshuffle, started his current stint as schools minister in May 2015. He has served in the role before, between 2010 and 2012, and briefly as minister for school reform from 2014 to 2015.

A proponent of rigorous academic study for all pupils, Gibb is behind several significant reforms to literacy teaching, including the controversial phonics check. He is also one of the main architects of the EBacc accountability measure, and a strong advocate of mandatory times-tables tests.

Gibb tweeted that he was "delighted to continue at the DfE".

"Thanks to teachers and the government's reforms, standards are rising: 154,000 more six-year-olds on track in reading this year; 1.9 million more pupils in good or outstanding schools; and double or triple science GCSE entries up from 63 per cent to 91 cent."

Anne Milton also remains at the department

as skills minister, but Robert Goodwill, the children's minister, was sacked. He was responsible for policy on safeguarding, school disadvantage funding, special educational needs and disabilities and free school meals funding.

He also oversaw the 12 opportunity areas that were a flagship policy of the also-departed education secretary Justine Greening.

Nadhim Zahawi, the MP for Stratford-upon-Avon and the co-founder of polling company YouGov, has been appointed as an unpaid parliamentary undersecretary of state, or a junior minister.

However, it is not clear whether Zahawi will take on Goodwill's brief in its entirety, or if a change to ministerial portfolios will take place.

Lord Agnew will continue to serve as academies minister, while Sam Gyimah, a former early-years minister, returns to the department to take on the universities brief previously held by

Jo Johnson.



difficulties in teacher recruitment and retention, and to developing education policy on the basis of evidence.

"We welcome Damian Hinds to the post and look forward to working with him in a constructive manner," He added.

Even the National Education Union, which is considerably more anti-government than either of the leadership unions, described a "good relationship" with Justine Greening.

"She listened to teachers and the unions, although she was not able to make the necessary changes in education policy," it said in a statement. "We hope Damian Hinds will be similarly willing to meet and engage with us and the profession. And we hope he



Damian Hinds
@DamianHinds

Delighted to be appointed Education Secretary – looking forward to working with the great teachers & lecturers in our schools, colleges & universities giving people the opportunities to make the most of their lives

9:23 PM - 8 Jan 2018

will be able to make the changes we need in education policy."

5. FREE SCHOOLS The prime minister's former aide Nick Timothy has written in the national newspapers that he wants to see Hinds crack on with plans for more free schools, especially religious ones and (possibly, somehow) selective ones. Timothy has even said that if Hinds can manage it then he might even become a prime minister one day. Before then however, Hinds needs to publish the grammar school consultation (now 12 months late), and open the delayed window for new free school applications (about nine months late). He also needs to figure out how to get enough sites and school leaders for all the schools that need to open to accommodate the baby-bulge generation.

6. EVERYTHING ELSE Hinds won't be able to spend all his time focused on schools. The free childcare policy is struggling, the new T-level technical qualifications are stalling, the apprenticeship reforms are multifaceted and controversial, and university fees are seen as a major battleground for any future elections. In fact, up against these demands, it could be that Hinds gets very little time to worry about anything at all in schools past priority number one.



HINDS IN 9

Nick Gibb

MEET THE NEW ED SEC

1. Born in 1969, **Damian Hinds is 48 years old**. The average age of an education secretary is 50. Coincidentally, this is also the exact same age of his predecessor Justine Greening.
2. Hinds was **born in London**. This makes him the 11th education secretary born in the capital. The last was Nicky Morgan.
3. Hinds attended St Ambrose Grammar School in Altrincham, Cheshire – one of the few parts of the country that still has selective schools. It became an academy in 2012.
4. A touchy subject of late, but as the role involves children so directly it will be mentioned at times: **Damian Hinds has three children**. This is unusual for education secretaries, as zero is the most common number. However he is not alone: Rab Butler, David Eccles, David Blunkett and Ed Balls also had three children each.
5. Hinds **studied politics, philosophy and economics at Trinity College, Oxford University**. Several other education secretaries also studied the subject, including Ed Balls and Ruth Kelly. Hinds is also not the first education secretary to study at Trinity. He is joined by Anthony Crosland, Labour's education secretary, who began dismantling the grammar school system a few years before Hinds was born.
6. While at Oxford, Hinds was president of the Oxford Union – a former glory he shares with Edward Boyle, Anthony Crosland, Quintin Hogg and Michael Gove.
7. According to his LinkedIn profile he worked in hotel management after university before becoming a strategy consultant. This is unique among education secretaries. He also did a stint in a Conservative think-tank, the Bow Group, during the early 2000s.
8. His predecessor was in role for 546 days. The average is 801 days, if you take single stints in office. **If Hinds stays in office for the average number of days he will leave on March 18, 2020.**
9. In the past Hinds has voted in favour of gay marriage (something that tripped up Nicky Morgan) and has always voted for education reforms made by the Conservatives in the past.

NEWS

SPIELMAN: 'DON'T STOP PUPILS TAKING TRIPLE SCIENCE JUST BECAUSE THEY MAY FAIL'

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools should not stop pupils from studying GCSEs they are unlikely to pass, the chief inspector of schools has said.

Earlier this week, Amanda Spielman (pictured) warned that some pupils are having their options "unnecessarily limited" by fears they will not achieve a C grade.

Instead, pupils' aspirations should be taken into account when deciding whether they take more challenging courses, such as triple science GCSE, Spielman told delegates at the Association for Science Education's annual conference.

Spielman said she feels "very upset" when she encounters schools that only allow pupils to study a subject if they are expected to pass. Simply steering them towards subjects they find easier means "too many pupils" have their education and career options "unnecessarily limited".

Most of the schools visited by inspectors direct pupils to choose between double and triple science based on their previous test results, she explained. In doing so, those schools are "overlooking pupils' own aspirations".

"Making sure there is a challenging science curriculum for all pupils ... should be a priority for all secondary schools," she said.

This focus on curriculums continues Spielman's longstanding interest in the topic.

Ofsted's national director of education, Sean Harford, has even said the inspectorate would research the link between certain kinds of curriculum and social mobility, and use any findings when inspecting the curriculums schools choose for their pupils.

By focusing on certain subjects at the expense of others, schools are making pupils choose GCSE subjects often on "less than two years" of study at secondary level, Spielman continued. But despite her appeal, she also issued a warning on prioritising pupils' motivation too much.

She pointed to the results of the OECD's 2015 PISA survey, which found that practical science experiments are negatively associated with pupil attainment – forcing authorities to return to test scores as the main means of judging what types of lessons are worthwhile.

Schools should be "uncomfortable" with the idea that practical science is "mainly about motivating" pupils, she said, adding: "Children should find experiments fun and motivating, but making sure children finish practical tasks having learned something ... is most important."

She did however reassure the audience that her team would not now start looking for a certain kind of teaching in science lessons.



Botched computing test won't count towards final GCSE grade

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A 20-hour computer science assessment will not count towards pupils' final GCSE grades in 2018 or 2019 after tasks from the test were leaked online, Ofqual has confirmed.

The exams regulator proposed changes to the assessment, currently worth 20 per cent of the overall grade, after it discovered that detailed solutions were posted on forums and viewed "thousands of times".

Earlier this week, Ofqual confirmed that the proposals will go ahead after 75 per cent of respondents to a consultation on the issue backed changes to the tests this year and next. It is not yet known what will happen in 2020.

Schools Week revealed last October that questions from Edexcel's GCSE computer science non-exam assessment, along with detailed solutions, were posted in online forums and viewed "thousands of times", prompting the exam board to replace the test.

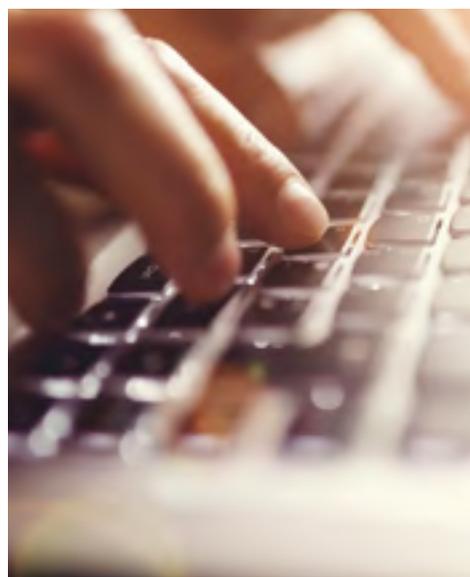
Sally Collier, the chief regulator of Ofqual, said the changes being enacted this year "will make the qualification as fair as it can be for all students".

"While the tasks themselves will no longer contribute to students' grades, we strongly believe that learning about a high-level programming language and having the opportunity to show how it can be used to solve problems is hugely important."

The decision to remove the test from final results will ensure pupils have an "equal chance to show their knowledge and skills in the exams".

Although pupils will still sit the test this year and next, they will be given feedback on their performance, rather than a mark that affects their final grade. It is not yet known what will happen in 2020.

Simon Peyton Jones, chair of the board at Computing at School, an organisation that promotes the teaching of computer science in schools, said: "The current situation could not be allowed to continue, and we welcome



the decision of Ofqual to undertake a speedy consultation. Our sympathies lie with students and teachers, who have been in a state of limbo for some time whilst awaiting this decision."

He added that now the NEA will not count towards pupils' final grade, CAS hopes the "more burdensome aspects" of administering the test are also "rapidly reviewed".

Incidents of cheating in computing exams

accounted for the vast majority of all penalties issued to students for plagiarism in GCSE and A-level exams last year, according to the latest figures.

Ofqual collected subject-specific information on exam malpractice for the first time this year, and revealed that 86 per cent of plagiarism cases had taken place in computing exams.

Plagiarism was the second largest category of student malpractice in 2017, accounting for 17 per cent of penalties issued. Access to unauthorised materials was the most common form of malpractice in 2017, making up half of all student penalties. The majority of these cases (78 per cent) involved a mobile phone, while 19 per cent were due to study guides.

Andrew Harland, chief executive of the Examination Officers' Association, said 86 per cent of the EOA's member want mobile phones banned in exam rooms, according to a recent survey.

"Most centres implement good practice with phones," he added. "In my daughter's school the drive to ban mobiles was led by the students. It worked there, so why not stop this constant handing out of punishments and give the responsibility back to students?"

TEACHERS CAUGHT CHEATING UP 150%

The number of school staff penalised for helping students cheat in exams has boomed this year, rising by around 150 per cent, but the number of penalties issued to schools and colleges has fallen.

Ofqual figures published last week show that 895 penalties were issued to school and college staff for malpractice during GCSEs and A-levels in 2017, up 535 on the 360 penalties issued in 2016.

The number of penalties handed out to students also rose in 2017, up by 535 or 24.5 per cent, from 2,180 in 2016 to 2,715 this year.

But penalties given to schools and colleges

decreased this year, falling by 35 or 22.5 per cent, from 155 in 2016 to 120 in 2017.

Andrew Harland, from the Exams Officers Association, said a recent Ofqual meeting had shown that teachers were often badly informed of exam practice, meaning "some of the so-called malpractice was down to ignorance".

"We are challenging the JCQ over their documentation and their lack of consultation even to the exam officer community, whose role is to deliver exams in centres," he said.

"We need solid, clear and unambiguous documentation by the JCQ and their members, and this needs to be fully managed by Ofqual."

GOOGLE FUNDS REAL LESSONS IN FAKE NEWS

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS
@PIPPA_AK

The battle against fake news is about to make its way into classrooms, as primary schools are sought for a pilot scheme to teach children how to critically analyse online information.

The News Wise programme wants to see "news literacy" included in the school curriculum, beginning with pilots to teach children in years five and six how to access, navigate, analyse and participate in the news.

Initially focusing on primary schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged children, the programme will create an evidence-based model on how best to introduce news literacy to primary school curriculums.

Developed jointly by the Guardian Foundation, the National Literacy Trust



to help children learn how to "spot misinformation, identify persuasion in communication and distinguish fact from opinion".

"The increased use of social media and the impact of online news on our democracies and societies mean that it's never been more important to empower children and incorporate critical thinking about the news into the curriculum," said Ben Hicks, the Guardian Foundation's executive director.

Jonathan Douglas, director of the National Literacy Trust, warned that children who aren't able to question the reliability of information online "will be hamstrung – at school, at work and in life".

"We will help children develop the critical literacy skills they need to survive and thrive in a digital world," he added.

Primary schools can register their interest in taking part in the pilot by visiting <http://bit.ly/2D9Y6G7>

and the PHSE Association, the project will be funded by Google for its first year with the pilot launching this autumn. For Google, this is part of its efforts to combat "misinformation" and support "high-quality journalism".

According to Jonathan Baggaley, the chief executive of the PSHE Association, the work will ensure teachers and schools receive "high-quality training and support"

NEWS: Grammar schools

DFE UNCLEAR ON EXISTENCE OF SELECTIVE SCHOOLS UNIT

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Confusion reigns over whether there is a specific team for grammar schools at the Department for Education. Officials are claiming it's been disbanded – but a group of school leaders seem to have met a similar team just a few weeks ago.

The National Association of Secondary Moderns, which represents non-selective schools in areas with grammar schools, was told it could meet members of the “admissions and selective schools team” last month, in an email seen by *Schools Week* (pictured).

