

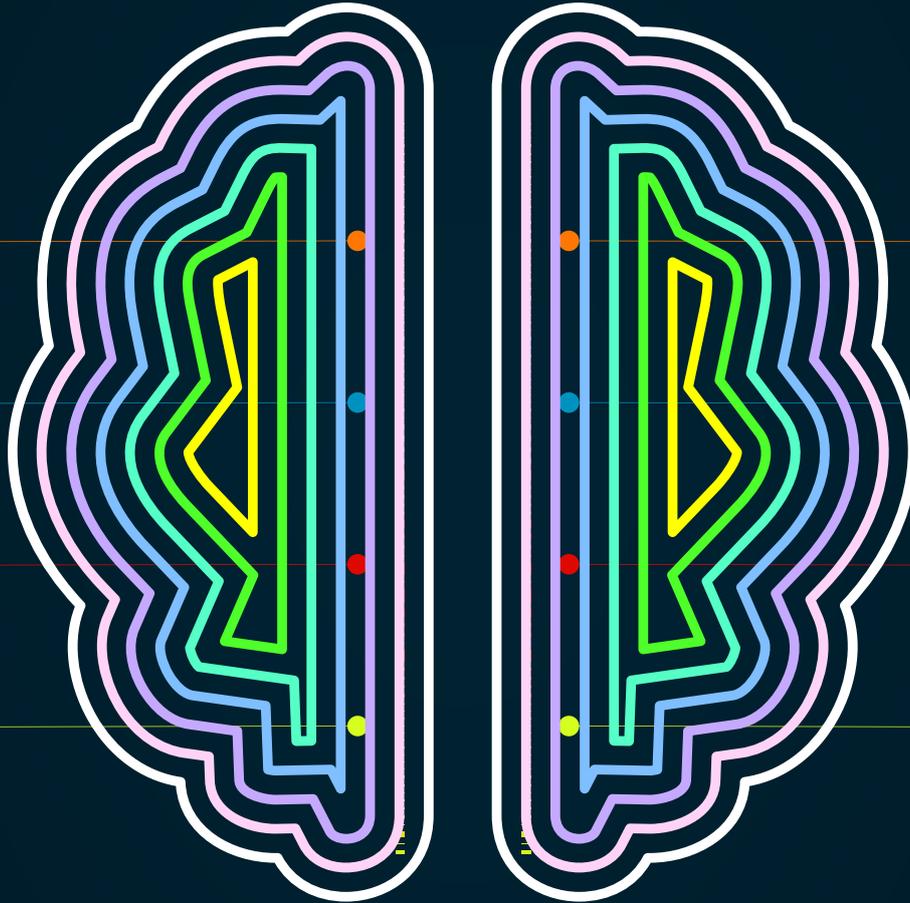
# SCHOOLS WEEK

A digital newspaper determined to get past the bluster and explain the facts.



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Natalie Perera, Executive director  
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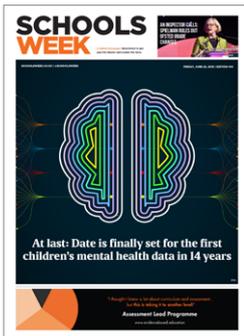
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## News

### Are councils on the hook for SEN funding?



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EPI: 'Let councils take schools back from failing MATs'

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# DfE's disagreement with Pearson puts business BTEC approval back

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
**@FCDWHITTAKER**



A popular BTEC course sat by thousands of pupils every year is yet to have its new content approved for teaching from this September, leaving schools in turmoil across England.

The Department for Education has still not said whether the new Pearson BTEC level one/two first award in business will count in school performance tables in 2020, and may not confirm its validity for over a month.

The delay, thought to stem from a disagreement between the exam board and the DfE over content, affects current year nine pupils who are due to start key stage four later this year. Last year, over 27,000 pupils took the course.

The list of qualifications that count towards schools' performance in league tables is updated at various points throughout the year as different courses are signed off.

In line with previous years, schools had expected to hear about the BTEC business qualification when the list was updated in March, but may now have to wait until the final list is published at the end of July.

Logic Studio School in Feltham, west London, is one of the schools due to start teaching the new qualification in September. But leaders are in limbo, and face the prospect of a last-minute decision if the course isn't signed off.

"It's huge, because we still don't know

if we will be running this course or not in September," Jay Lockwood, the school's principal, told *Schools Week*.

"We've just done timetables, so we've timetabled in business, but we don't know which course we're running yet."

Lockwood estimates the delay has placed an extra burden on between five and six members of staff.

"The DfE talks so much about staff workload and how it can be addressed, but it's things like this that causes staff the most stress, that less than four weeks before we break up, we still don't know what we're delivering in September," he said.

"It's always last-minute, without enough thought, and asking us to make decisions on the hop."

Pearson, meanwhile, still "anticipates" that the qualification will be available for teaching from September, and is "putting support in place" to help schools prepare.

"We have made changes to some of our level two qualifications to bring them into line with the government's

revised guidance for this qualification suite," a spokesperson said. "The outcome will continue to underpin the high calibre and quality of the BTEC qualification as a key route into higher education and the workforce."

"We anticipate that these qualifications will be available for teaching in September 2018. In the meantime we are putting support in place to prepare both schools and learners for the September window."

"This includes updating our free teaching and learning support ensuring it is available ahead of first teaching in September, and we will be running online events as soon as the qualifications have been approved. We are also ensuring we have subject specialists on hand to answer questions and explain any changes."

A spokesperson for the Department for Education said the final list of qualifications would be published in the summer, "in line with previous years". This means all the qualifications on offer are "up to date", she added.



ALIX ROBERTSON | @ALIXROBERTSON4

## Two more 'outstanding' schools sign up for T-levels trial

The Department for Education has revealed the names of two more schools that will deliver its new technical qualifications.

These are George Abbot School, a secondary in Surrey that is part of the Guildford Education Partnership, and Priestley College, a sixth-form college turned 16-to-19 academy that belongs to The Challenge Academy Trust, which join a list of 52 providers selected to deliver T-levels from 2020.

Neither school has been visited by Ofsted since

converting to academy status, in 2011 and 2017 respectively. George Abbot School was rated 'outstanding' in 2006, while Priestley College earned the top grade in 2007.

George Abbot School is in the process of deciding which T-levels it is best suited to offer, but Priestley College has opted for education and childcare and digital skills.

There were 15 schools initially in the first wave of T-level providers. This week's additions take the total taking part in the first phase of the

programme to 17.

T-levels are post-16 vocational courses designed to have "parity of esteem" with A-levels.

Three T-level "pathways" will be taught from September 2020, involving courses in design, surveying and planning for the construction industry, software application development for the digital industry, and education for the education and childcare industry.

Further courses will be rolled out in stages from 2023.

# Love Island contestant is a DfE policy adviser

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@PIPPA\_AK

Fans of reality television and education policy were in for a treat this week after a contestant on *Love Island* revealed she is a civil servant at the Department for Education.

According to her profile on LinkedIn, 21-year-old Zara McDermott has been an education policy advisor at the DfE since November 2017, working in the post-16 team. She previously spent two years as an officer at the Department of Energy and Climate Change.

However, her job at Whitehall is potentially at risk after *The Sun* reported that McDermott – who told her fellow contestants that she “makes laws” – failed to tell DfE bosses she would be appearing on the dating show when asking for a “career break to work on TV”.

*Love Island* – in which participants compete to form the best-liked couple – has been accused in some snotty corners of dumbing society down after it received more applications for entry than Oxbridge.



However, education committee chair Robert Halfon was among the first to mark the news that McDermott would be joining the line-up by tweeting on Sunday evening: “Who says *Love Island* is not intellectual?”

McDermott’s Instagram account gives a



glimpse of life as a civil servant at the DfE, including a selfie from inside Downing Street with the caption: “My office for the day. My job is better than yours.”

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

## Culture minister: ‘Think of the kids and ban mobile phones’

The culture secretary wants more schools to ban mobile phones in order to protect children “in the digital age”.