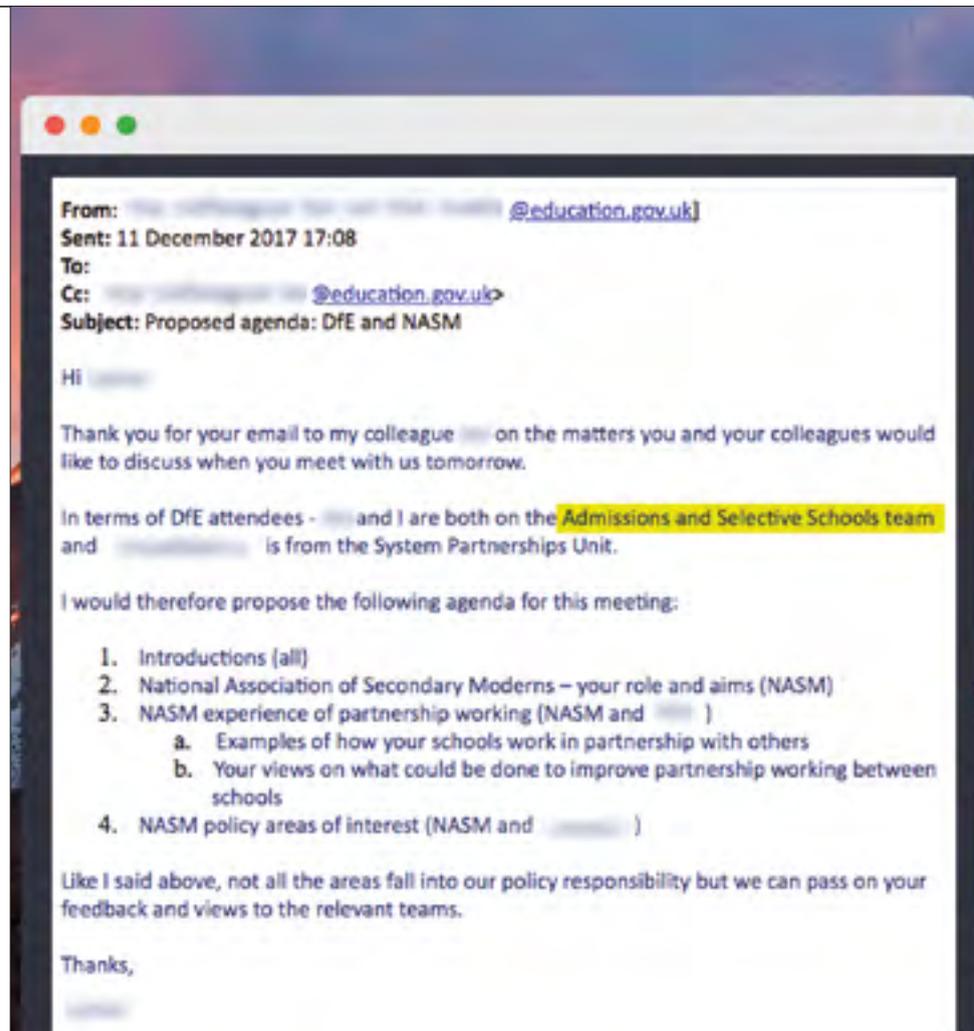
Two “DfE attendees” at the meeting were to be from that team, joined by another person from the systems partnership unit, a separate group which works to link private and state schools.

Ian Widdows, the founder of NASM, and four headteachers went to the appointment on 12 December.

The advisors were clear with Widdows their team's remit was similar to the system partnerships unit – namely, finding out ways for selective and non-selective schools to collaborate.

“We got no impression it was about [establishing] more selective schools,” he told *Schools Week*, dismissing longstanding rumours that the DfE has a unit devoted to increasing the number of grammar schools in the country.

Instead, officials shared Widdows' view



that some grammar schools “can be quite insular” and should collaborate more with other schools, on an equal and not

superior basis.

“They were very good at listening to us.” When *Schools Week* asked the DfE

whether the Selective Education team still existed, a spokesperson said it did not exist “anymore” because of a “change in policy priorities.”

However, the DfE then denied the existence of the Admissions and Selective Schools team too.

When presented with the email seen by *Schools Week*, the spokesperson admitted “there are people in the department whose remit extends to these areas” but claimed this did not amount to a formal team. They refused to share numbers of staff working in this area.

Widdows said this change of tune was confusing but that his organisation would be pleased to continue a dialogue about secondary modern schools.

Meanwhile Jim Skinner, chief executive of the GSHA, told *Schools Week* his group were “anticipating” further meetings with the selective schools team.

The DfE's denial prompted Janet Downs, a member of the Local Schools Network which campaigns for good school places, and who has submitted FOIs on the topic, to ask why the government was “trying to hide” the team and its work.

The government should also publish the response to its consultation on grammar schools, which was expected a year ago, she added.

Schools Week revealed at the end of last year that the consultation document had not been updated since the day of the general election.

Gloucestershire's grammar growth through the 'back door'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Grammar schools in Gloucestershire are expanding “through the back door” by increasing their pupil admission numbers, a furious local comprehensive head has warned – but grammar heads are pointing to funding pressures and the need for more local secondary places.

Malcolm Trobe (pictured), deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said members were reporting an increase in grammar school expansions, with specific concerns raised about Gloucestershire. *Schools Week* has previously reported that Kent grammar schools took on enough extra pupils over five years to fill a new large school.

A *Schools Week* analysis of pupil admission numbers across seven grammar schools in Gloucestershire shows that at least four of them have increased or plan to increase their pupil numbers.

One of the grammars, the Marling School for boys, said in a consultation document that it was expanding because it was oversubscribed and cuts had meant it “needs to grow” to fund itself.

The school added an extra form class (30 places) two years ago, and its sixth form will add 50 more places from next year.

Another grammar school in the area,

the Crypt School, said a projected rise in the secondary pupil population was why it would offer 38 more places from September.

Gloucestershire county council confirmed the projected rise at secondary level, but said it had asked other secondary schools near to new housing developments to increase their admissions, and a new 900-place secondary school would open in 2019 to meet the increase.

Will Morgan, the headteacher of the Cotswold School, a local comprehensive, lambasted the expanding grammars for “pillaging” pupils from nearby schools.

He accused them of not having “altruistic” motivations for increasing their admission numbers, and suggested they were instead desperately trying to shore up funding, as they had too few poor pupils who qualified for additional pupil premium funding.

Morgan has sent letters outlining his complaint to both the Crypt School, which went coeducational this year, and Sir Thomas Rich's School, which is proposing 30 more places from 2019.

He told them that by increasing the number of selective places, they were willing to “see the results of your closest comprehensives fall and their students and staff

struggle even more than they already are”.

If they would not U-turn on expansion plans, he asked that new places only be offered to the poorest pupils, rather than the “professional middle classes”.

The High School for Girls also added 22 more places this year, and Ribston Hall High School added six in 2016.

“The reality is we've got expansion by the back door in Gloucestershire,” said Morgan. “We've basically got the equivalent of extra grammar schools being set up right here.”

Meanwhile, partnerships between selective and non-selective schools have become strained in Gloucestershire, according to local MP David Drew.

Drew, the MP for Stroud, told *Schools Week* that he has seen a “real decline in collaboration” between schools, including grammar schools, in recent years.

The lack of place-planning and funding had led schools to compete for pupils, he said.

Nick Dryer, the headmaster of the Crypt School, defended the expansion, and said there was “very strong demand for entry to our school in the locality due to our reputation, as well as growing pupil numbers in Gloucester and Cheltenham”.



MINISTERIAL MUSICAL CHAIRS DELAY GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACCESS AGREEMENT

Plans for a formal agreement between grammar schools and the government to widen access for disadvantaged pupils have been interrupted by the appointment of the new education secretary.

Last year, the schools minister Nick Gibb said the Grammar School Heads Association would “codify” a commitment to improving admission rates for disadvantaged pupils in a “formal agreement with the Department for Education”.

The former education secretary Justine Greening is understood to have been ready to sign the agreement before she resigned this week, leaving the deal in limbo.

The GSHA was “very close” to completing its agreement with the DfE, according to its director Jim Skinner, but the change of secretary of state will “almost inevitably cause a further delay”.

“We were waiting on ministerial comeback, which I got the impression actually was very close,” he told *Schools Week*. “But of course now we have got a change of secretary of state. It doesn't mean it won't happen but it will almost inevitably cause a further delay.”

Skinner said moving forward again with the agreement would now be “very much something for the department”, and its new education secretary Damian Hinds, to sort out.

The Department for Education was contacted for comment, but did not respond by the time of going to print.

NEWS

CATERING STAFF FEEL EXCLUDED, UNDERVALUED AND POORLY TRAINED

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Exclusive

Over a third of school caterers feel excluded as members of staff and more than a quarter feel undervalued, a survey has revealed.

Research by the trade union Unison found that 35 per cent of kitchen staff felt excluded in their schools, and 27 per cent admitted they didn't feel valued within the school meals team.

A further 13 per cent were concerned about bullying at work from managers and 10 per cent worried about bullying from colleagues.

In November and December 2017, Unison surveyed 1,220 kitchen staff working across the UK in primary, secondary and special schools, as well as at pupil referral units.

"We don't feel part of the school as a whole. We have to cook for two schools, one of which is not our own, to keep our jobs and the department financially viable," one respondent told the union.

The research also showed that a third of the kitchen staff surveyed had not received any training in the past year. Participants reported being expected to complete "mandatory training in our own time", and having "no training opportunities" because there was "no money available".

"Every day more children with allergies are coming into school ... we are expected to deal with all situations with no training," said one response.

Respondents said they wanted the opportunity to learn more about first aid, food hygiene, health and safety, management, food allergies, cooking skills and nutrition.

In light of these findings, Unison is calling for all school meals staff "to be trained in the school food standards, to ensure all schools are providing nutritious and healthy meals".

The union wants to see employers providing "well-resourced training and development for school meals staff", to ensure "a confident and content workforce that is well equipped to meet modern demands".

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT, said it is becoming harder for schools to influence the training and development of kitchen staff, as many are now employed by subcontractors.

"When choosing a school meals provider, schools should identify companies that demonstrate a commitment to training and developing their employees," he said.

Even though a fifth of respondents earn the national minimum wage and another fifth hold down a second job, one in three kitchen staff also said they worked between two and five hours of unpaid overtime every week.

Unison wants to see all employers responsible for school meals to "stop overburdening kitchen staff".

"It's disgraceful that some of the lowest-paid employees in our education system are doing hours of unpaid overtime every week just to keep our school kitchens running and the nation's school children fed," said Ruth Levin, Unison's national officer for education and children's services.

Durand's eye-watering legal bills in wake of Ofsted battle

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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The troubled Durand Academy Trust almost trebled what it paid in legal and professional fees in 2017.

According to the chain's annual accounts, it paid more than £620,000 in 2017, rising from around £210,000 in 2016. In total, the books suggest the trust spent more than £800,000 on legal assistance in just two years.

Much of last year's increase is likely to be down to the trust's High Court action against Ofsted, after which a damning 'inadequate' grade given to Durand Academy in south London was quashed.

The accounts also reveal the financial impact of the trust's ambitious free boarding school project, which closed in September with more than £130,000 paid out to staff made redundant.

Accounts also declare that the trust held reserves of over £4 million at the end of the financial year.

Durand has been involved in a long-running dispute with various government agencies since 2014, when the National Audit Office raised concerns about related-party transactions and conflicts of interest linked to the way its leisure facilities at its school site in the borough of Lambeth were run.

In 2015, Sir Greg Martin, Durand's then-executive headteacher, was grilled by the



parliamentary public accounts committee over his £420,000 salary, which included payouts from various private companies linked to the school.

The Charity Commission also investigated, and the trust was subsequently issued with a financial notice to improve by the government's schools funding body.

Martin resigned as head in August 2015, and was later appointed to chair its board, but problems continued to plague both the trust and its boarding school, which ran up a deficit of £476,000 in its first year of operation.

The dispute with the government escalated when, in July 2016, it was issued with a notice of the Department for Education's "provisional intention" to cut off its funding.

After refusing to cut ties with ex-head Martin, the trust was told in October



Sir Greg Martin

2016 that the termination of its funding agreement would proceed, shortly before the Charity Commission ruled that the contract between Martin's company and the leisure centre linked to the school he used to run was "too generous".

Early last year, Ofsted was forced to apologise after it published an "unapproved" report that rated Durand Academy as 'inadequate'.

This forced a legal battle that only concluded in August last year, when Durand won its bid to have the report struck from the public record. In the meantime, it was informed that its funding would be terminated in July 2018.

Martin finally resigned as chair at the end of August last year, and the future of the school remains in doubt as a new sponsor is sought, and whilst Ofsted's appeal of the court ruling is considered.

Durand were approached for comment.

DFE FAILS TO ACHIEVE ITS WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP COACHING TARGET

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

The Department for Education is almost a year behind on its target to link 1,000 women teachers with 1,000 coaches, through its scheme to encourage more female school leaders.

Launched by the DfE and National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) in March 2016, the Women Leading in Education (WLE) programme promised to 1,000 connections by International Women's Day in March 2017.

But almost a year since the deadline passed, only 850 coaches have registered and the number of teachers benefiting from the coaching, which is delivered for free, is unclear.

Concerns were raised about the progress of the scheme in November 2016, when after eight months only 257 coaches were involved and the number of teachers was unknown.

In a blogpost on the topic, Hannah Wilson, headteacher of Aureus School and a coach herself, said the DfE was "not interested in being involved in the operations and logistics, just in the tokenistic tick-box exercise of doing something for equality".

When asked this week how many female

teachers were signed up to the programme now, the DfE told *Schools Week* that just 119 participants had confirmed that they were currently taking part in, or had already completed, coaching through the initiative.

A DfE spokesperson said that it is not a requirement for participants to notify the department when they receive coaching, but added that 854 "live" candidates had expressed interest in the programme.

"We hear from our community that there are more coaches registered than required and that many female teachers, especially those who are not social media, are unaware of this free resource," Wilson told *Schools Week* this week.

In November 2017, responsibility for WLE coaching was transferred from the NCTL to the Teaching Schools Council (TSC), which now hosts a directory of all the coaches who are signed up.

Participants are also now required to register before they can access the coaching directory, and the DfE expects this to provide "a more precise figure on the total number of participants".

Each coach has written a profile and the TSC recommends participants email them directly to agree "whether you wish to work together", and set "a format for your coaching".

Nicola Brooks, the "WLE champion" for the south-west, said that while this "is a great opportunity" which her network actively promotes, it can feel "impersonal".

"What would make the coaching programme better is something like what we are trying to do at our networking events – which is to let those relationships naturally occur," she said. "When you are in a room talking about things somebody might say, 'yes I'm happy to have a chat with you about that', or 'why don't you come and visit'."

There are nine school-led regional networks set up to promote the WLE programme, and the south-west is looking to build up its own coaching partnerships.

"Even if it's just through some time at the start of our three of four events per year," she said. "It helps to meet face to face."

Wilson said that the south-east network is also working to match teachers with coaches, through coaching "speed dating", adding: "The format worked really well and we have now cascaded this out across the region."

"Male and female leaders from all backgrounds have been invited to sign up to pledge to coach women to support career progression, and the recently appointed school-led regional networks will also take an active role in supporting the coaching pledge by helping to match participants with suitable coaches," a DfE spokesperson said.



Hannah Wilson

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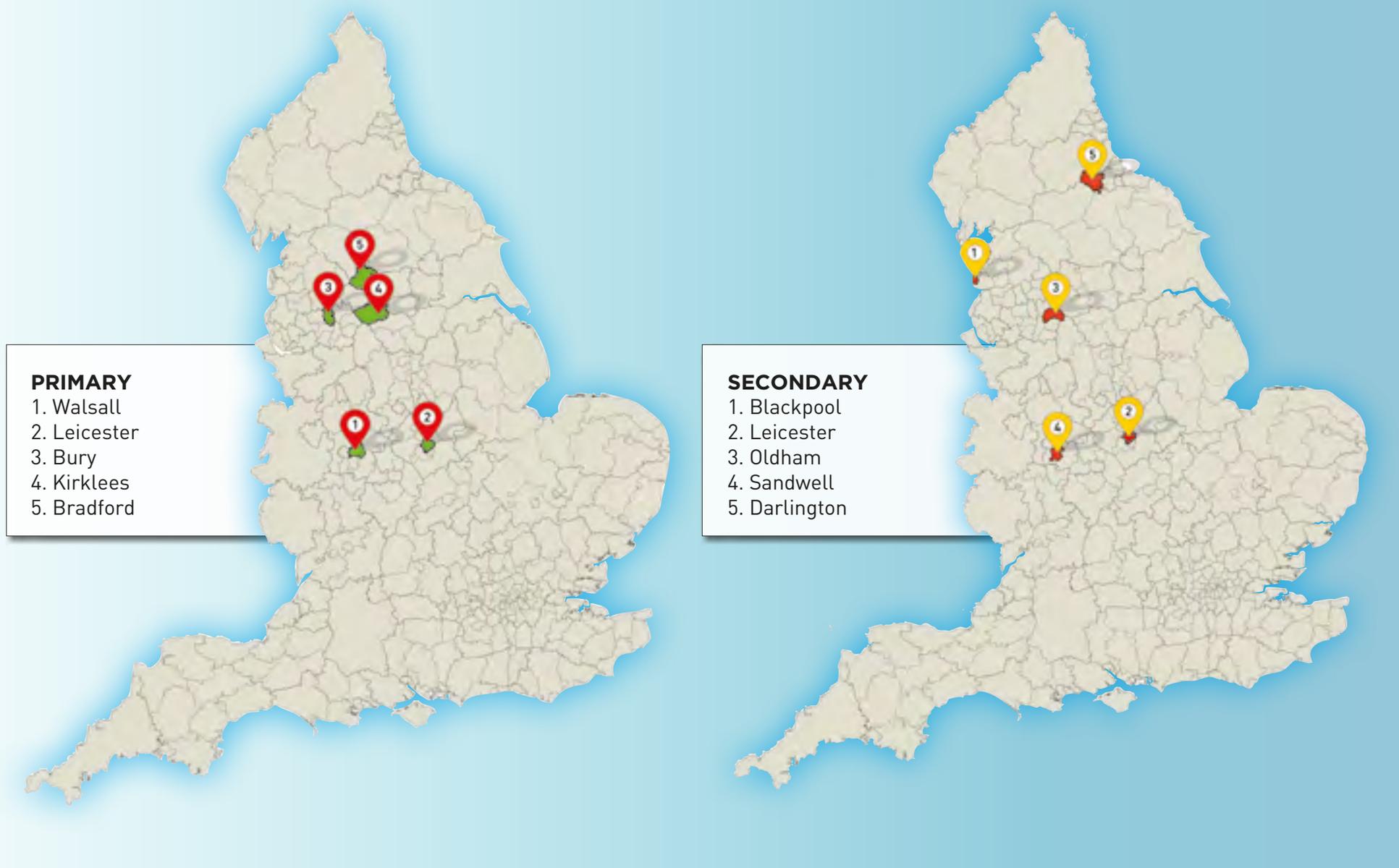
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NEWS

Blackpool and Walsall most 'in need' of free schools – or are they?

New 'need-o-meter' from the New Schools Network aims to aid free school founders in their applications, but school and community leaders question the approach



FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Investigates

Blackpool and Walsall are the two areas of the country most in need of new free schools, the government has decided, as it prepares to restrict where they can be opened.

The New Schools Network has launched a "map of need" tool, to help proposers with bids for new free schools.

According to the tool, the areas most in need of good primary free schools are Walsall, Leicester, Bury, Kirklees and Bradford.

Blackpool, Leicester, Oldham, Sandwell and Darlington are meanwhile highlighted as the areas with the greatest need for new secondary free schools.

Run by Toby Young, who founded the West London Free School, the New Schools Network is an advocacy group funded by the government to promote its controversial programme and assist with applications.

Free schools are a form of school opened via applications to central government, and

have been a pivotal government policy since 2010.

Since last summer, it has been the government's policy to wave applications through as long as proposers can demonstrate a "social need" or "significant demand" from parents.

But Justine Greening last month outlined a change to the application process that will effectively restrict where new projects can be launched. The government will now invite a new wave of mainstream applications in early 2018, "with a particular focus on enabling more challenging areas to feel the full benefit of the programme".

The New Schools Network's online tool uses national data on current school capacity, pupil-number projections and information about school performance to calculate what it calls an "NSN score". This is then used to rank areas by their apparent "need" for new free schools. The data can be downloaded by proposer groups to use in their free school applications to the Department for Education.

According to Young, who took over

as director of the network from Theresa May's former chief of staff Nick Timothy in January 2017, the tool will allow prospective free schools to "identify the areas where their efforts will have the greatest impact".

"Free schools have become an established part of the educational landscape, opening up across the country to address educational underperformance," he said. "As we continue to build new ones, our map will help ensure that those groups coming forward to set up them up focus their efforts in the areas of greatest need."

Opponents of the tool claim it will lead to disadvantaged areas inundated with unnecessary free school bids.

Stephen Tierney, chair of the influential Heads Roundtable policy group and chief executive of the Blackpool-based Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, said his area needed new free schools "like a hole in the head".

"There is a new secondary free school opening next September, and that will allow us to meet the needs of a growing pupil population. If you now start putting

in additional free schools, you will make an already fragile position even worse, because we will be massively over capacity," he said.

"One of Blackpool's major problems is a transient population; people move in and out of the area a lot. If you open more free schools, you are going to have more children moving between schools, making the population even more transient than it already is."

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary and an Oldham native, said the idea that education would be addressed by opened a few more free schools was "laughable".

"While schools face the first cuts to their budgets in a generation, recruitment targets are missed for the fifth year in a row, and teachers leave the profession in record numbers, the government can do nothing but push ahead with one of its hobby horses."

"The idea that communities like Oldham, which have been constantly unsupported and let down by this government, will thrive if only a few more free schools were opened there simply beggars belief."

NEWS

Harris to open 'innovative' vocational sixth-form for AP pupils

JESS STAUFENBERG

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Harris has announced plans to move its Aspire AP academy, which caters for pupils at risk of exclusion, onto the same site as its new vocational sixth-form.

The Harris Professional Skills Sixth-Form, also known as HPS6F, is a free school opening in south London in September which is unusual for only offering vocational courses.

Harris believes the pupils in the sixth form will act as "positive role models" to alternative provision pupils who have previously struggled to engage with learning, according to Dan Moynihan, the trust's CEO.

Experts in the sector have hailed the model as "innovative", but also raised concerns that AP pupils are being directed towards vocational options rather than academic routes and therefore risk "narrowing their curriculum".

While Aspire currently offers A-levels, these will be stopped and pupils can instead take a place at HPS6F to do qualifications up to level three – equivalent to A-level – in health and social care, media, business retail or construction, as well as English and maths.

Dave Whitaker, the executive principal at Springwell Learning Community, an AP

school in Barnsley, commended the model for enabling vulnerable pupils, who are often afraid of moving schools, to make an in-house transition to sixth form.

But he raised concern about a "potential narrowing of the curriculum" for the AP pupils. Most of these pupils have left other Harris academies and local schools, and also include school-phobic and refugee children.

Only offering four vocational qualifications, alongside mandatory GCSE retakes, could be "too little challenge" for pupils, he said. However, Moynihan insisted the new site was close enough to a number of Harris academies with strong A-level offers that pupils would be supported to move should they wish to.

The new set-up was also intended to give Aspire pupils access to new technical equipment at the site, which is a renovated former police station built in the eighties (pictured).

It will accommodate 300 pupils, 135 of whom will be AP pupils from year 9 to 11, and will be a "smaller environment" that is less intimidating than the large nearby FE colleges, he said.

About 20 of the sixth-form places will be reserved for latecomers in November, said Moynihan. He hopes this option will reduce the high rates of youngsters who drop out of courses and are not in



education, employment or training (NEET) in Croydon. By focusing on four vocational qualifications, the trust wants to direct pupils towards upcoming job opportunities in the area, such as at the new Westfield shopping complex opening in four years.

The two academies will combine resources by sharing staff and buildings, even though they remain legally separate schools. So far, the sixth form has received more than 150 expressions of interest, Moynihan confirmed.

Whitaker said the school could be very effective at reducing the number of NEET youngsters in the area, and the "proof of the pudding" would be in how many pupils progressed onto apprenticeships, jobs or further education.

Schools Week contacted local colleges for their thoughts on the new sixth form but did not receive any responses.

IN brief

LATER-LIFE TEACHING CHARITY GETS £350,000 FROM DFE

Now Teach, the organisation founded by former Financial Times journalist Lucy Kellaway to encourage professionals to become teachers later in life, is to receive £350,000 in government funding.

The money will allow the charity to expand out of London and start work in Hastings, one of the government's social mobility opportunity areas.

Launched by Kellaway and Katie Waldegrave in 2016 with the support of the Ark academy chain, Now Teach has so far recruited around 50 new maths, science and language teachers.

Kellaway, herself a Now Teach recruit who started work as a maths teacher at Hackney's Mossbourne Community Academy last September, is "delighted" with the funding to help the charity expand in its second year of operation.

Now Teach will host a launch event at Hastings Pier on January 20.

GREENING BEQUEATHS £26M FOR 35 NEW 'LITERACY HUBS'

A new Centre of Excellence for Literacy Teaching will be given £26 million in government funding to open 35 English hubs across the country, focusing on improving language and literacy teaching in reception.

A £7.7 million curriculum fund will also be used to pay "cultural and scientific institutions" to develop new teaching resources.

But the plans, announced by Justine Greening shortly before her resignation as education secretary, were dismissed as "small initiatives" and a sticking plaster by Labour, which has called for school revenue funding cuts to be reversed.

The government will also invest £435,000 in phonics and reading "partnerships", including £100,000 for 20 roadshows across the country, and use £5.7 million of existing strategic school improvement fund money to improve literacy and numeracy skills among around 40,000 children in 469 schools.

SCHEME PLACES 'VULNERABLE' PUPILS IN BOARDING SCHOOLS

The government has launched a new information service to place more vulnerable pupils into boarding schools.

The Boarding School Partnerships Information Service, run in collaboration with the Boarding Schools Association, will link schools with local authorities and children's charities so those "on the edge of care" can be put forward for bursaries and scholarships.

The service is being overseen by an "expert voluntary board", including headteachers, children's services professionals, charity executives and government officials.

Boarding school placements can offer vulnerable children "the possibility of term-time respite", and helps them develop relationships with the adults working at those schools, the government said.

"These placements won't be right for every child, but the pastoral care and educational support provided by our top boarding schools can have profound benefits for some young people," said Lord Agnew, the academies minister.

AUDIT OFFICE QUERY USE OF NCTL GRANT MONIES

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

So many teacher training providers have failed to produce accurate data about their trainees that the National Audit Office has admitted it cannot be sure funds are being used correctly. As a result, it has slapped the accounts of the National College for Teaching and Leadership with a negative judgement.

The NCTL, an executive agency of the Department for Education, provides £318 million in grants, mainly for training new teachers, and is responsible for recruiting and developing the school workforce.

After hearing concerns about the use of the grants, the NCTL sampled student records held by training providers and found that 40 per cent of tested providers hold inaccurate trainee data, potentially affecting the amount of grant funding they received.

A quarter of the sampled training providers could not provide adequate student data to back up their grant funding claims to within £1,000.

The NCTL gathers evidence on the way funding is spent through "grant returns", which training providers must prepare and have certified by independent reporting accountants.

But the NAO found the NCTL had not required grant recipients to maintain records showing that students were eligible for bursaries.