Writing in *The Telegraph*, Matthew Hancock (pictured) said he admires headteachers who “take a firm approach” in refusing to allow pupils to use mobile phones during the school day.

Schools already have the freedom to ban or curb the use of phones while pupils are on their premises, and the Department for Education claims that 95 per cent of schools in England already exercise that right.

But Hancock, a former education minister, wants more schools to “look at the evidence and follow their lead”.

“I enthusiastically support using technology for teaching,” he wrote. “But we also need to teach children how to stay safe with technology.

“Why do young children need phones in

schools? There are a number of schools across the country that simply don’t allow them. I believe that very young children don’t need to have access to social media. They are children after all. They need to be able to develop their social skills in the real world first.

“Whilst it is up to individual schools to decide rather than government, I admire headteachers who take a firm approach and do not allow mobiles to be used during the school day. I encourage more schools to look at the evidence and follow their lead.”

The children’s commissioner Anne Longfield wants pupils to be taught digital citizenship at school.

In January, she said schools have a “bigger role” to play in preparing younger

pupils for the “emotional demands” of social media, and she wants pupils taught about the algorithms used by online platforms, so they do not become “addicted”.

Under current DfE guidance, schools can ban or limit the use of mobile phones on school premises during the school day, but must make their policies, especially on sanctions, clear to pupils, parents and staff.

“Headteachers already, of course, have the power to ban mobile phones in schools and we support their right to do so,” said a DfE spokesperson.

“We know that 95 per cent of schools already impose some kind of restriction on mobile phones use during the school day, with a substantial number banning them from the school premises altogether.”

Hancock has been backed by Ofsted boss Amanda Spielman, speaking at this year’s Festival of Education.



1.5  
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## Opposition builds to Suffolk's free school transport cuts

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@PIPPA\_AK

A last-ditch attempt to prevent Suffolk county council from making drastic cuts to its free school transport provision has been made opposition councillors.

The drastic cuts, which are expected to have a "significant impact" on pupil numbers at some schools in the county, were unanimously approved at a meeting of Suffolk's Conservative cabinet on Tuesday.

However, opposition including Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent councillors announced on Thursday that they would be referring the decision back to the council's monitoring officer, who will have to decide if it was fair, justified and proportionate.

The planned cuts would see free transport only given to pupils who attend their nearest school, rather than any school whose catchment area they are in.

The new rules follow the minimum service that must be provided by law and were due to be phased in from September 2019, initially only affecting children who move house or start a new school.

Since 2015, 29 out of 36 county councils have reduced their expenditure on home-to-school transport, with more than 29,000 pupils losing out. In areas where the nearest school is single-sex or religious ethos, the shift has been particularly controversial.

Matthew Hicks, who leads Suffolk county council, said the cuts were made due to "significant financial challenges" and after a "comprehensive consultation process".

However, Jack Abbott, the council's opposition spokesperson for children's services, said the "strength of feeling" about the proposals "transcends party politics."

"This is ill thought-through, poorly formulated policy decision must be reversed to ensure educational attainment in Suffolk is not negatively impacted by this decision," he added.

A review into the new policy has warned it will cause upheaval at several schools, including Thurston Community College which could lose 124 pupils – eight per cent of its total.

More than half of the pupils in its catchment live nearest to the Ixworth Free School, which opened in 2014 and was last year rated as 'requires improvement'. Ixworth now expects to grow by a third, taking in 73 more pupils.

EXCLUSIVE

# Are councils on the hook for every penny of SEN funding?

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools are forking out millions of pounds for special educational needs provision even though there is often a strong legal case for obliging their local authority to fully fund it.

The majority of councils provide schools with up to £6,000 of funding for pupils who have a special education need.

The cost of delivering all provision needed for a pupil with an education health and care plan (EHCP) can of course rise beyond £6,000 – causing many schools to view SEND pupils as costly. The council is responsible for covering these costs, but the majority are withholding up to £6,000 from the total on the basis that schools have already been given that much.

However, several education law specialists believe councils are legally obliged to pay for everything. Provided the school has done everything in its power to help the pupil and has not fallen foul of the Equality Act, Polly Sweeney, a partner and education specialist at law firm Irwin Mitchell, says the council must stump up the additional cash.

Back in 2014, the Children and Families Act ushered in sweeping changes to SEND provision which made clear that the legal responsibility for special needs provision lies with local authorities.

"My experience in these cases is where a school is firm in saying it cannot deliver the provision within the funds delegated, and can demonstrate the costs of provision against the SEND funding provided by the local authority, then the local authority will agree to provide the additional funding," she said.

"Rather than thinking 'this is going to be expensive', schools need to think 'let's go back to the local authority and ask them for the rest'."

Almost a quarter of a million pupils had EHCPs (or their predecessor) in January last year.



If schools are required to find an additional £6,000 for each pupil, it would put an additional strain of £1.4 billion onto the total budget.

Julia Maunder, the headteacher of Thomas Keble secondary academy in Gloucestershire, said her school would be in a stronger financial position if it didn't have to meet £54,000 of special needs funding.

The local council has an arrangement where it withholds £6,000 of additional cash for the first nine pupils with EHCPs at the school, though it fully funds the rest.

Laxmi Patel, the head of education at law firm Boyes Turner, said that whatever the individual funding agreements between local authorities and schools, ultimately local authorities would have to "cough up the cash" for an EHCP in court.

Her words were echoed by Ed Duff, SEND lawyer at HCB Solicitors, who agreed there is no existing regulation that requires schools to fund £6,000 of an EHCP.

If a school is proven to have misused public funds they could be found liable, he warned, but schools that are transparent about their use of funds will have a case.

"The simple fact is the local authority remains responsible for the EHCP. Schools must discharge the EHCP, but if the school simply does not have the funding to do so, the local authority must provide it."

2  
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## Almost 8,000 pupils 'disappeared' from schools last year



**JESS STAUFENBERG**  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Up to 8,000 pupils due to leave secondary school last year left before their exams and never reappeared in another school, according to FFT Education Datalab.

Some of these pupils will have been "off-rolled" - made to leave without being recorded as excluded - as a way of boosting a school's GCSE results, according to the researchers.

Now, the Datalab team, who have highlighted the issue of off-rolling before, are calling on the government to follow through on its promise to crack down on the practice.

Of the 553,000 pupils who reached the end of secondary education last year, 93 per cent finished in a mainstream school.

But about 22,000 children who left a mainstream state school at some point between year 7 and year 11 are not recorded attending any state education again.

Of those, about 30 per cent went into private education, further education or other recognised settings and received GCSE or equivalent qualifications, which are recorded in the National Pupil Database.

But 15,400 children do not appear to have taken any GCSEs or equivalent qualifications, or did take them, but were not attending a recognised establishment (including home-schooled pupils, who still sit

exams).

Using emigration statistics and mortality statistics, the researchers estimate that between 50 and 60 per cent of that number moved out of England, or in some cases died.

That leaves between 6,200 and 7,700 pupils who are of "particular concern". They are apparently still in the country but do not have GCSE or other qualification results, or results that count towards any recognised establishment.

Dave Whitaker, the executive principal at Springwell Learning Community, an alternative provision school in Barnsley, said the figures are "stark" but proved pupils could be tracked properly.

"What it shows, probably for the first time, is a level of sophistication in tracking pupils," he said.

"There is a misconception that you can use permanent exclusions to realistically measure [the number of pupils off-rolled], when there are many other reasons pupils leave schools."

He urged the government to properly investigate the reasons why pupils end up outside the school system.

Anne Longfield, the children's commissioner for England, told *Schools Week* she is increasingly concerned that some schools are "gaming the system by off-rolling some of the most vulnerable pupils."

The government should consider fining schools caught informally moving pupils to other settings, she suggested.



## NHS funding settlement poses 'quite severe challenges' for the DfE

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government's pledge to pump an extra £20 billion into the NHS will put pressure on the Department for Education, MPs were warned today.

Luke Sibieta, from the Institute for Fiscal Studies, has told the parliamentary education committee that the policy announcement "poses quite severe challenges" for the DfE and other high-spending Whitehall departments.