"I estimate 23 per cent of providers have



not retained full primary records and in these cases it is not possible for the NCTL to establish whether degree details were correctly recorded by the training provider, and consequently whether the trainee teacher and training provider were paid the right amount," Amyas Morse (pictured), the head of the NAO, wrote about the accounts.

"The NCTL has not provided me with sufficient evidence that grants paid to training providers and schools were used for the purposes intended, and conformed with

the legislation relevant to grant streams."

Morse told the NCTL to provide clearer instructions for reporting accountants and said its assurance team has the "capacity and capability" to help grant managers fully review and challenge grant returns.

The NCTL should also review the design of the control framework which is used to minimise risks and provide clear guidance to training providers on the records that they need to hold, he said.

The report concluded that the NCTL is now taking action to address the weaknesses spotted by the NAO, but will have limited ability to improve the situation for the 2017-18 financial year.

The NCTL is working with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to improve its assurance instructions for 2017-18.

A grants assurance working group has also been established at the DfE to draw on best practice from other teams. It will be chaired by the department's operational finance director and the NCTL's accounting officer.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We take the use of public money very seriously and have strict processes in place to ensure the accurate payment of grants. The vast majority of these payments were administered correctly.

"We have taken swift action to address the recommendations from the National Audit Office and its report has recognised the improvements we are making to strengthen our systems."

NEWS

Schools furious as Suffolk council attempts to curb free transport

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

Investigates

Opposition is mounting against plans to cancel free transport from thousands of children, amid claims it will cost some schools millions of pounds.

Pupils in Suffolk currently receive free transport to any school if they live in its catchment area, even if it is not their nearest.

But the county council is consulting on plans to provide transport only to a pupil's nearest school, which is the minimum service it must provide by law. One local head said he had "never seen anything as unutterably stupid from a local authority in my whole career".

This could save £3 million a year, but will see around 3,700 pupils losing out, which schools say will cost them numbers and funding.

Thurston Community College estimates 812 pupils would be affected, costing it up to £3.5 million. Over 500 live closer to the nearby Ixworth Free School which opened in September 2014 and was rated 'requires improvement' at its first Ofsted inspection last July.

Thurston is rated 'good', but the council confirmed proposals would not take Ofsted grades into account.

Rachel Gooch, a governor at the school, claimed the cost-saving plan could backfire,




because the council may only be able to cut five bus services – saving a more modest £200,000 – once it takes into account the number of children who will still need a bus to school. Others who lack a safe walking route also need transport, as will those unable to get a place in the nearest school.

The council refused to explain how much it expects to save.

Gooch said the proposals could have a "devastating impact", and may mean that only families who live in towns or who can afford to pay will get a choice over where their children go to school.

"This is crucial in terms of enabling young people to get on in their lives and become the future work force, to have those choices and that opportunity for social mobility," she

said. "This will mean less choice for pupils. Schools will be damaged and I think the upheaval will go on for years to come."

Elsewhere in the county, Hartismere School claims it could lose up to 200 pupils and more than £1 million.

Jim McAtear, its headteacher, wants the council to cease the consultation and "apologise to the people of Suffolk" for proposals which he said would lead to redundancies and disruption.

"It's an example of austerity just gone absolutely crazy. I have never seen anything as unutterably stupid from a local authority in my whole career," he said. "This should never have even been raised to disturb people's lives. I think it will actually destroy some of the most popular educational

institutions in Suffolk."

However, Gordon Jones, the council's cabinet member for children's services, defended the consultation, which he called "a very clear and genuine pledge to listen".

"This is a very serious and challenging issue to tackle, which we must in order to be able to afford to run the service in the future," he insisted.

A council report from September acknowledged the policy would have an "adverse impact" on families in rural areas.

In September 2015 the neighbouring county of Essex adopted the same policy. Parent campaign group Essex Against School Transport Cuts estimates that around 5,000 children have lost their entitlement to free transport, and some are charged up to £900 a year. It claims the council has only saved £40,000, which is cancelled by a fall in pupil numbers of 2,421 during the same time period.

"It's splitting up families and villages, and parents are having to pick up the cost. It's been pretty devastating," said one member of the group.

The council's figures show spend per day on transport fell from £134,325 in 2014/15 to £131,540 in 2016/17, and its cabinet member for education, Ray Gooding, suggested savings are "fully on track".

The Suffolk consultation will run until February 28.

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WEEK COMMENCING MONDAY, JANUARY 15

NEWS: WHILE YOU WERE AWAY

Access to the best secondaries no better than 2010

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Access to the best secondary schools has not improved since 2010, and has become more geographically unequal, according to a report by the Education Policy Institute.

The think-tank compared the availability of places in "high-performing secondary schools" – those with good value-added scores over a four-year period. It found that around a fifth of local authority areas had no such school "within reasonable travel distance of pupils" in 2015.

There is an "acute shortage of high-quality secondary school places in areas such as the north of England", according to Natalie Perera, the EPI's executive director.

"No progress has been made in addressing this issue since 2010, and as a result successive cohorts of children in many parts of the country are being let down," she said.

Conservative ministers frequently claim to have improved access to top schools since they entered government in 2010, but the EPI's latest research casts doubt on this assertion.

When discussing improvements to the school system, the government usually focuses on the number of children in schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

But while this encompasses many additional pupils as a result of the baby bulge, it does not account for large regional variations.

In fact, access to the best secondary schools has become "more geographically unequal" since 2010, in spite of policies aimed at improving school performance outside better areas like London.

For example, areas with "consistently good access" to high-performing secondary schools saw the proportion of pupils in attendance increase from 49 per cent in 2010 to 58 per cent in 2015. Many of these areas are in the capital.

However, in areas with "consistently low densities" of high-performing schools, the proportion of pupils with access to places fell from six per cent in 2010 to five per cent in 2015. These areas were all outside London and the south-east, and included Blackpool, Hartlepool, Barnsley, Redcar and Cleveland, Knowsley and Middlesbrough.

The research also found "large areas of the country in which parents and pupils currently have no access to a high-performing secondary school". For example, the north-east has "virtually no high-performing secondary schools" whatsoever.

Given the wide geographic variation in places, the government's £72 million opportunity areas initiative "seems a positive step towards addressing this challenge", the EPI said.

However, there is "no evidence" yet on whether the policy will be effective. There are also questions about its coverage.

"If opportunity areas are the government's answer to social mobility cold spots, then



they are needed in areas such as the north-east of England, where one is yet to be allocated," said Perera.

David Laws, the head of the EPI and a former politician who served as schools minister under both Michael Gove and Nicky Morgan between 2012 and 2015, said it was "shocking" that access to high-quality secondary school places in England had "become more unequal".

"In one fifth of local areas, children cannot access quality secondary school places. Government rhetoric about spreading opportunity is not being matched by experience in areas such as the north, north-east and parts of the Midlands," he said.

A government spokesperson did not comment directly on the research, pointing instead to the government's investment in opportunity areas, ignoring the criticism of the policy in the research.

The spokesperson also repeated the government's regular assertion that "there are now 1.9 million more pupils in schools rated good or outstanding than in 2010".

areas", including senior educational leaders, and financial, marketing, legal, human resources, facilities, analytical and strategic staff.

Some of the money paid for the appointment of the trust's assistant director of schools, Gary Kelly, in August 2015, around three months before the trust received any the grant. It also paid for the recruitment of several executive principals, including Dr Judith Greene and Darren Grover.

Bright Tribe is in trouble for how it has run its schools in the north, after a series of setbacks saw it pull out of the Haydon Bridge deal and announce plans to ditch Whitehaven Academy in Cumbria, which has been beset by difficulties.

The trust's chief operating officer, Mary McKeeman, resigned in November after just 10 months in post, and Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, said earlier this month that discussions about pulling out of its remaining northern schools began months ago.

The issue of the £1 million forms part of those discussions, Carter said, although it is unclear whether the trust can be compelled to pay back money that has already been spent, and for which the government's requirements were technically met.

Last month, Northumberland county council voted to demand the return of the cash.

Bright Tribe's million pound splurge on recruiting 3 schools

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The Bright Tribe academy trust has already spent "the majority" of the million pounds it was given to encourage expansion in the north of England, even though it took on just three schools, the academies minister has revealed.

Lord Agnew has written to members of the parliamentary education committee to answer questions from a recent hearing about the £1 million "northern hub" grant paid to the trust in late 2015.

He reveals that "most" of the cash has already been spent on new senior staff at the trust, which is currently in discussions about walking away from all of its schools in the region.

MPs and local education officials are campaigning hard to have the money returned to the government in full and reinvested.

Agnew claimed the trust was given the funding so it could take on "three to five" schools, the majority of which were to be rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted.

Since the funding was allocated in



Lord Agnew

November 2015, three additional academies have opened under the trust's sponsorship: Grindon Hall Christian School in Sunderland, and the Haltwistle Community Campus upper and lower schools in Northumberland. Both Grindon Hall and Haltwistle Upper School were previously 'inadequate'.

The trust had been in negotiations to take on the Haydon Bridge Academy, also in Northumberland, but walked away in 2017.

In his letter, Agnew said the majority of the funding received by the trust was used to "support the development of the trust's staffing capacity". This covered "a number of

AQA WILL INVESTIGATE ITS MARK REVIEWING PROCESS

AQA will look at how it trains staff who review exam marks, after an investigation by Ofqual into a huge rise in the number of GCSE grades changed last year.

Ofqual has published an undertaking made by the exam board, in which it admits to not having "acted sufficiently" to change the behaviour and practices of reviewers after new rules came in last year.

The number of GCSE grades changed rocketed by 52 per cent in 2017, and Ofqual's chief regulator Sally Collier has blamed the rise on exam boards that did not follow rules for grade reviews introduced in 2016.

AQA has agreed to review training methods and materials for reviewers and "ensure that we more clearly explain, including through exemplification, the circumstances in which changes of marks are appropriate, and in which they are not".

The undertaking also commits the exam board to ensuring that reviews are only conducted by trained staff.

GOVERNMENT'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT PLAN UNDER SPOTLIGHT

The government's proposals for additional mental health support for school pupils are to be scrutinised in an inquiry by the parliamentary education and health committees.

The committee will begin hearings this month, and will look at measures picked out by a consultation published in December, in particular the resources allocated to schools to help "deliver support on the front line".

Schools seem likely to get funding to train "mental health leads", and will also receive support from local mental health support teams, as part of a £300 million investment.

Pupils will also be taught about mental health in the classroom, while certain treatments, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, will be provided in schools.

TEACH KIDS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA DANGERS, SCHOOLS TOLD

Schools have a "bigger role" to play in preparing younger pupils for the "emotional demands" of social media, and must improve teachers' knowledge of the impact of apps like Instagram and Snapchat on pupils' wellbeing, the children's commissioner for England has said.

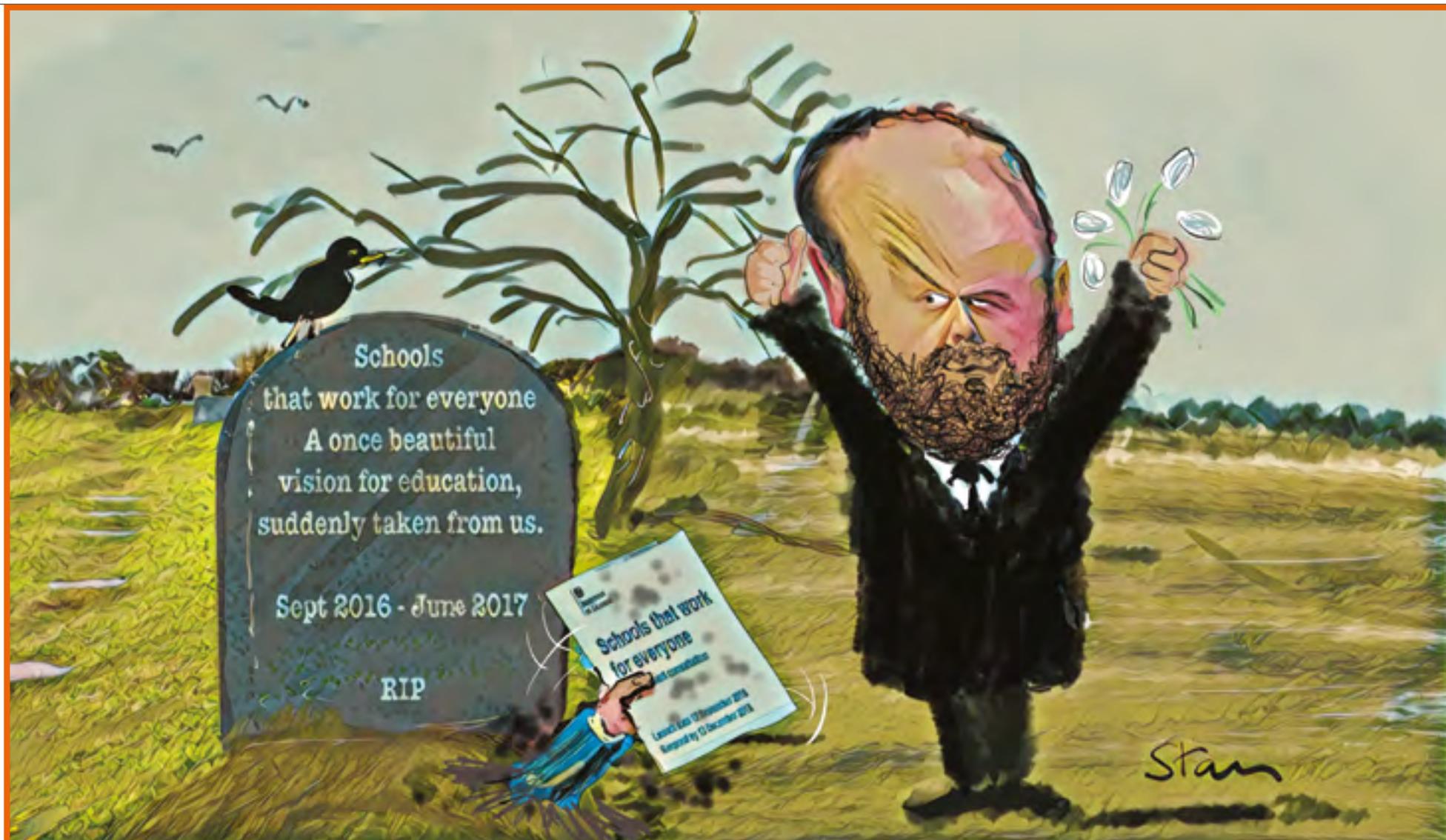
New research commissioned by Anne Longfield looked into the effects of social media on children aged eight to 12. It found the impact of the internet changed around the same time pupils move schools, as they switch from games to social platforms after entering year 7.

She now wants schools to teach pupils about the algorithms used by the various social media platforms, so they do not become "addicted" to online social interaction.

While efforts by schools to teach pupils about online safety have been successful, there is a need to think about the "subtler impacts" of social media use on children's moods and emotions, the report found.

It has prompted renewed calls from the NAHT union for compulsory PSHE lessons.

NEWS



EDITORIAL

The spectre of grammar schools is once again haunting prospects

Few political announcements have received such intense coverage before dropping so completely from newspaper pages as Theresa May's pledge to open more grammar schools. Let's wind back just over a year: it's September 2016 and the PM announces plans for more academically selective schools. Setting aside years of crossparty agreement that such plans are no good for anyone, in any country, and especially not for poor kids, May gives the idea a multimillion-pound allocation in the budget.

And then, June 8 happens. The plans are dropped – Justine Greening gets to answer other questions at conferences. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief, except for a few grammar school heads who already had plans for new sites in motion (and who then try to deny they ever did, see edition 119).

The whole thing is a bit like this week's reshuffle, one a 24-hour version of the other: all hot air before a slow pfff noise. Except in the final hour, Justine Greening resigns and grammar-school boy Damien Hinds takes her place, the same Hinds who once asked in a book why there isn't "at least one

unashamedly academically elite state school in each county".

Then *Schools Week* finds an email from Department for Education officials mentioning an 'admissions and selective schools team' that has at least two members of staff, and it turns out that Gloucestershire grammar schools have been expanding their pupil admission numbers – fairly or not – while becoming less collaborative. Finally, grammar schools were meant to sign an agreement to improve their intake of poorer pupils, but it's all been delayed.

Do warning signs come in threes? We count four. It's easy to jest, but the department must act to reassure comprehensives, of which there are 3,500 across the country, compared with 164 grammars, that plans for more selective schools will never again be unearthed.

The fact the DfE, rather than celebrating a team which according to all accounts is making admirable efforts to help grammars engage with other schools, would prefer to deny its existence, is strange.

Nothing to hide? Then tell us.

At least we've still got Nick Gibb... 😊

With schools pleading for more funding, teachers baying for blood over workload and big reforms to QTS, sex and relationships education, and primary testing underway, Damian Hinds certainly has his work cut out for him.

Far from rolling out the red carpet for the new education secretary, many in the schools community are only just coming to terms with their disappointment that Justine Greening, seen as the first education

secretary in years who truly listened to teachers, is out, and they're wary of Hinds' past comments on grammar and faith schools. Michael Gove's backing will also stir up suspicion.

But school leaders hoping for some semblance of continuity needn't fear. The Immovable Nick Gibb remains in place as schools minister, so we can expect plenty more speeches about phonics, times-tables testing and ED Hirsch.

Why we must protect staff lower down the ladder

Every member of staff in a school should feel part of the community. That includes kitchen staff, caretakers or receptionists, as much as teachers in the classroom.

A sense of belonging is both important for staff welfare and motivation, and also for creating a positive environment for pupils. Overworked and undervalued individuals can't do their best work, and won't want to stay on in a place where they feel unappreciated.

It was great to see different kinds

of school staff recognised in the New Year's Honours list this year, and it was clear from speaking to them that knowing your efforts make a difference and are appreciated is key to longevity in a role.

Unpaid overtime, bullying and a lack of proper training suggests employees lower down the ladder in the education system are being taken advantage of, despite their vital contribution to the school system. This has to change.



Head of Specialist Provision

Marlborough Centre, Hoo St. Werburgh Primary School
Leadership Scale L13 - 18 FT

Are you a dynamic, passionate, and progressive leader for children with special needs? Do you have the skills and drive to lead a fantastic specialist provision from 'Good' to 'Outstanding'? Are you passionate about achieving outstanding teaching and learning in every classroom? Do you want to inspire children through engaging curriculums? Do you excel at developing your teaching and support staff to be the best they can possibly be? If so, then this could be the role for you!

We have an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, experienced and skilled individual to take on the senior role of Head of Specialist Provision at the Marlborough Centre, Hoo St Werburgh Primary School, part of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust to join our team, supporting children who have Education Health Care Plans in Autism, associated difficulties and complex matters.

You will need extensive experience of behaviour management across all Primary key stages, actively managing groups of children and coping with a complexity of challenging needs are essential for this role. The ideal candidate will be expected to have a continuous presence within the school, be responsible for leading and supporting staff within the Centre as well as collaborate with the Head of main School at Hoo St. Werburgh Primary which shares the site. Responsibilities will include the development of staff, relevant policies, training and the management of data as well as innovative leadership and being an outstanding practitioner.

The Centre and school share the inclusive ethos of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust, we firmly believe that every child has a right to an education, no matter what barriers they have to learning. We aim

to instil in our pupils an enthusiasm for learning and an interest in the world around them. We have high expectations of our pupils and staff and strive to provide a learning environment that ensures our pupils are challenged and make good or better progress in all aspects of their school life.

We celebrate every achievement of our pupils learning including their social and emotional development, life skills acquisition to the national curriculum subjects of reading, writing, maths and many more. We recognise that becoming toilet trained or trying something new to eat is just as momentous as being able to read & write.

Visits to the Centre are highly recommended. Please contact **Karen Watkin**, HR Manager: **01634 338348** for an application form please email hr@rivermeadinclusivetrust.com. If you would like to have an informal discussion with either the Director of School Improvement or the CEO please contact Karen Watkin so a time can be given.

Closing date: 26th January 2018 noon

Interviews: Week beginning 29th January 2018



THINK LEADERS.
THINK HARRIS.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Start Date: September 2018

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

We are looking for a talented Executive Leader to join us as our new Deputy Primary Director. Working alongside our Primary Director, you will lead a team of Executive Principals and our highly experienced central improvement team.

This is a high profile post with considerable autonomy, and you will play a major role in overseeing Primary education across our 22 Primary academies. You will need a strong track record of high performance and an understanding of how to work across a group of primary schools. We want a leader with proven strengths in engaging, inspiring and motivating staff and communities.

Primary education at Harris comprises of 19 academies, plus 3 all-through academies. Every inspected academy has been judged Good or Outstanding (59% Outstanding). As a top performing Multi-Academy Trust, we offer access to a professional and supportive community of academies and executive leaders. Primary Education at Harris has a highly experienced central improvement team consisting of teaching and learning consultants, Executive Principals and led by a Primary Director. We are looking for an individual who wants to help transform education in London, and create exceptional places of learning.

If you would like to discuss a post in confidence please call Sabeena Hasan, Primary Director, on:

020 8253 7777

Closing Date: 14th January 2018

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

EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL

Start Date: April or September 2018

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

We are looking for a talented Headteacher, or Executive Headteacher, who has a successful track record of school improvement and experience of working across a cluster of schools. You will join a highly collaborative central team and take responsibility for ensuring great outcomes in a group of our academies.

We want a senior leader with proven strengths in engaging, inspiring and motivating staff, and you will work collaboratively with other Principals in order to bring about rapid school improvement.



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Harris Federation 



A great opportunity has arisen at **Marston Vale Middle School**

HEADTEACHER

We seek a dynamic and positive leader for our school. We want a leader to inspire our pupils, to inspire confidence in our parents and who can work alongside our staff and our Trust to continue the huge improvements at Marston Vale.

The school is a rural 9-13 Middle School on the Bedford Borough and Central Beds border. The children are positive and well-behaved. Our staff and Governors are highly ambitious for the school and know more work is needed. This is a brilliant challenge for an exciting school leader.

CLOSING DATE: Monday 22nd January 2018

INTERVIEWS: Week commencing 29th January 2018

If you would like any further information or to organise a tour, please contact **Adrian Rogers, CEO** via arogers@chilternlearningtrust.org

For full details and an application pack please visit:

www.marstonvalemiddle.co.uk

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. CVs will not be accepted for any posts.

www.marstonvalemiddle.co.uk



@MVM_school



@marstonvalemiddleschool



A great opportunity has arisen at **Marston Vale Middle School**

PASTORAL WORKER

Marston Vale Middle School are looking for an enthusiastic Pastoral Support Worker to work in our School.

This is a new role and will report to the Senior Leader for Behaviour. Working in collaboration with the existing Behaviour Support Worker you will be responsible for supporting pupils that do not wish to engage with their learning in order to help them achieve their potential.

A first point of contact for Parents and Carers your communication skills must be to a high standard and you must have a versatile approach to communication, both written and verbal.

Supporting our Heads of Houses, Teaching Staff and families as well as external agencies, this role requires someone who is highly organised and can build good strong relationships with identified pupils quickly to ensure they are able and willing to engage with their learning.

Support outcomes for identified pupils to ensure they are progressing and reaching their identified potential.

CLOSING DATE: Monday 22nd January 2018

INTERVIEWS: commencing Tuesday 23rd January 2018

Should you wish to come along and look around our school prior to applying please email Sally Knight, HR Partner at sknight@marstonvalemiddle.co.uk or call her on 01234 768224.

For full details and an application pack please visit:

www.marstonvalemiddle.co.uk

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. CVs will not be accepted for any posts.

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SCHOOLS WEEK

Clare is our new sales executive at Schools Week, and your go-to person for everything jobs-related.

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**I'm here to make
recruitment that bit easier**





Principal

South Pennine Academies are seeking an outstanding person for the post of Principal to lead Brambles Primary Academy, a brand new Academy in the North of Huddersfield opening in September 2018. The successful candidate will believe passionately that all children, regardless of background can make strong academic and personal progress, and succeed.

This is a truly unique and once in a life time opportunity to develop this new provision as a presumption free school from pre-opening to outstanding. This career changing opportunity is seeking its founding Principal who will be available to start as soon as possible. Jane Acklam OBE, the CEO of our Trust will lead strategically with you at this new Academy. We are looking for a leader with special qualities, who will benefit from this strong partnership.

The Governors, and South Pennine Academies will ensure that

our new Academy provides the very best educational success for our children. We will create a dynamic relationship between Governors, Sponsors and the CEO which will be both challenging and supportive as we work together to create an outstanding Academy.

If you think you would be the right person for the role then we would love to hear from you!

To read further about this exciting opportunity and apply please visit <http://bit.ly/2EvOZ2a>

Closing Date - 9am Monday 22nd January 2018
Interview Dates - Monday 29th January and Tuesday 30th January 2018

Moor End Academy



Principal

South Pennine Academies are seeking an outstanding person for the post of Principal to lead Moor End Academy in Huddersfield. The successful candidate will believe passionately that all children, regardless of background can make strong academic and personal progress, and succeed.

Moor End is our flagship school, an academy converter who converted to an academy as an 'outstanding school' in August 2011. Before this the academy was a technology college for over ten years, and this grounding in technology still forms a strong part of curriculum and student experience.

Moor End's school improvement journey is always determining new destinations and looking for new horizons. Our students are amazing; they have a thirst for learning, have fantastic relationships with staff and therefore attendance at school is high.

Jane Acklam OBE, the CEO of our Trust will lead strategically with you in

this role, and we are looking for a leader with special qualities, who will benefit from this strong partnership.

The Governors, and South Pennine Academies ensure that Moor End provides the very best educational success for our children. We will create a dynamic relationship between Governors, South Pennine Academies and the CEO which will be both challenging and supportive as we work together to continue Moor End Academy's outstanding journey.

If you think you would be the right person for the role then we would love to hear from you!

To read further about this exciting opportunity and apply please visit <http://bit.ly/2qShvZY>

Closing Date - 9am Monday 22nd January 2018
Interview Dates - Wednesday 31st January and Thursday 1st February 2018

READERS' REPLY



EMAIL



TWEET



FACEBOOK



WEBSITE

Justine Greening announces £26m for English hubs and £7.7m curriculum fund

Janet Downs, Bourne

This scattergun approach to funding will do nothing to solve the deepening funding crisis in English schools. A few million here, a few million there – these are little more than fodder for announcements (often repeated).

And how many more roadshows etc, do teachers need about phonics? Matched funding for government-approved phonics material and training was introduced early in the coalition years. This was despite primary schools already teaching phonics.

Colin Richards, Cumbria

Instead of tired and untested headline initiatives such as establishing 35 English teaching “hubs”, the government should be reversing its closure of children’s centres, perhaps renaming them “early literacy hubs” (for so they are, in part), and should also be ensuring that local libraries (“community literacy hubs”) are protected from the cuts it is inflicting on local authorities.



Alison Graham // @ecolitical

These tweaks in no way deal with the underlying educational malaise.

Toby Young’s new job will ‘undermine’ efforts to tackle sexism in schools



Janet Lord

Inappropriate appointment in the first place. The more details that come out about his attitudes, behaviours and beliefs, the more inappropriate it is.