In the face of mounting pressure over health funding, prime minister announced on Sunday that the NHS will get an extra £20 billion a year by 2023.

Although the government claims that a chunk of the extra cash will come from the so-called "Brexit dividend" - money the government claims the UK will save once it leaves the European Union - but economists dispute there will be any such thing.

Sibieta said the announcement implied there would either be tax rises, borrowing or "spending cuts elsewhere".

"So it clearly poses quite severe challenges for high-spending departments like education," he told MPs. "The pressures are obvious."

Any increase in funding for education at next year's spending review must be calculated through a "bottom-up" approach to reflect the actual amount of extra cash schools need. This should take into account things like teacher pay rises, pupil number increases, extra responsibilities taken on by schools and pressures on school budgets.

The committee also heard how some schools are being forced to use pupil premium funding - meant for the most disadvantaged children - to plug gaps in their general budgets.

Angela Donkin, from the National Foundation for Educational Research, said schools are on "different journeys" with the pupil premium, with some using it well and others needing more "help and direction".

Natalie Perera, the Education Policy Institute's executive director, said there was "more scope" for schools to make better use of the funding.

Sibieta said it was "unsurprising" that schools were using pupil premium funding to plug more general gaps, and reminded MPs that without the additional money, overall school budgets would have fallen in real terms between 2010 and 2015.

# News

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## The first new children's mental health data in 14 years

**ALIX ROBERTSON**  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

After 14 years of silence, the government will finally publish brand new data on the mental health of young people in October, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal.

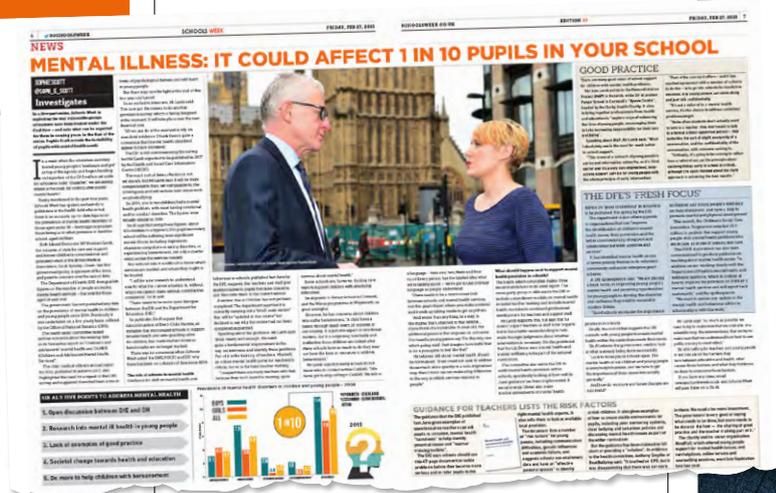
No data on the prevalence of mental health issues among children has been collected since 2004, a gap that has been branded as "wholly unacceptable" by the Liberal Democrat MP Norman Lamb.

In 2015 Lamb told *Schools Week* that he had secured funding for a new prevalence study to be published in 2017, but it was pushed back after delays. The survey will finally see the light of day in October.

The NHS has refused to give an explanation for why the process has taken so long. The Department for Health did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Since the general election last year, the government has introduced new plans to tackle young people's mental health issues, placing considerable demands onto schools.

Proposals released in a green paper last year said the government would establish "senior mental health leads" to work in schools from 2019, however a subsequent joint report between MPs on



EXCLUSIVE

the education and health committee tore into the proposals, insisting they would put additional pressure on teachers without providing schools with extra resources.

Lamb said the "feeble" green paper "falls short in almost every respect".

"Not only do the proposals ignore the early years, they also fail to take into account the strong emerging evidence about the effects of trauma, neglect and abuse in childhood," he said.

The last data on came out in 2004, before which it had been collated on a five-yearly basis by the Office of National Statistics. Labour prime minister Gordon Brown delayed the 2009 collection, and it was never rebooted once the coalition government took over in 2010.

Since then governments have "effectively been operating in a fog",

Lamb said, without any real idea of the numbers of young people who need support.

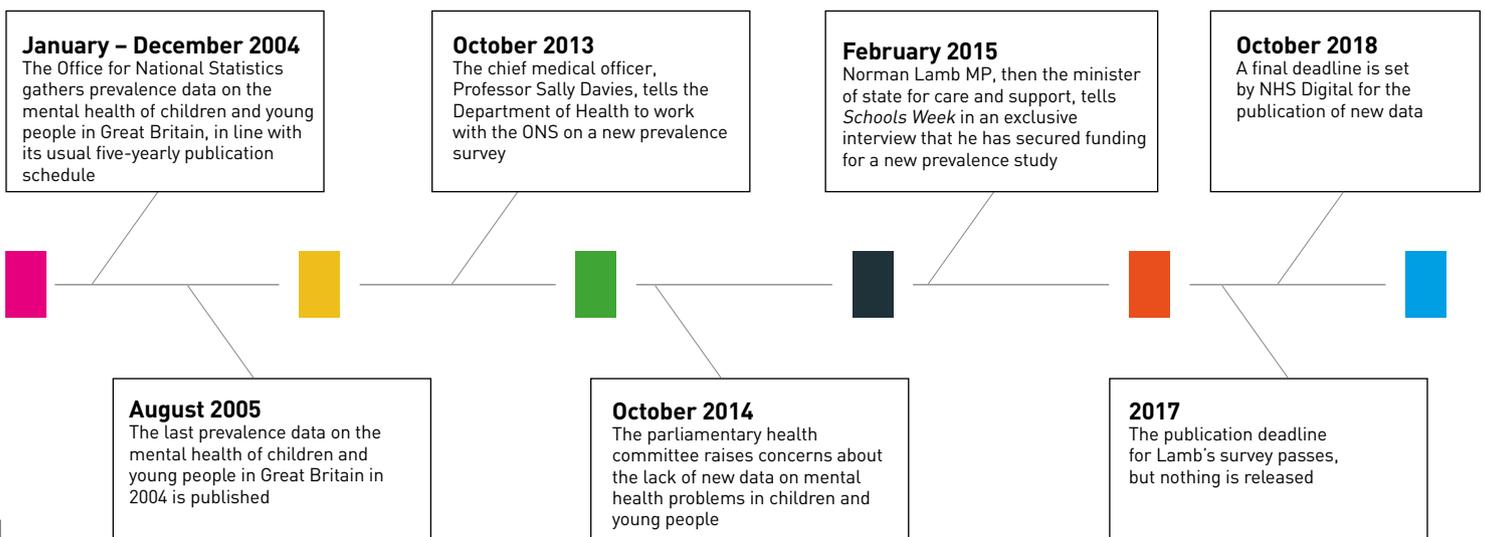
In 2004, one in 10 children had a mental health problem, with most having emotional and or conduct disorders.

The chief medical officer raised concerns about the missing data in 2012 and suggested there had been a rise in level of psychological distress and self-harm in young people.

Sarah Hannafin, a senior policy adviser at school leaders' union NAHT, said pressures on young people have "in many ways increased" and believes it is vital to know the number children affected by mental health issues, what those issues are and their severity.

2.5  
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### Timeline



# With 'democracy week' imminent, teaching resources are still absent

ALIX ROBERTSON

EXCLUSIVE

@ALIXROBERTSON4

Ministers have refused to discuss upcoming new resources to help secondary schools teach pupils about democracy – even though schools imminently need the information.

The idea was first mooted by the government last December and it has been mentioned at least twice since by the minister taking the lead on it.

But with the July date for the first ever national

democracy week – a new initiative by the Cabinet Office and involving the Department for Education – fast approaching, schools are in the dark about the proposals after both departments refused to answer *Schools Week's* questions about who is developing the resources, and how and when they will be delivered to schools.

Plans for the resource were first mentioned over six months ago in the government's policy paper 'Every voice matters: Building a democracy that works for everyone'.

The document described "a package of approaches", which would include providing schools with "resources on the history of democracy with specific focus on the Suffrage movement, and what this history means in terms of modern day civic engagement and democratic participation".

The resources were mooted again by cabinet office minister Chloe Smith in a Commons debate in February. During the discussion about national democracy week, Smith said schools would "have their part to play", and that materials would include "a schools resource pack with a specific focus on the suffrage movement at secondary school level".

In a parliamentary written answer earlier this month, Smith again referenced

national democracy week, and pledged to launch the secondary schools resource "later this year".

National democracy week is a new scheme designed to promote democratic

engagement in young people. According to the government, it is a "week-long celebration of democracy in society, including events, talks and fun activities, an opportunity to celebrate progress and champion future democratic participation".

Launching on July 2, the event this year will focus on the centenary of women's suffrage.

Fiona Carnie, a writer and educationalist who works in student voice, told *Schools Week* there is a shortage of approaches for national democracy week that involved schools and education.

"Planning to just teaching kids about what an election is and how you vote is not going to cut it – you need a much more vivid, vibrant experience of what democracy means," she insisted.

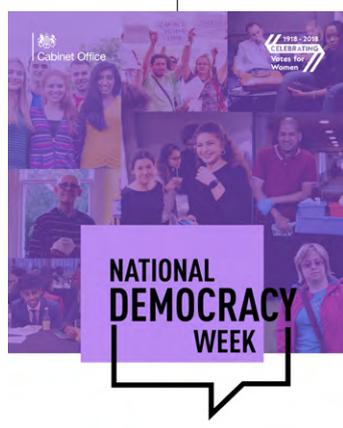
Pupils should be treated as "partners" in the school system, she added, and could be better engaged through activities such as taking part in selection panels for new members of staff or helping to develop their school's homework policy.

"They actually have to experience it and see that actively participating either in school or in their communities makes a difference."

Liz Moorse, the chief executive Association for Citizenship Teaching, said: "Anything that is going to come out to support schools in delivering high-quality citizenship and democracy education is going to be useful, because it has slipped down the agenda in many schools.

"The run up to the first national democracy week is an important time to be thinking about these sorts of issues."

Neither the Cabinet Office nor the DfE would comment.

2  
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## More disadvantaged pupils get less experienced maths teachers

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

Pupils in disadvantaged areas are more likely to be taught by inexperienced maths teachers or someone without a maths degree, according to a report into the impact of teacher shortages.

Key stage five maths pupils at the most disadvantaged schools are almost twice as likely to have an inexperienced teacher than those in the most prosperous areas, research from the Nuffield Foundation and FFT Education DataLab has shown.

The former have a 9.5 per cent chance of being taught by a newly qualified teacher, compared with 5.3 per cent for the latter.

Equally, 64.8 per cent of key stage five maths lessons at the most affluent schools are taught by a maths graduate, compared with 51.9 per cent at the most disadvantaged schools.

Schools are much more likely to allocate inexperienced teachers or those without a maths degree to key stage three, particularly in disadvantaged areas, in order to protect the quality of education at GCSE and above. Nineteen per cent of key stage three maths teachers are inexperienced – classed as having under two years in teaching – compared with seven per cent at key stage five.

However, this risks "switching pupils off maths at an age when they are forming attitudes to subjects and future choices" and there could be "knock-on effects" if pupils arrive at their GCSEs "ill-prepared from key stage three".

By allocating the most experienced teachers to certain age groups, school leaders are determining "which pupils get the best teachers and, by extension, which of them will make the most progress. During teacher shortages, these choices become more stark for schools."

Just 44 per cent of practicing maths teachers have a degree in maths, compared with 65 per cent of English teachers with an English degree.

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# News from the Festival of education

## Sir Michael Wilshaw: 'Not all teachers do their best'

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The former chief inspector of schools Sir Michael was at his controversial best at this year's festival as he faced a grilling from Piers Morgan.

Here's what he thinks.

### 1. NOT ALL TEACHERS ARE PROFESSIONAL

Quizzed about his decision to paint some teachers as "lazy" during his tenure as chief inspector, Wilshaw said the teaching profession was "very defensive" about his comments, but that he stood by them.

"Not all teachers are professional, not all teachers are committed, not all teachers do their best, and it's the job of a headteacher to identify the great majority who do their best and those who don't," he said.

### 2. LONDON SCHOOLS EXCEL BECAUSE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES CARE

Some parents, he said, are more committed to their children's education than others.

"The reason why London schools are doing so well, apart from good headteachers and good teachers, is because a lot of the immigrant families care about education," he added.

"I'm working in parts of England with white British populations where the parents don't care. Less than 50 per cent turn up to parents evening. Now that's outrageous."

### 3. INSPECTORS 'SOMETIMES' GET CONNED

He said inspectors "sometimes" get conned by schools allegedly hiding their worst-behaved pupils with sudden school trips, and get the "wool pulled over their eyes", but believes the quality of inspections has improved.

### 4. OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM IS 'MEDIocre'

England's school system is not as good as its international competitors because not enough is done about the "long tail of underachievement", especially among poorer children.



"We are mediocre, and it's foolish to claim otherwise," he insisted. "Otherwise we'd be much higher up the PISA league table, we would be up with the South Koreans and with the Shanghais and some of the best European nations like Poland for example."

### 5. TEACHERS AREN'T PAID ENOUGH

The school system is struggling as a result of a lack of investment in teachers, he claimed.

"We're not paying them enough money," he told festival-goers. "And in some cases we're paying headteachers too much for delivering mediocre standards."

### 6. LACK OF FUNDING POSES 'REAL DANGER' TO SCHOOL STANDARDS

He predicted that while money will "pour" into the NHS in the coming years, "very little" will go into schools.

"There's a real danger now that standards

will start to slip because of a lack of funding and because we're not addressing the key issues."

### 7. NO LOVE FOR LOVE ISLAND

Asked by Morgan if he thought ITV show *Love Island* is "the single biggest threat to the education of our young people", he was not complimentary.

"Listen, I caught five minutes of it the other day, and I was absolutely appalled. It's a sad reflection of our nation's education system."

### 8. MOBILE PHONES SHOULD BE BANNED FROM EVERY SCHOOL

The way schools govern the use of mobile phones is topical at the moment, after a senior minister told more heads to ban them.

Schools are already free to restrict or ban phones, but Wilshaw wants ministers to go further and impose the ban on schools.

## CHIEF INSPECTOR RULES OUT CHANGES TO OFSTED'S GRADING SYSTEM

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**
**@FCDWHITTAKER**

Ofsted will not scrap its current grading system for schools, following "persuasive" lobbying from headteachers.

The future of the four grades – 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate' – has been the subject of intense speculation since Amanda Spielman expressed her disquiet about the impact of the 'outstanding' rating on schools in 2016.

The watchdog was rumoured to be considering a move to a pass-fail system, but the chief inspector has now said that her organisation will not scrap the existing grades in its new inspection framework, due out next year.

"I know that there are some who would like Ofsted to abandon grades altogether or to move to a pass/fail model," she said during a keynote speech to the Festival of Education at Wellington College. "For me, that is a decision which must squarely be decided on the basis of whether the current grading system meets our mission of being a force for improvement.



"We will keep this under regular review. But we've concluded, on balance, that it is right to maintain the current grading system in the new framework and that is the basis of the discussion I'm having with ministers now as we engage with them on the new framework as a whole."

Polling of teachers by YouGov

"indicates that the profession prefers a four-point grading system to a pass/fail one".

"Many teachers have told us directly that a pass/fail would make the system even more high-stakes – it would de facto turn 'requires improvement' into a 'fail'. That could risk deterring more teachers from working in challenging schools."

The chief inspector has been "persuasively lobbied" by school leaders and others over the 'outstanding' grade in particular. They argued that scrapping it would "send the wrong message about aspiration and excellence in the system".

Parents told the watchdog that they too preferred the current system.

"They like the clarity of four grades in helping them to make informed choices, and as a marker of how well their child's school is performing," said Spielman. "For these reasons I am not yet convinced of the case for change."

But with the current system staying in place, Spielman wants to see the rule that currently exempts 'outstanding'-rated schools from routine inspections scrapped, so people can "have confidence in grades".