Schools ‘must prepare’ pupils for pressures of social media



Ann Litchfield // @Ann_Litchfield

How do you propose we fit this into the curriculum? Will it be assessed with a GCSE?

Samantha Jauncey // @sljauncey

I agree that we as a society need to do more but in order to achieve this effectively schools need parents to support and engage with online safety education too.

Schools ‘must prepare’ pupils for pressures of social media

REPLY OF THE WEEK



Dave Crathorne

They do, but some parents believe it is their children’s right to be on their phone and social media, even if they are in Y1. Yet again parental responsibility is shifted to the classroom.

Reply of the week receives a Schools Week mug!



Is the grammar school policy about to get a second wind? Contributing editor Laura McInerney considers the possibility and how Labour should respond.

Ugh. It appears the grammar school zombie may be alive after all. The appointment of grammar-loving Damian Hinds to the top job suggests there may be another attempt to resurrect selective schools in the future.

Even if that doesn’t happen, the creeping expansion of pupil numbers at existing grammar schools also suggests they are trying to build outwards even if new sites aren’t on the cards.

Why the government thinks a policy so roundly rejected by the electorate back in June would suddenly become popular is beyond me, but let’s assume it’s what the Conservatives believe and that they are going to put a promise for more selective schools in a future manifesto.

The interesting question is what Labour ought to do in return. The party’s mouthy shadow education secretary Angela Rayner probably wants in her heart to close every last one of them, given that she has a bent for being overzealous and fighty. But she’s savvy enough to know that closing popular schools would be a terrible idea.

She could, however, be clever about it all and



LAURA MCINERNEY

Contributing editor, *Schools Week*

Just when you thought it was safe to go out...

combine two ideas: funding and selection.

Last year I heard Guardian journalist Fiona Millar speak at an event where she suggested a future Labour party might limit funding to grammar schools unless they change into comprehensives. In the same way that the Conservatives have dangled cash at schools to become academies, Labour could do with grammars. Want government money to maintain your roof? Then become a comprehensive. Want money to become a teaching school? Fine, just change your admission code. Want to expand your admissions? No problem – but put that 11+ in the bin.

Played this way, the dividing line becomes

clear. The Conservatives are offering no more money, but where extra exists it will go to new selective schools in areas that need more ‘good’ places. While Labour can promise more money overall (though I’m still sceptical it could ever actually raise it), and that it will open up ‘outstanding’ places in selectives to everyone or otherwise use cash saved in areas with struggling schools.

What makes me sad, however, is that grammars have even been part of the conversation this week.

One of the pressing issues that Justine Greening was finally getting to was the much-ignored alternative provision sector, which costs a small fortune and isn’t delivering

strong-enough pupil outcomes. Every year the 6,000 pupils excluded from school go on to cost an estimated £2.1 billion in education, health, benefits and criminal justice costs. Only one per cent will get the five GCSE passes that can unlock so many future opportunities. It’s a huge, complex, multifaceted challenge.

Across the country, one in three schools is in debt and their financial situations are getting worse. Teacher recruitment numbers are down a third. Special needs pupils continue sitting in limbo for months at a time.

And yet, it looks as if one of the first actions of the education secretary is going to be pushing for more religious schools and, in time, more selective ones. It would be almost funny, if it wasn’t real life.

Still, I am not one to be always down-hearted. I can do optimism!

Looking back at Hinds’ contributions when he was a member of parliament’s education committee in 2010-12, he is sharp-minded and independent. His questions show a curious mind who searches for evidence and he has a pragmatic bent. This sort of practical thinking was Justine Greening’s special power and if Hinds can replicate it, while also having the sort of charisma that Greening lacked, things might just be ok.

But keep your eye open for those grammar zombies. You never do know when they’ll attack.

OPINION

KEVIN
COURTNEY

Joint general secretary,
National Education Union

STEVE
MASTIN

Chairman, Conservative
Education Society



Whose job is it to fix the teacher workload problem?

Long, gruelling hours is an ever-present issue for the teaching profession, a point on which Steven Mastin and Kevin Courtney agree. Where they differ is on whom to blame: for Courtney the responsibility lies squarely with the government, while Mastin argues that the problems stem from bad senior leadership.

Teachers tell us time and again that workload is the main issue that drives them to despair – or in many cases out of the profession all together. The government has acknowledged the extent of the problem but as yet it has unfortunately achieved little of any real consequence in trying to address it.

Research continues to reaffirm the scale of the problem. The most recent Department for Education survey on teachers' working time only told us what we already knew: teachers are working excessively long hours – well over 50 hours per week on average. School leaders and new entrants to teaching work significantly longer hours again.

Teachers themselves sometimes have scope to help themselves – the ATL's "Make One Change" initiative gave us proof of that. Individual school leaders, where they feel confident, can adjust practices to benefit their staff. Bodies such as Ofsted can make more significant interventions, as Sean Harford has shown over the past year. The government, though, is the main culprit in prompting the workload crisis. The buck stops at the door of the DfE and it is there that we need a change of approach to schools and teachers.

First and foremost we need to radically overhaul the assessment and accountability system in schools. The climate created by the current regime leads inevitably to unrelenting demands on school leaders which lead in turn to unreasonable demands on teachers, whether in terms of planning, marking, reporting, attending meetings, or other newer demands such as emails.

Almost two years ago the DfE was persuaded reluctantly to establish its independent review groups on unnecessary workload associated with planning, marking and data management. The reports were thorough and the authors often uncompromising, pointing out how planning too often becomes "a box-ticking exercise creating unnecessary workload", and data collection "an end in itself, divorced from the core purpose of improving outcomes for pupils".

Their recommendations set out a range of useful principles to help school leaders and teachers ensure that working practices are productive, expectations reasonable and workload for teachers manageable. All of this was valuable, although we would have welcomed some more explicit identification of

bad practices that should not be undertaken.

The more challenging task is to ensure that this approach becomes embedded in schools. The DfE has produced advice, supported by the NEU and other teaching unions, but its impact so far has unfortunately been limited. We have encouraged our members to seek dialogue with their managers and collaboratively implement change, but also to challenge unnecessary practices where schools fail to adopt and adhere to the recommendations.

We may yet succeed in pushing schools into a new way of thinking. But we also need a real reversal of the government attitudes which created the problem in the first place. Ministers suggest that they don't intend to set out to create unnecessary workload and want to play a role in reducing burdens. They say their policy is to support autonomy, with schools leading the education system. So why then do they not act more decisively to reform the accountability system, lessen its

“ We need to radically overhaul the assessment and accountability system in schools

grip on the confidence of school leaders, and aim to encourage good practice rather than to stimulate insecurity?

The principle, really, is a very clear one. Working practices that have no useful impact on pupil outcomes but are a burden on school staff should stop. The insecurity behind work that's no more than a paper trail for accountability purposes must end. As another of the independent workload reports commented, "school leaders must have the confidence to reject decisions that increase burdens for their staff for little dividend".

School leaders and teachers should once more gain some professional control over the curriculum they teach and the way they teach it. Trust should return to the profession and teachers should be allowed to spend their time on making a difference to their students' lives.

I love teaching. I get to discuss history with enthusiastic young minds, helping them to share my passion for the past. I also get to work alongside dedicated and inspiring colleagues, learning from them as I progress in my career. And what's more, I get paid to do something I love.

Don't get me wrong; some days are tougher than others. Even if you work in a school where strict behaviour is maintained you will still have some difficult experiences. Any teacher will tell you that you invest so much emotionally and physically in your work. Despite what some of my friends think, my job does not begin at registration and end when the bell goes.

Good teachers put their all into a single lesson, even if they have taught for many years since the way in which pupils respond is different every time. A good teacher will know that you read the class, looking into pupils' eyes to check they understand and putting into place strategies for helping those who didn't quite get it the first time around. You leave school having taught your lessons but also having done so much more. And this does not take into account those who go the extra mile and organise afterschool sporting fixtures, run clubs, lead trips, who rehearse a choir or volunteer to be the Duke of Edinburgh coordinator.

Last term, I was moved when I read about the plight of a recent graduate who was leaving the profession due to the pressure of an unreasonable workload. A bright, passionate 22-year-old said he was leaving to "restore his emotional and psychological wellbeing". The problem was workload and everything he cited was the fault not of the DfE but his school's culture. His story is sadly familiar.

Over the years, workload has increased in different ways. Pupil learning styles was one of them: kinaesthetic, visual and aural learners need to be catered for in lesson planning. Personal, thinking and learning skills (PLTS) had to be mapped across the curriculum with evidence that pupils were meeting them. I sat through one staff meeting about De Bono's 'thinking hats', encouraging us to try to build them into our lessons. Most of us were thinking about how we could have used that one hour to mark books or plan lessons.

Many teachers have had to divide up national curriculum levels, against the advice of Ofsted and the DfE, both horizontally and vertically, so they can mark individual pieces of work in year 7 to show "progress", differentiating lessons in six different ways to "engage" pupils.

The latest workload burden for many is

“ The buck stops with schools when it comes to creating a culture of work for teachers

dialogic marking, or triple marking, in which the teacher writes a comment on children's work, and pupils then respond in green pen, redrafting their work. The teacher is then obliged to look at again, thus taking time away from teaching.

No example I cited has ever been required by Ofsted or the DfE. The buck stops with schools when it comes to creating a culture of work for teachers. Many leaders are under considerable pressure to raise standards and, at times, have unintentionally increased the burden on their already diligent teachers. They need to have the confidence to trust their professional judgment and not add to teachers' workload.

Can anything be stripped back to the basics of good teaching? Why are some teachers spending an hour creating a PowerPoint with animations? Is the whole-school marking policy part of the problem? Are those additional meetings useful? Is the reporting system onerous? If a new idea is implemented, have leaders been honest with staff about the additional workload?

Teacher workload is the responsibility of schools. School leaders can add to it or reduce it. The schools minister, Nick Gibb, categorically stated that triple marking should not be used. There is a serious workload crisis in some schools and it is not the fault of the DfE. The next time your workload is added to, ask where this has come from.

The new education secretary shares some of his predecessor's conciliatory instincts, but Tory red meat may be back on the menu, writes Jon Andrews

Despite the great hype across news outlets, ministerial reshuffles barely capture the attention of anyone outside the great bubble of Westminster. This is a misconception – in education at least – and many in the sector have struggled to turn their gaze away from the events of this week. It's hardly surprising with so much at stake on issues such as funding, teacher recruitment and school standards.

While we frequently want a new direction or a change at the top of the Department for Education, many in the education community wanted Justine Greening to stay, and they will be dissatisfied by her departure. Despite disagreements, the MP for Putney quietly developed an effective relationship with teachers, unions and policy circles.

Regarded as competent, somewhat un-ideological and willing to listen on a range of issues such as reforms to qualified teacher status, the former secretary of state warmed herself to teachers and commentators alike – even if hers was one of the shorter stints of recent times.

Greening was not afraid to tackle some of the more difficult problems in education – most notably introducing a national funding formula for schools. Always a politically risky task, successive governments continuously kicked reform to funding arrangements into the long grass – yet she should be



JON ANDREWS

Director for school system and performance, Education Policy Institute

Will we see continuity or change from Damian Hinds?

remembered as the person who delivered.

With the new secretary of state now in place, can we expect a similar outlook?

Damian Hinds may face a tough challenge – he will be of course be keen to ensure the government's reasonably sound relationship with the community is maintained – yet may also be more open to those in his party who want a shift back to more traditional policies.

The former secretary of state's consultative, evidence-based approach meant that there was a degree of hesitation on reforms which would boost grammar, free and faith schools. It would be ill-advised to automatically assume that such hesitation will continue.

We know that Hinds himself, for instance, once asked the government to lift the admissions cap on faith schools. It would be unwise to bet against new policies focusing on structural reforms to schools. And while

legislation for new grammars will remain off the table, we may see existing grammar schools expanded with more vigour than they otherwise might have been.

“ **Hinds once asked the government to lift the admissions cap on faith schools**

Significantly, if a pivot to more traditional Conservative politics is on the agenda, Hinds may also use the national funding formula to apportion additional funding to party

strongholds. The formula for 2018-19 is now set, but he may choose to address pressure from within his party by allocating higher rates of funding to non-disadvantaged pupils from 2019-20 – pressure that was resisted by his predecessor.

Teacher recruitment and retention will need to be a top priority – especially following ITT figures released in December, in which applications plummeted by a third. A robust response, through the delivery of qualified teacher status reforms, will be required.

There are also several manifesto pledges which Hinds could still look to deliver on this year. These include a review of admissions and exclusions in schools, and a comprehensive review of tuition fees – something which Greening herself is said to have prevented last year.

Hinds will also want to demonstrate a firm commitment to social mobility. A former chair of the all-party parliamentary group on social mobility, he is well versed on the issue, meaning objectives in the social mobility action plan are likely to remain in place for now. Again, though, with the government looking to reassert more authority in this area, it is possible that a recharged focus around "ordinary working families" could transpire.

The new education secretary will look to build on the achievements of his predecessor, and will certainly aim to learn from her respected, more balanced approach. Don't be surprised, however, if education issues which many assumed were buried in 2017 resurface again this year.

SUMMIT



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CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR

FREDDIE WHITTAKER & ALIX ROBERTSON

@SCHOOLSWEEK

It's that time of year again, and this time, 59 people have been recognised in the new year's honours for their services to education and politics.

A lifetime of vocal support for grammar schools has paid off for Graham Brady, the influential right-wing Tory MP, who has been knighted.

But the year has proved less impressive for academy executive heads and chief executives, with the number of honours bestowed on such folk falling from 11 last year to just 7. Are they finally falling out of favour?

Knights, Dames and Companions

Knighthood for thwarted Tory grammar school champion

An influential Conservative MP who led the abortive charge to bring back selective education has been knighted, just months after the government formally abandoned its plans for new grammar schools in England.