"I entirely understand why the exemption was brought in. My starting point is always that we should trust our best leaders and teachers to get on with the job. But there are now almost 300 schools that have gone a decade or more without inspection."

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA\_AK

## Spielman: Writing lines as punishment is 'entirely appropriate'

Ofsted will focus more on pupil behaviour from next year, and headteachers who make badly behaved pupils write lines or do community service will be given its "full support", Amanda Spielman has said.

In her keynote speech to the Festival of Education, Amanda Spielman explained how Ofsted's new inspection framework, which comes into force next September, will have a "clearer focus on behaviour". The new regime will "probably" include a separate judgement

focusing purely on the "behaviour and attitudes" of pupils.

"I think it's entirely appropriate to use sanctions such as writing lines, community service in the school grounds – such as picking up litter – and school detentions. And where they are part of a school's behaviour policy they'll have our full support."

Spielman also announced that Ofsted is designing a study to assess whether schools are hiding the worst behaved pupils from inspectors,

including through strategically planned school trips during inspections.

But Nick Brook, NAHT's deputy general secretary, hit back, saying Ofsted should focus on showing its inspections had a positive impact on schools, not on "rumour-driven investigations which could further erode public confidence".

Spielman discussed plans for "more dialogue with a wider range of staff" like trainee teachers and lunchtime supervisors, who may be more exposed to poor behaviour.

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# EPI report

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## Unions welcome EPI findings but the government is unmoved

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

Unions have backed the EPI's demand that councils be allowed to take back schools from struggling academy trusts, but this is not on the table, the Department for Education has confirmed.

Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, described it as "without doubt the most significant aspect of this report".

"This is simple common sense and would be welcomed by many communities who have seen their local schools taken over by unaccountable and negligent academy chains. Indeed it's a demand that has already been made many times," he said.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said there is "no reason why the government should not explore further any option which potentially improves the life chances of young people".

He demanded more research on what both high- and low-performing groups have in common, adding: "Politicians must stop fixating on structural reform as a panacea and instead focus on providing the support that schools need."

However, a spokesperson for the DfE said the government "disagrees that the solution is to place schools back under local authority control".

"Instead, we are empowering academies and trusts to drive improvements and share expertise," he said.

Roy Perry, the vice chair of the Local Government Association's children and young people board, said the government "needs to allow councils to be the effective education improvement partners they can be".

"Councils stand ready to step in and help schools where necessary," he added. "Councils should be given freedom to set up their own MATs, if that is the wish of the local community, and they should be given the powers to do so."

"All state-funded schools, regardless of type, are at financial breaking point," said Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of school leaders' union the NAHT.

"The government needs to demonstrate its commitment to schools and young people by releasing more funds at the earliest possible opportunity."



# EPI: 'Let councils take schools back from failing MATs'

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

The best local authorities should be allowed to take schools back from underperforming multi-academy trusts, according to a leading think-tank.

Academies do not perform better than maintained schools, and the government must find a better way to handle poor performance, the Education Policy Institute's latest report has found.

The EPI wants to give local authorities the power to regain oversight of academies from underperforming MATs, but councils with poor schools should get school-level interventions and support from regional schools commissioners.

The EPI measured pupil improvement and found very little difference in the overall performance of academies and local authority schools at both key stages two and four.

However, it warned the overall performance of the group a school is in – whether a MAT or a particular local authority – makes the biggest difference to the attainment of its pupils.

The analysis took prior attainment and disadvantage into account, and found that primary pupils overseen by the best-performing trusts and LAs are the equivalent of a full term ahead of their peers in the lowest-performing chains or councils. At key stage four, the difference is equivalent to half a grade in each GCSE subject.

Meanwhile, there is "sustained underperformance" at both academies and maintained schools.

The process of giving failing academies fresh oversight has been "slow", but intervention in maintained schools is tricky for the government too.

Although some local authorities "have been consistently struggling with their performance" – including Dorset, Newcastle and Wolverhampton – the government is "restricted in its options for intervention at local authority level, following its decision to drop measures to force academisation in low-performing areas".

David Laws, who presided over the expansion of the academies programme as schools minister between 2012 and 2015, is now the executive chair of the EPI.

He said the report demonstrates that "neither full academisation nor a wholesale return to the old local authority model is likely to significantly improve attainment in English schools".

"Instead, the government needs to consider how it can act more swiftly and effectively to tackle the worst-performing school groups," he said.

"Too many local authorities and academy chains can languish at the bottom of performance tables for too long before action is taken."

The EPI wants the government to publish information on local authority performance as it does with academy chains, and work to identify MATs at "significant risk of failure" and prepare potential sponsors for their schools earlier.

"It remains the case that what matters most is being in a high performing school group, not being in an academy rather than a local authority maintained school or vice-versa," the report said.

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## EPI report

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## Academies are no better than LA schools, and 7 other EPI findings

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

There is no difference in the performance of multi-academy trusts and groups of local authority schools, a new report from the Education Policy Institute has found.

The report, which compared school performance and pupil improvement at every trust and local authority in England at both key stage two and four, makes a number of recommendations to improve the academy system, including allowing local authorities to take schools back from failing trusts.

Here are eight things we learned.

### 1. Academies do not perform better than maintained schools

According to the analysis, there is very little difference in the performance of academy trusts and local authorities. However, the overall performance of the group a school is in – whether a MAT or a particular local authority – makes the biggest difference to the attainment of its pupils.

Primary pupils overseen by the best-performing trusts and LAs are the equivalent of a full term ahead of their peers in the lowest-performing chains or councils. At key stage four, the difference is equivalent to half a grade in each GCSE subject.

### 2. LAs should be allowed to take schools back from failing trusts

The EPI recommends that councils should have the power to take a school back under local authority control if the multi-academy trust it is a part of is performing poorly.

This would help reduce the time taken to rebroker academies if a trust fails, and would provide “additional capacity” within the system.

### 3. The government must be better prepared to deal with failing MATs

The report warns that the government takes too long to find new sponsors for schools that need rebrokering, which often has “a detrimental impact on schools in terms of their admissions, and teacher retention and



recruitment.”

Instead, the Department for Education should work have a “better understanding of where failure may happen in the future” and make sure other trusts in the area have capacity to take on extra schools.

### 4. Poorly performing councils should face government intervention

Although the DfE cannot force academisation in areas where local authority schools are consistently underachieving, the EPI has said it should consider ways in which it can “intervene at an individual school level in these areas”, including offering support from the regional schools commissioners.

### 6. Local authorities should publish the same performance data as MATs

The DfE should publish the same performance information about local authority schools as it does about academy chains, the report says, in order to create an “understanding of where high and low

performance is occurring”.

### 7. MATs run more poorly performing primary schools

The EPI analysis reveals that academy chains are “disproportionately represented” amongst the worst performing groups of primary schools, with 12 making it into the bottom 20. For the top performing primary schools, just one MAT – Harris Federation – makes it into the top 10.

### 8. London councils have the highest performing secondary schools

London secondary schools are performing better than others around the country, with five of the top six performing local authorities based in the capital.

Although 14 of the top 20 best secondary school groups are trusts, three of the worst four are also run by academy chains.

Bright Tribe Trust, which has relinquished all but one of its northern schools, is the lowest performer in the country.



# England's academy trusts: The best and worst

Academy trusts are “disproportionately represented” among the lowest-performing primary schools groups, according to new research by the Education Policy Institute.

The EPI compared school performance and pupil improvement at every academy trust and local authority in England. It looked at performance at key stages two and four, accounting for characteristics such as prior attainment and levels of disadvantage, as well as the historic performance of the school.

It found that local authorities make up 15 of the top 20 school groups at key stage two, with just one MAT – the Harris

Federation – making it into the top 10. Academy chains are “disproportionately represented amongst the lowest performing groups”, with 12 making it into the bottom 20.

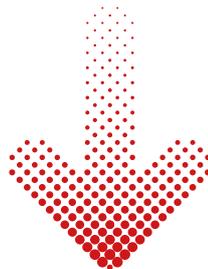
Fourteen of the top 20 secondary school groups are academy chains, and just one of the six top performing local authorities is not in London. Although the bottom 20 is more even, three of the worst four are academy chains, including the Education Fellowship Trust, which gave up all 12 of its schools in March 2017, and Bright Tribe Trust, which relinquished all but one of its northern schools this year.

## KEY STAGE 2

### BEST-PERFORMING SCHOOL GROUPS

- 
1. London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea
  2. Harris Federation
  3. London Borough of Greenwich
  4. London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
  5. Redcar and Cleveland council
  6. London Borough of Hounslow
  7. London Borough of Hackney
  - = London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
  8. London Borough of Westminster
  9. London Borough of Lambeth
  10. London Borough of Newham
  11. The Spencer Academies Trust
  12. London Borough of Islington
  13. The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
  14. London Borough of Redbridge
  - = London Borough of Haringey
  15. London Borough of Tower Hamlets
  16. Transform Trust
  - = Hull Collaborative Academy Trust
  17. London Borough of Lewisham

### WORST-PERFORMING SCHOOL GROUPS

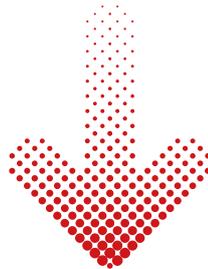
- 
1. Bedford borough council
  2. Askel Veur - Diocese of Truro
  3. Borough of Poole
  4. The Education Fellowship Trust
  5. Rutland county council
  6. The Brooke Weston Trust
  7. West Sussex county council
  8. Net Academies Trust
  9. Diocese of Oxford
  10. Wakefield City Academies Trust
  11. Pontefract Academies Trust
  12. Northamptonshire county council
  13. The Academy Trust of Melksham
  - = Doncaster council
  14. University of Brighton (Hastings Academies Trust)
  15. Schoolworks Academy Trust
  16. Luton borough council
  17. Bracknell Forest
  - = United Learning Trust
  18. The Blessed Cyprian Tansi Catholic Academy Trust

## KEY STAGE 4

### BEST-PERFORMING SCHOOL GROUPS

- 
1. The Rodillian Academy Trust
  2. Outwood Grange Academies Trust
  3. London Borough of Brent
  4. The Gorse Academies Trust
  5. Harris Federation
  6. University of Brighton (Hastings Academies Trust)
  7. Matrix Academy Trust
  8. London Borough of Hackney
  - = Kingston-upon-Hull city council
  9. London Borough of Haringey
  - = The Dean Trust
  10. Samuel Ward Academy Trust
  11. The Thinking Schools Academy Trust
  12. The Sigma Trust
  - = London Borough of Merton
  13. Diocese of London
  14. United Learning Trust
  - = London Borough of Southwark
  15. Redhill Academy Trust
  - = The Cam Academy Trust

### WORST-PERFORMING SCHOOL GROUPS

- 
1. Bright Tribe Trust
  2. Nottingham city council
  3. The Hart Schools Trust Ltd
  4. The Education Fellowship Trust
  5. Barnsley council
  - = Southend-on-Sea borough council
  6. Greenwood Academies Trust
  7. The Brooke Weston Trust
  8. Newcastle City Council
  - = Eastern Multi-Academy Trust
  - = Solihull metropolitan borough council
  - = Derby city council
  9. Education Central Multi-Academy Trust
  10. Walsall council
  - = Woodard Academies Trust
  11. David Meller \*
  12. Wirral council
  - = Milton Keynes council
  - = City of Wolverhampton council
  13. Wade Deacon Trust

\* This includes all schools that fall under the sponsorship of David Meller in the following multi-academy trusts: The Meller Educational Trust, Hertswood Academy, Elstree UTC, Watford UTC and Harefield Academy Trust

# News

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## The Treasury ‘doesn’t know’ if PFI contracts offer value for money

**PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS**  
**@PIPPA\_AK**

The Treasury does not know whether private finance initiative (PFI) contracts offer value for money and has no plans to find out, a powerful committee of MPs has warned.

A report from the public accounts committee has told the government to be “much clearer” about the use of PFI contracts and their benefits.

PFI contracts involve private companies paying for new buildings at schools or hospitals and taking an equity stake in the site. Occupants then pay the company back with interest over contracts that typically last 25 to 30 years.

Although it accepted that PFI is beneficial to the Treasury, as the expenditure is not included on the balance sheet for public debt, the committee warned the “ongoing costs to the institutions at the front line have been high and the contracts inflexible”.

PFI in schools has long proved controversial. Liverpool city council is currently paying £4 million a year for the empty Parklands High School. When it expires in 2028, the deal will have cost the taxpayer almost £55.5 million since it closed in 2014.

The Treasury has “acknowledged it has not attempted to quantify the benefits of using PFI”.

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority told the committee that data



on the benefits of PFI “doesn’t exist” and the Treasury said it is “impossible” to say whether the positives justify the higher costs.

The organisation is collating any existing data on PFI benefits and comparing schools and hospitals nearing the end of their contracts with publicly financed assets to see if any benefits of PFI have materialised, but it will not publish its findings.

Meanwhile, the Department for Education is currently comparing the value for money of schools on PFI against public financed ones, but would not confirm whether or not the findings will be published.

Meg Hillier, who chairs the committee, said the government’s “inability to answer basic questions about PFI remains undimmed” and it must “level with taxpayers about the value of PFI”.

“It beggars belief that such apparently institutionalised fuzzy thinking over such large sums of public money should have prevailed for so long,” she said.

There are over 700 contracts in operation. Between 2016 and 2017, public bodies including schools paid £10.3 billion to private companies. In the last 25 years the government has paid £110 billion for the contracts and, even without any new deals, it will have to pay another £199 billion by the 2040s for existing contracts.

The DfE’s accounts showed PFI debts had risen to £1.8 billion in July 2017, an increase of £300 million on the year before.

The Kingsway Academy in the Wirral will close in August due to “crippling” PFI costs of £21 million, while a contract costing £1 million a year has prevented Mexborough Academy, previously run by the collapsed Wakefield City Academies Trust, from finding a new home.

The government reformed the contracts to create PF2 in 2012, but the committee said it remained “fundamentally the same model as PFI”, and told the Treasury to write to it before signing any new PF2 deals “demonstrating how the changes introduced under PF2 are not influenced by balance sheet treatment”.

PF2 has only been used for six projects since its launch, including the Priority School Building Programme, which will build 46 schools in five batches at a cost of £623 million.

Half of the equity in PFI and PF2 projects is owned by offshore infrastructure funds, the committee warned, and the five largest are paying less than one per cent tax on their profits.



## Pro-academy lobby group FASNA to rebrand

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA\_AK

A pro-academy pressure group may rebrand in order to give trusts a “credible voice”.

The Freedom and Autonomy of Schools National Association (FASNA) is a members’ organisation for schools which campaigns for autonomy and aims to “evidence its success”, is consulting on plans to change its name.

As the Confederation of School Trusts (CST), the body would represent all “legally autonomous school trusts” by building links with one another and lobbying ministers,

also providing support with professional development and through difficult situations.

FASNA claimed there is currently no “credible sector voice” for academy trusts, and said CST will support maintained schools to convert to academies, form a trust or remain as they are. It will also advise academy trusts as they grow to incorporate more schools.

Leora Cruddas, the chief executive, said academy trusts are currently too “dispersed”, with “no way of making or influencing policy

and without the capacity to advocate for our education system when it comes under attack.”

Rob McDonough, who chairs FASNA alongside his day job as chief executive of the East Midlands Education Trust, said the CST would “be the voice for trusts at a regional, national and, in the fullness of time, international level”.

The consultation will run until June 19. To take part visit <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/fasnaconsultation>

# News: Mental health report

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## Schools and Youth Mental Health:

A briefing on current challenges and ways forward

.....  
*Loic Menzies, Eleanor Bernardes and  
Billy Huband-Thompson*

## Ofsted 'struggles' with pupil mental health and wellbeing

ALIX ROBERTSON  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Ofsted inspectors are struggling to report effectively on pupils' mental health and wellbeing, according to a new report.