Graham Brady (pictured), the MP for Altrincham and Sale West, who chairs the powerful 1922 Committee of right-wing Tory backbenchers, has been recognised in the new year's honours list.

Christine Ryan (pictured), meanwhile, a board member of the exams regulator Ofqual, who led the Independent Schools Inspectorate as chief regulator and chief executive for 11 years until last April, is to become a dame.

Brady, who was tipped as a possible future



education secretary last year, has spoken of his "delight" at the "great honour" of his knighthood. It caps a disappointing year for the MP, after his party's poor performance in June's election forced the government to shelve its grammar school reforms.

A leading campaigner for the expansion of selection during David Cameron's tenure as prime minister, Brady became a prominent cheerleader for Theresa May's plans to open the first new grammar schools in decades when they were announced last year.

Despite the election result, Brady said he still expected the government to run a "modest"

pilot of new grammar schools. However, no such trial has been announced.

Ryan said she was "very surprised, proud and delighted" by her damehood.

"It is not something that when I left school at 15 I would have ever imagined was possible," she added.

Howard Orme, the Department for Education's chief financial and operating officer, has been made a companion of the Order of the Bath, an honour reserved for senior civil servants and military personnel.

Orme is one of the most visible DfE officials, because he regularly gives evidence to inquiries by parliamentary committees. He is also the department's freedom of information officer.



Commanders of the Order of the British Empire

Trust leaders and government solicitor honoured

CE medals will be handed to two academy trust leaders and a government solicitor for their services to education and schools.

David Earnshaw, the chair of the board at the Outwood Grange Academies Trust, said he was "very proud" to accept the honour, which he said also recognised the efforts of his fellow governors at the trust, which runs 24 academies in the north and east Midlands.

"Their personal voluntary

commitment plays a key part in enabling our academies to raise standards and transform the life chances of children within our communities," he said.

Earnshaw, who also sits on the Inspiration Trust's governing board, is a former secondary school headteacher who stayed involved through governance when he moved into the private sector, leading technology, marketing and business management companies.

A member of the DfE's academy and free schools board, Earnshaw became a national leader of governance in September 2016, and joined the board of Inspiration Trust in 2017.

Other figures recognised this year include David Meller, the founder of the Meller Educational Trust and Anne McGaughrin, the legal director for the Department for Education within the government's legal department.



David Earnshaw

Officers of the Order of the British Empire

Governance, character and headship

The chief executive of the National Governance Association is to be recognised for her services to education with an OBE.

A tireless campaigner who has steered the NGA through its transformation as more academy board members have joined, Emma Knights said the honour was also down to the 250,000 volunteers governing state schools in England.

"It was very pleasing to see 16 governors and trustees honoured for their voluntary contribution, and we are happy to help others nominate for this coming year," she said. "But only a few will be recognised in this way, so let's make 2018



a year in which all our volunteers are thanked."

Academic James Arthur, who leads the University of Birmingham's character education programme, has also been made an OBE.

"To be awarded an OBE for my work in character education is also an acknowledgement of the incredible team in the Jubilee Centre at the University of Birmingham," he said.

Zoe Carr (pictured), the chief executive of the WISE Academies chain and a veteran of the government's controversial headteacher board in the north of England, will also receive a medal. She has supported the regional schools



Emma Knights

commissioner Janet Renou on the headteacher board since it formed in 2014 and was re-elected for another term last year. Last year she lavished with praise by the new academies minister Lord Agnew. Carr said it was a "huge personal

accolade to be recognised at this level", and said the honour was "testament to the dedicated team of staff within WISE Academies who work tirelessly to provide an excellent education to every child within our trust".

EAR'S HONOURS



Members of the Order of the British Empire

Honours for a legendary choir leader and Herculean SEND hero

A teacher who has led a junior school choir for 20 years will be made an MBE for her services to education.

Under the direction of, Alison North the choir at Lindley Junior School in Huddersfield won the *Songs of Praise* 'choir of the year' award in 2008 and 2016, and was voted the national children's choir of the year in 2012.

"It's absolutely fabulous to have the work that I've done recognised like this. I've enjoyed everything and have so many incredible memories with so many different children," North said.

Joanna Brotherstone, a governor of Greenmead School in Wandsworth, will meanwhile be honoured for her services to children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Brotherstone has worked with the special school since 1995, and in 1998 cofounded a charity called Small Steps, to help preschool children with cerebral palsy and other motor or sensory impairments.

"I care a lot about the work and what has been really special is some of the messages I've had from parents – that makes it feel completely worthwhile," she said.

Maureen 'Mogg' Hercules has been recognised after 40 years at the helm of the independent Dallington School in London.



Alison North with the choir
Inset: Alison North



She founded the independent school for three- to 11-year-olds in 1978, and is now teaching the children of former pupils, which she sees as "a great honour".

At Prior's Court School in Hermitage, Berkshire, the director of residential care

services, Sarah Butcher, will get an MBE for her work developing autism care.

Butcher has been at the school since 1999, starting as head of night care, before moving into training and consultancy, and then residential care.

"It's an honour to be nominated, but it's also an honour to work with the young people," she said.



Mogg Hercules

British Empire Medals



Susan Clarey

Among those to receive the British Empire Medal for their services to education are Susan Clarey, an office manager at St. Anne's Church of England Primary School in County Durham and Patricia Venton, a business manager at Camelsdale Primary School.

Clarey has worked at her school for 50 years, putting in voluntary hours during the holidays and also service as a member of the governing body.

"It meant the world to me, I was completely overwhelmed and my family were delighted," she said. "If pupils need anything I have an open-door policy. The children that were here when I first started are now parents and grandparents who come back to see me."

Venton has devoted herself to all aspects of schools life, acting as a security officer, support staff governor, a member of the leadership team, and also organising the pupils' swimming.

"I've worked in the school for nearly 33 years and it's a major part of my life," she said. "I believe primary education is so important, it's starts of a love of learning. I'm here weekend and evenings – whenever I'm needed. I love the school, I don't know of any child that doesn't want to come here."

EVERY EDUCATOR ON THE 2018 NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

KNIGHTS BACHELOR

GRAHAM BRADY, MP for Altrincham and Sale West

DAMES COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

CHRISTINE RYAN, lately chief inspector, Independent Schools Inspectorate

COMPANIONS OF THE ORDER OF THE BATH

HOWARD ORME, chief financial and operating officer, Department for Education

COMMANDERS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

DAVID EARNSHAW, chair, Outwood Grange Academies Trust

ANNE MCGAUGHRIN, legal director for Department for Education, Government Legal Department

DAVID MELLER, founder, Meller Educational Trust and chair, National Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network

OFFICERS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

CHRISTINE ABBOTT, chief executive officer, the Education Alliance and executive principal, South Hunsley School and Sixth Form College, Melton

PROFESSOR JAMES ARTHUR, professor of education and civic engagement, University of Birmingham

PAMELA BIRCH executive principal, Hambleton Primary Academy and deputy chief executive officer, Fylde Coast Academy Trust

DAVID ALEXANDER CANNING

ZOE CARR, chief executive officer, WISE Academies multi-academy trust

KATHARINE CARRUTHERS, director, UCL Institute of Education, Confucius Institute for Schools

CATHERINE CLARKE, lately headteacher, King's Oak Primary School, New Malden

LYNN CODLING, executive headteacher, Portswood Primary and St Mary's CE Primary School

DAVID DEANE, headteacher, St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, national leader for education and Ofsted inspector

PHILIP HAMILTON, chief executive officer and founding trustee, Community Academies Trust

FRANCES HAWKES, headteacher, the Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools

DAVID JOHNSTON, chief executive, Social Mobility Foundation.

EMMA KNIGHTS, chief executive, National Governance Association

NAOMI MAREK, chief executive, Sky Badger

BERNICE MCCABE, headmistress, North London Collegiate School

ANTHONY O'HEAR, professor of philosophy

DR KIM TAYLOR, headteacher, Spring Common Academy

JULIA TEMPLEMAN, chief executive officer, Northampton Primary Academy Trust Partnership

ELIZABETH WOLVERSON, chief executive, London Diocesan Board, Schools Academies Trust

MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

JOAN BAMBER, governor, Dame Evelyn Fox and Newfield Schools

PAUL BERMAN, chair of Trustees, Wargrave House School

JOHN BOWERS, chair of governors, Dixons Kings Academy

JOANNA BROTHERSTONE, governor, Greenmead School, Wandsworth

CHRISTOPHER BROWN, governor, Sir Tom Finney Community High School, Preston

JIM BROWN, policy officer, secure children's homes, Department for Education

SARAH BUTCHER, director of care, Priors Court School, Berkshire

CHARLES BUTLER, assistant headteacher and head of performing arts, Ulverston Victoria High School, Cumbria

MARIA EVES, chair of governors, Broughton Hall Catholic High School and vice-chair, St Teresa of Lisieux Catholic Primary School

LOUISE FITZROY-STONE, executive director of sport, Guildford High School

LAWRENCE FORSHAW, life president, governing body, Alder Grange School, Rossendale, Lancashire

REBECCA FOSTER, course leader for physical education and senior lecturer in adapted physical education, the University of Worcester

JACQUELINE GERRARD, chair of the corporation, Stode's College, Egham

HOWARD GROVES, member, Senior Mathematical Challenge Problems Group and member, UK Mathematics Trust Challenges Sub Trust

ROSEMARY HADFIELD, member, the Clement Danes Trust Board and associate governor, Westfield Academy, Hertfordshire

JANE HARLEY, team leader, teacher strategy and practice unit, the Department for Education

ANNE HENDY, teacher, Hitchin Girls' School

MAUREEN HERCULES, founder and headteacher, Dallington School, London.

MAGGIE HOLLINGSWORTH, lately trustee, Inspiration Trust

COLIN HOPKINS, school governor and chair of trustees, Church of England Central Education Trust

ANTHONY JOHNSON, chair of governors, Oaklands Primary School, Yeovil, Somerset

KATHLEEN KEILLOR, governor, Caroline Haslett Primary School

GILLIAN LANE, lately vice-chair of governors, Central College Nottingham and governor, Acorn Primary Federation

ROISIN MAGUIRE, lately principal, St Joseph's College, Stoke-on-Trent

ALISON NORTH, teacher and choir leader, Lindley Junior School, Huddersfield

MICHAEL PIPES, lately school governor, Hampshire

KATHRYN PODMORE, lately principal, Birkenhead Sixth Form College

DR ANDREW SPIERS, director of science and technology, Ardingly College

DERRICK WILLER, schools liaison officer, Institution of Engineering and Technology

MEDALLISTS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

SUSAN CLAREY, office manager, St. Anne's Church of England Primary School, Bishop Auckland

HILARY FORD, school volunteer, Herringthorpe Junior School, Rotherham

LESLEY HALL

FIONA MCCORMACK

PATRICIA VENTON, business manager, Camelsdale Primary School

REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS
OF THE WEEK

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



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

Drama in decline

@Trivium21c

I'm quite used to hearing from teachers of subjects such as drama why their subject is important. This post makes that case, but spends most of the time explaining why it's not for the reasons you might think. The author argues that drama is not a means to some utilitarian end, it's something worthwhile in its own right.

Markopalypse now

@emc2andallthat

A short post from a very experienced teacher pointing out that "I have never marked as much or as often as I am now". This is because he has to, due to school policy, not because he would choose to if it was left to his own professional judgement. He points out that the type of marking teachers are often doing is neither required by Ofsted (despite popular myth) nor a helpful way to feedback to students.

Plenary vs pedagogy

@EnserMark

This post might seem a little out of date; perhaps people don't use three-part lessons any more. However, my experience suggests that a lot of teachers still think a lesson needs to end with a plenary. The author suggests that there are better ways to check what a class has learned: "I use low-stakes quizzes and tests the next lesson and in future lessons. I also make sure that links between lessons are explicit and check learning of previous lessons by asking questions about it in the lessons that follow."

Grannies are the solution

@iQuirky_Teacher

The author suggests this is a light-hearted post, but other than their use of the word "grannies" where "retired people" might have worked better, it seems like a serious

suggestion. The author argues that young children learn a lot from conversation with adults and that the average nursery does not have enough adults to ensure that every child has quality one-to-one conversations. The suggestion is that there are enough "grannies" out there who would be willing to volunteer to help with young children in nurseries.

Staff wellbeing matters, part 2

@5N_Afzal

This is an unusual post in that while the issues it discusses are absolutely critical in the lives of teachers, it is actually aimed at governors. It consists of a list of questions that governors can ask school leaders to address whether school culture is good for teacher wellbeing and whether workload and work-life balance are reasonable. Questions include "do you ask what is being dropped to accommodate new initiatives?" and "how do you/your school leaders deal with requests to go part time?"

SATs are not fit for purpose

@solomon_teach

This post is a real eye-opener to those of us not familiar with how SATs exams are conducted. It argues that despite the high-stakes nature of the tests, the exams in year 6 are administered in a way that must make cheating very tempting for schools. Various ways in which scrutiny is lacking are described and also some surprising procedures are mentioned.

If you are nice to them, then they will behave

@JohnKenny03

An Australian primary teacher reflects on how the behaviour management advice he was given when training did not work at all. "No amount of kindness could've stopped me getting kicked in the shins, sworn at or having paper aeroplanes thrown at me when I was not looking." It turns out that children actually need clear boundaries and consequences for stepping over them, rather than relentless positivity.

Things I was led to believe in my early years of teaching that I have come to question

@A_R_Kerrigan

Like the last post, this one takes aim at bad advice given during teacher training. A number of classic misconceptions about learning are mentioned, like "pupils learn best through discussion in small groups" or "it is better for pupils to be guided to discover something for themselves than to be explicitly taught it".