Inspectors have paid more heed to wellbeing since 2015 when new requirements were introduced to the inspection framework requiring them to observe mental health, how pupils manage their own feelings and behaviours, and what they know about keeping themselves emotionally healthy.

But new research by mental health charity Minds Ahead and think-tank LKMCo found that inspectors "struggle to implement the criteria effectively".

It backs up analysis by the Institute for Public Policy Research, which found that of 50 secondary school Ofsted reports published in late 2015, only a third made explicit references to pupils' mental health or emotional wellbeing.

Inspectors need to "receive better training in this area of the framework so they can offer more informed and critical commentary", the latest report has found.

An Ofsted spokesperson said the wellbeing of children and young people has been an "integral part" of its inspections for some time and is "always in the minds of inspectors when they go into schools".

"Indeed, as the report acknowledges, the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils is one of our key judgements in school inspections and is graded in every full inspection," they said.

"Our inspectors already evaluate the experience and wellbeing of particular individuals and groups of pupils, including those with mental health needs. Making a judgement about personal development, behaviour and welfare forms part of existing inspector training."

The spokesperson said the report would be considered "alongside the government's developing policy" as Ofsted develops its revised education inspection framework for September 2019.

"There will be a full consultation on this early next year."

## Using Teach First as a model for in-school mental health training

ALIX ROBERTSON  
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A scheme modelled on Teach First should be set up in schools to train mental health specialists to work with young people, research has suggested.

The training would involve learning how to manage problems that children face at school such as "bullying, exam stress and low moods".

Proposed in a new joint report from school mental health organisation Minds Ahead and the education and youth think-tank LKMCo, the programme would link with the NHS and mental health providers to ensure a pathway to specialist care.

In January 2017 prime minister Theresa May announced plans to deliver mental health "first aid" training to a staff member at every secondary school in England by 2020, through Mental Health First Aid UK.

But the proposal was met with criticism because there was only enough funding available to train 1,000 teachers in the first year of the scheme.

The LKMco and Minds Ahead research suggests an alternative approach,

modelled on "the successes of Teach First", which places graduates with a 2:1 degree or higher into a school for two years of on-the-job training.

Adopting this type of framework to train mental health specialists would help attract "high-calibre candidates", the report claimed.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it is "absolutely critical" a solution for mental health issues is found, as schools have been forced to reduce provision such as counsellors due to "real-terms funding cuts".

"The creation of any new specialists in schools needs to be properly resourced, with sufficient training in place, and cannot become yet another responsibility on teaching staff," he insisted.

Norman Lamb, a former health minister and patron of Minds Ahead, said schools' input is "important", but needs to be backed up by clinical mental health services, which are "currently vastly understaffed".

"We urgently need to train more specialists and more of these experts need to have a youth focus," he said.

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## 40% of faith schools favour religious children of any denomination

**ALIX ROBERTSON**

**@ALIXROBERTSON4**

Nearly half of England's secondary faith schools prioritise religious families – of any denomination – over the non-religious, according to new research.

While the figure is 40 per cent overall, Catholic state secondary schools are the worst offenders. In a survey of admissions policies at 637 faith schools, Humanists UK found that 60 per cent of Catholic secondaries "discriminate against the nonreligious specifically", a proportion that's significantly higher "than any other kind of school".

The Catholic Education Service has hotly protested the findings, arguing that non-religious pupils already have the greatest choice, because 81 per cent of schools are non-religious in the first place.

In contrast, there are some parts of the country "where one in three Catholics can't get a place at a catholic school", a spokesperson insisted.

There are roughly 68,000 children of no faith attending Catholic schools, they said, and only one Catholic secondary school in the country has a fully Catholic body of students.

CES' records show that 14 Catholic secondary schools in England (four per cent of the total) have no non-religious children attending at all. These are all in London, "where demand is at its highest".

A quarter of Church of England state secondary schools were also found to be prioritising children from various faiths over the non-religious. The figure for



Muslim schools is one in five, and Jewish schools one in six.

In contrast, Humanists UK said it had found no state-funded Hindu or Sikh schools that "single out the non-religious in this way".

A Church of England spokesperson said its schools "exist to serve the whole community" and "remain popular" with parents from all faith backgrounds, including those who are non-religious.

"While admission policies will always be an emotive issue, 15 million alive today who have attended a Church of England school know the reality – that they represent the diversity of their communities, and offer a rich educational environment for all," he said. "We continue to live out our vision for creating flourishing schools and pupils at the heart of our communities."

Partnerships for Jewish Schools and the Muslim Council for Britain have been contacted for comment.

"Schools' admissions policies should be

fair to families, treating them and their children equally regardless of their beliefs. Policies that discriminate against one group specifically are the antithesis of that and ought to be banned," said Humanists UK chief executive Andrew Copson.

Admissions to faith schools have been in the spotlight in recent months, after the education secretary Damian Hinds mooted lifting the "faith cap", a rule that means any new faith free school that is oversubscribed can only select 50 per cent of its pupils by religion.

In March, 71 faith leaders, politicians and education experts sent a joint letter to Hinds, asking him to reconsider his plans to remove the cap because the decision would be "divisive" and a threat to "social cohesion and respect".

In May the government announced that plans to lift the cap had been abandoned, saying that ministers would instead make it easier for faith groups to open new voluntary-aided faith schools, on the proviso that they provide 10 per cent of the capital costs themselves.



FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

## Hinds prepares for a second education committee appearance

Damian Hinds will face his second grilling from the parliamentary education committee next week.

The education secretary will face MPs on Wednesday morning.

It will be his second appearance in front of the education committee since he was appointed in early January.

When he gave evidence to the committee for the first time in March, he spoke about academy trust accountability, but would not commit to allowing Ofsted to carry out full

inspections at chains.

He also told MPs that issues around home schooling might be included in the government's reviews of exclusions practices in schools, and would not rule out a review of pupil premium funding.

He then insisted that councils have more power over illegal schools than they realise, and admitted he had never visited a university technical college.

The hearing will take place at 10am on Wednesday.



# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Insufficient mental health data does not compute

To solve a problem, you must first understand its extent and nature. This is a basic skill that pupils understand pretty quickly. For ministers, it is proving more of a challenge.

The lack of joined-up thinking and the paucity of data in the government's approach to young people's mental health is alarming.

Why didn't all the research that went into producing a green paper on 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision' coincide with a data update on the current situation?

The challenges to young people's mental health have moved on drastically since 2004, when the last data was released, and it is vital

we can see if the purported damage of social media is real and, if it is, how it manifests itself.

Since 2004 there have also been endless new school policies, including enormous changes to examinations, high-stakes accountability, the curriculum and expectations on children's behaviours.

School teachers, health professionals, and charities all work hard to help young people face these challenges and manage their mental health struggles on a daily basis. But they do so in a data vacuum, as do the ministers who create the policies. This data has never been more needed. Roll on October.

## Is Spielman's grading decision a pass or a fail?

She may have the outcome of a YouGov poll on her side, but one wonders whether Amanda Spielman will look back on her decision not to shake up Ofsted's grading system for schools as a huge missed opportunity.

Around two years since she first told MPs of her discomfort over the impact of the 'outstanding' grade on schools, she has chosen to maintain the status quo. So what's changed? Was one opinion poll and some "persuasive" lobbying from heads enough to change her mind? Or is she simply picking her battles with a reticent Department for Education? Only time will tell.

# SCHOOLS WEEK



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LAURA  
MCINERNEY

Contributing editor

## Graduate recruiters are clamouring for more talented women – and schools should be afraid

**G**ender pay rules are making corporations jittery, and rightly so. As *Schools Week* recently revealed, academy trusts usually have way more low-paid women than high-paid ones, which causes an imbalance in average pay.

Reputationally speaking, this is bad for academy trusts. But for banks, retailers and large consulting firms, the damage is even greater because the disparities are so much larger. As a result, many companies are internally committing to recruiting at least 50 per cent women in their graduate recruits. Hurray, one might think, equality has arrived! There's just one problem. If graduate recruiters start going heavily after women, where does that leave teaching?