BOOK REVIEW

Flip the system UK: A teacher's manifesto

By JL Dutaut and Lucy Rycroft-Smith

Published by Routledge

Reviewed by Mark Enser, head of geography



This fascinating collection of essays from across the education spectrum could not have come at a better time. At its heart is a plea from its editors, JL Dutaut and Lucy Rycroft-Smith, that teachers are put back at all levels of the education system and given the authority and agency to enact meaningful change. This volume follows on from an international edition of the book *Flip the System, Changing Education from the Ground Up* (Kneyber & Evers 2015) and continues in its radical tone and calls for change.

The book feels so timely because of the increased desire for teachers to take control of their profession: with the rise of teacher-led conferences like ResearchEd and Northern Rock (organised by two contributors to this book, Tom Bennett and Debra Kidd respectively) and the launch last year of the Chartered College of Teaching, with a stated aim to be "an autonomous, member-driven organisation, established to promote the learning, improvement and recognition of the art, science and practice of teaching for the public benefit". Indeed, the chapter by the college's chief executive, Alison Peacock, provides a useful axis around which many of the other essays revolve.

Another essay that stands out from the pack is by David Weston, discussing how data could be (and should be) used in schools to empower rather than monitor teachers. This idea of over-monitoring professionals is a theme which runs through this collection and is well articulated throughout; it will feel very familiar to most of the teachers and school leaders reading it. This problem of data distorting the system is explored in

the chapter by Robert Loe, who makes a convincing case that Goodhart's Law makes it inevitable that any measure used to judge a school (however well-meaning) will force schools to look for ways to game the system, eventually causing the measure to lose all value.

Each essay identifies clear problems within our education system, but what is perhaps missing from some chapters is a sense of what can be done to change this system. One that does provide the starting point for this change is by Steve Watson, entitled 'A manifesto for control', which suggests schools need democracy, scholarship, activism and solidarity to really flip the system and put teachers back in control. Another useful chapter is by Tom Bennett, which shows how a more informed profession will be one that can take more control of its destiny, and then provides practical suggestions for how this can be achieved.

As this is a book on teacher agency I would have liked to have walked away with a greater sense of what I, as a classroom teacher, could do to make a difference and make some of the changes that this book calls for. I would also have expected to have seen more contributions from classroom teachers in a book about empowering the teaching profession (only nine of the 40 essays were written by people who were primarily classroom teachers at the time it was written) but perhaps this says something about the depth of the problem facing our profession; that these teacher voices are not there, are hard to find or are unwilling to take part.

This is an exciting and important book that brings together a wide range of people from across the world of education, all of whom are calling for the same thing: for teachers to take control of education in the UK. It very clearly shows where the problems are and in many cases, proposes clear solutions. While this book will inform and empower classroom teachers, it is probably school leaders and policymakers who most need to read this book as, sadly it would seem, they are the ones who can actually do what this book calls for and flip the system.





Week in Westminster

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

SATURDAY:

While the press was busy calling Justine Greening a dead woman walking, she wasn't going out without a fight and released a series of literacy initiatives.

She followed those up with some tweets, almost defying Number 10 to sack her in the middle of her social mobility crusade. A gamble that didn't pay off...

MONDAY:

On the day of reckoning, it looked like Greening would be straightforwardly sacked or moved to another department. Instead, she spent more than two hours at Downing Street arguing with the prime minister and her aides, before finally emerging without any job at all.

We're not quite sure how this happened. Did Theresa May tell her in the first five minutes and ask her to stand facing the wall for the rest of the time, just to make sure she really understood the seriousness of her offence? Or did it take Greening

that long to decide she didn't want an alternative position at the Department for Work and Pensions? Perhaps May reminded her that it was her own time she was wasting?

TUESDAY:

The schools community awoke to the news that Toby Young had quit his new Office for Students position to spend more time with his free schools.

The government had come under intense pressure to sack him from the board after his appointment was announced on New Year's Day. Concerns focused at first on his generally offensive nature, then tweets from 2009 about women's breasts, before moving on to his recent articles about "progressive eugenics".

A big hoo-ha has been made about whether or not the Office for Students, and indeed his current employer the New Schools Network, already knew about these offensive tweets and articles. However Week in Westminster would be surprised if they didn't, given that he has literally gone

on and on about all these things in public as the main way of earning his living.

Meanwhile, the schools minister continued living up to his nickname – "the immovable Nick Gibb" – after he was kept on in the position for another millennium.

WEDNESDAY:

Damian Hinds, the new education secretary, was today tipped as a future prime minister – which is a bit strange for a bloke who has been in post for all of two minutes.

Could it be that Michael Gove is lavishing praise on "young" Mr Hinds because he wants to back him in a future leadership contest?

Then again, whom did Gove back in the leadership race last year? Week in Westminster can't quite remember...

THURSDAY:

Another day, another person suggesting Hinds is next in line to the throne. Today it's long-lost former prime ministerial aide

Nick Timothy, who wrote in The Telegraph that if Hinds is an obedient little minister and brings back grammar schools, he might one day get the top job. Greening meanwhile made a beeline for the Tory backbenches that house the anti-Brexit "awkward squad", joining former edu-sec Nicky Morgan. Perhaps they can discuss their favourite *Schools Week* memories.

Greening's first move as a troublemaker was a question to the new women and equalities minister to check if her flagship reforms on sex and relationships would continue. She was reassured they would. The brief falls into the hands of Nick Gibb for the most part, but Hinds is still going to have to carry the can when it comes to committee questioning. Given that Hinds is Catholic, and previously had an intern paid for by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, eyes are closely fixed on his reactions to this issue as it rolls forward.

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEELIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS



Name Peter Flew

Age 50

Occupation

Director of the school of education, the University of Roehampton

Location

London

Subscriber since

August 2015

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...



FLY ON THE WALL

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

At home.

Which section of the paper do you enjoy the most?

I love the review section as I often read new books on teacher education and education policy.

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

As a former primary headteacher, I was always nervous about spending my meagre CPD budget on INSETs of variable quality. I think the government should fund accredited, high-quality CPD for all teachers, regardless of where they are in their careers. This would include a return to subsidies for masters-level study.

Who is your favourite education secretary of all time?

Justine Greening seems to be shaping up well and is earning the trust of schools and initial teacher education providers. She has shown that she can listen to the needs of schools and, as our local MP, I know that she engages well with local schools and with us at the University of Roehampton.

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

I am interested in anything to do with the College of Teaching. I have great hopes for this new organisation and I only hope that we can persuade all qualifying teachers to remain members once they qualify.

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

I leave it out at work for colleagues to read.

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

Celebrate the amazing partnerships universities have with schools, as we train the next generation of teachers... and somehow convince Nick Gibb that we engage with fads a lot less than some education publications will have him believe. We're used to dealing with real evidence!

Favourite memory of your school years?

Performing in the school musical, 'Love From Judy', at Broadwater School, Godalming in 1981.

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

I would still be an IT consultant in the City of London. I packed it in to do a PGCE in 2002.

Favourite book on education?

Quiet by Susan Cain. Not every child is an extrovert and being an introvert is a powerful trait to celebrate.

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

Review of recent research as well as books.

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

The editor of *Schools Week*. I always found Laura McNerney fascinating to listen to and follow on Twitter. I hope her successor is just as inspiring!



School Bulletin *with Sam King*

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



London school discovers the meme-ing of life

FEATURED

A weekly after-school club is encouraging pupil-premium students to make digital art to express their emotions, improve mental wellbeing and promote self-confidence.

The 'Game of Memes' project at London's Eltham Hill School gets students to make 'memes' and other forms of digital art, on a topic of their choosing, which are then sent to Wales-based artist Jeremy Gluck for tweaking, and returned to students.

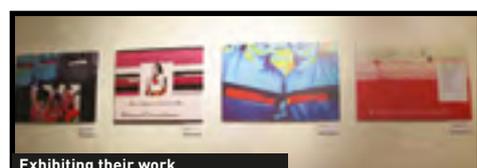
"Jeremy will either glitch the work so it looks like a computer screen has gone wrong, or add a joke or sarcastic comment to the image," explained Rosemary Osborne, the school lead practitioner who is heading up the project. "Memes say things like 'how you feel when your mum loses your mobile phone', but the themes also cover deep, profound stuff about mental health, feeling wanted, and how they feel about life, school and being a woman. There has been some powerful stuff that has really shocked me."

So far, the students' artwork has been exhibited at art spaces around London, including Vinyl Deptford and Hoxton's Hundred Years Gallery, and a 2018 summer exhibition is planned at Lewisham Art House.

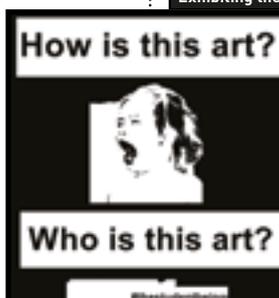
"I've been teaching for many years, but



Meme team: the pupils behind the artwork



Exhibiting their work



what is really interesting to me is the way students have totally engaged with it. It's a really exciting, innovative way of working with an artist," Osborne added.

The school is currently working with the Greater London Authority and the London Teachers'

Innovation Fund (SHINE) to run the project, after receiving £15,000 of funding



to enable disadvantaged students to work with professional artists and playwrights through a variety of school projects.

"I just think it's so powerful in engaging those students that people often don't know what to do with – students with ADHD and autism, or pupil-premium students. It's a group that often money is thrown at, and not really coordinated in a really effective way," Osborne said.



GIVING A VOICE TO PUPILS IN CARE

A charity is encouraging teachers to put forward pupils in care for its annual writing competition.

Applicants will be asked to submit a 500-word piece of writing to Coram Voice on the theme of who or what makes them proud. The work can come in the form of poems, short stories, raps or newspaper articles.

The competition, which is now in its third year, is exclusively for care-experienced young people, and is grouped into four age categories: primary school, lower secondary school (11-14), upper secondary school (15-18) and care leavers.

The winners of each age category will be announced at a London ceremony on April 9, and will receive £100 worth of shopping vouchers and a tablet computer as a prize.

Judges for this year's competition include singer Lucy Spraggan, who is a newly approved foster carer, Channel 4 News' social affairs editor Jackie Long and Jenny Molloy, the author of *Hackney Child*.

The deadline for applications is February 8, and pieces can be submitted online at coramvoice.org.uk/voices18



Pupils get their teeth into oral hygiene

Staffordshire schools develop teeth

Two Staffordshire secondary schools have teamed up with the NHS to encourage their students to make healthier lifestyle choices.

The Whole Population Health project is being piloted at Thistley Hough Academy and The Hart School, in partnership with the University Hospitals of the North Midlands NHS trust, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS trust and the North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS trust.

As part of the project, students in years 7 to 10 will take part in sessions on oral hygiene and the effects of smoking and sugary drinks. There are also plans to have a dentist visit once a month so students who are not registered with a practice can have regular check-ups.

"The sessions will look at several key health

issues including hydration, sleep and oral hygiene," said Caty Reid, vice-principal at Thistley Hough. "These have been carefully chosen as small changes in lifestyle can reduce the likelihood of developing significant and potentially life-threatening illnesses in later life."

The NHS hopes to roll out the programme, which is funded jointly between it, the participating schools and Stoke-on-Trent city council's public health team, to other schools after the two-year pilot is complete.

"At the start, students completed a health questionnaire and we will ask students to complete this again at the end, so we can evaluate how effective it has been," added Ian Carruthers, the head of widening participation at University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS trust.



The finished bonding squares

Pupils help mums and babies bond

Students and staff at an Essex secondary school are helping new mothers and their premature babies bond more quickly through a knitting project.

Forest Hall School students and staff have been giving up their spare time to knit and weave wool "bonding squares", which will be donated to the neonatal unit of St Thomas' Hospital in London.

The project came about after the partner of one of the school's staff, who works at the hospital, mentioned they were experiencing a shortage.

Donated in pairs, one square is placed with the premature baby and the other

worn against the mother's skin. The squares are then swapped daily so the baby can smell the mother in its incubator to help with the bonding process.

"We have students knitting and weaving squares during their lunch breaks and mums, nans and members of staff are knitting them at home so the whole community is getting involved," said Claire Gannon, a textiles and child development teacher at the school.

"Our students like to get behind a cause and they are really enjoying doing it. It's proving quite a sociable thing to do as they come and knit while they have their lunch."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new



KIM WALTON

Principal, Astrea Academy Sheffield

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Principal, Moor End Academy.

INTERESTING FACT: Kim plays six musical instruments: clarinet, bass clarinet, piano, flute, saxophone and violin.



GAIL STONIER

Headteacher, Ecclesfield School

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Principal, Future Tech Studio School

INTERESTING FACT: Gail enjoys diving with sharks as an advanced PADI diver with a search and rescue qualification.



BEN SPINKS

CEO, Barking and Dagenham School Improvement Partnership

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Local government market director, Capita Transformation

INTERESTING FACT: The day after he had his interview for the role, Ben hopped on a plane to New York where he ran a marathon in three hours, 50 minutes and 14 seconds.



DES BIRD

Headteacher, Workington Academy

START DATE: April 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Headteacher, Richard Rose Morton Academy.

INTERESTING FACT: Des is a keen follower of horseracing and likes to cook in his spare time.



ALAN BIRD

Headteacher, City of London School

START DATE: January 2018

PREVIOUS JOB: Deputy head, Brighton College

INTERESTING FACT: When Alan was younger, he benefited from a means-tested bursary to allow him to attend an independent boys' day school in Guildford.

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

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SCHOOLS WEEK

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

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.

Difficulty: EASY

Last Week's solutions

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

Difficulty: EASY

Difficulty: MEDIUM

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

Difficulty: MEDIUM

Solutions: Next week

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

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