It's no secret that schools rely on a largely female workforce. In total, 74 per cent of teachers are women – 85 per cent at primary level and 62 per cent in secondary schools. And those figures have only got higher in recent years.

Over in graduate recruitment land, things are different. In 2015, the Association of Graduate Recruiters urged its members – including Tesco, the Bank of England, and BT – to help shift a gender imbalance in new graduates

that sways roughly 60:40 in favour of men. Industry needs to find 10 per cent more women, and the question for recruiters is where you find them.

If one has any doubts these companies are serious, glance

“ **If companies are desperate to recruit female graduates, teacher recruitment is going to suffer**”

at the 2018 High-Fliers survey, which annually reviews graduate schemes. Among recruiters, the top concern is improving the diversity of the workforce. This year 74 per cent of companies said it was an issue, up from 67 per cent last year. The next highest concern? Improving their brand's reputation among students (55 per cent).

Perhaps this is a sign that companies finally understand the benefits of diversity. Perhaps it's because they are terrified of the reputational risk that comes without it. Neither really matters for the point I'm trying to make, which



is this: if companies are desperate to recruit female graduates, they will throw extra cash and benefits at them, and teacher recruitment will definitely feel the pinch. There's no way the government can pay its way out; in a cash fight with desperate banks, the exchequer will always lose.

An obvious solution would be to double down on making teaching more “female friendly”.

In the past, the job was believed to attract women because its hours made childcare easier. As teaching became more complex, with larger workloads, this became less possible.

Not only is it presumptive that women (and only women) will want to put their career secondary to childcare, parenting is not particularly a concern for your average 21-year-old. Women in professional jobs are now 34 on average when they have their first child. To a graduate, that's a lifetime away.

A second easy solution is to say

we can create more graduates. Unfortunately, we are in a demographic dip. Over the next few years there will be historically low numbers of 21-year-olds due to low birth rates around the millennium.

Meanwhile, graduate vacancies are back on par with the boom year of 2007. Add to this the increased nervousness about hiring immigrants, and you can see how even extra hordes of graduates would do little more than keep us at an even keel.

Instead of getting downbeat, a better solution would be to see the positive. If recruiters take more women, they will take correspondingly fewer men. A campaign based on the slogan “Hey men! No one else wants you BUT WE DO” would catch attention, even if it somewhat flouts equalities law.

Otherwise, perhaps we should make the profession more “male friendly”? What would that even mean? Should the DfE start sponsoring football teams? Are men attracted to incredibly long hours that allow them to shirk childcare?

As a nation we've spent so long focused on what women want that we've never bothered to learn what men may want too.

Ultimately, teaching is a great job for anyone who has the guts to care and the brains to think, man, woman, non-binary, whatever. But if major companies are coming for our core recruitment pool, then we need to get savvy and figure out how to overcome our own gender inequalities – even if that seems counterintuitive.

**In conversation**

David Laws and  
Natalie Perera

CATH MURRAY | @CATHMURRAY\_



**Is evidence-led education  
policy even possible?**

# In conversation: David Laws and Natalie Perera

**David Laws, executive chairman, and Natalie Perera, executive director and head of research, Education Policy Institute**

I'm at the new Education Policy Institute offices at 9am on a sweltering Monday to meet its executive chairman, the former Liberal Democrat schools minister David Laws, and Natalie Perera, an ex-civil servant turned executive director. I'm envisioning some kind of breakfast banter over croissants, à la Richard and Judy, or maybe more Fern and Phillip.

As it is, the relationship between the two – who have worked together for coming on six years, first within government but now lobbying from without – has less repartee and more gentle respect. Perera always lets her boss finish what he's saying, even when you can see she's itching to speak, though more surprisingly perhaps, Laws never interrupts his executive director.

The second part of Perera's title is "head of research", which seems an unusual role for someone who is not university-trained, I venture.

"Natalie is a great example of the fact you don't have to go to university to really excel in things and reach the top," Laws counters, with disarmingly contagious calm confidence. "I always assumed when we were in the department that she had about three PhDs, she used to blind all of us so much with her knowledge and data. It just shows what can be achieved if you've got the drive and motivation and talent."

The appointment also reveals EPI's priorities. Located by Victoria station, just two tube stops from Westminster, the think-tank is unabashed about its aim to directly affect education policy, and it has recruited to senior posts a further four or five "really talented, motivated bright people" from the DfE.

The former minister denies that he has followed a deliberate strategy to draw from the civil servant talent pool. It's simply, he

**“Research in very poor countries is greater than in developed countries like ours”**

suggests, "the way it worked out" – perhaps a little disingenuously, since he goes on to admit that it's very convenient they should have intimate working knowledge of the national pupil database.

For her part, Perera is keen to stress the importance of growing their own talent, too – through a graduate internship programme, among other routes.

The EPI positions itself as a bridge between university academics and the government, using strategic partnerships "to elevate academic research in a way that doesn't usually have that kind of profile," she says.

This seems a natural progression for Laws, who has often discussed his frustration at the degree to which policy preceded evidence during his time as a minister in the Coalition era. He echoes this now. "I almost never, in my red box as a minister, received the sort of quantitative research reports looking at issues in education and producing conclusions that might be helpful to me as a minister."

Michael Gove, his superior at the Department for Education, had a reputation for a cavalier attitude to evidence. So is Laws – whose 2016 book *Coalition* revealed just how charmed he was by his boss – willing to throw him under the bus on this particular question?

"I think Michael had both a very strong interest in data analysis and evidence," he responds with diplomacy, "but also unusually, that was mixed in with some very strong personal opinions, based upon his experience."

The problematic tendency of politicians to "leap from personal experience to drawing conclusions for the system as a whole" is affecting Number 10's current support for grammar school expansion, Laws believes.

"If you're Theresa May or some of the other Tories who have been to grammar

## In conversation: David Laws and Natalie Perera



schools, and you did well, and got to the top of your profession, or became prime minister or something, it's very tempting for them to think 'well, obviously that's a really great way of delivering social mobility'.

"There's a risk of translating what appears to work for one individual or a small number of individuals and concluding that it is the way to design the entire system. That's clearly a fallacy."

Perera is keen to add her take.

"What I think proponents of grammar schools don't quite understand is, even those disadvantaged children who do get in and do see a third of a grade higher in their results are likely to be a unique set.

"We don't know, for example, whether their parents are graduates and have just fallen on hard times, or whether they are from immigrant families who in other

**"I almost never received the sort of quantitative research reports that might be helpful to me as a minister"**

## In conversation: David Laws and Natalie Perera

countries might have been lawyers or whatever.

"So I think we need to be careful in over-egging what this very tiny group of disadvantaged kids in grammar schools truly attain."

In Gove, a passion for evidence coexisted with very personal biases. Laws recalls how he would invite people like Andreas Schleicher of the OECD to brief his education ministers on trends in international education, and the implications for policy. However, he also had some "deep-seated beliefs about things like the value of autonomy in improving educational standards in schools, and whether a 19th-century English novel should be compulsory or not".

"It's quite unusual in my experience to have those two things coexisting in one person, but then," he adds, echoing the somewhat obsequious tone of his book: "Michael is quite an unusual and exceptional person."

Perera's analysis from 12 years spent inside the Department for Education, is that there is often a gap between the talented people "tucked away doing lots of great research and analysis" and the policy advisers speaking to the ministers. While her tone is neutral, conciliatory even, her words suggest a somewhat chaotic environment.

"It's a big department, so the research could go upwards, you know, to the minister, but there were lots of intermediaries where it could go, or indeed nowhere at all," she says.

Laws is gently scathing about the rigour of the UK's use of evidence in political

decision-making, even in comparison with much poorer countries. He contrasts Liberia, which ran a \$1 million randomised controlled trial at a small number of schools before introducing its own academy-style system, to the ad-hoc way academisation was introduced in England – which of course, didn't have international donors to account to.

"The great irony for me, working with an organisation that looks at education policy in the developing world, is that quite often, the degree of rigour, evaluation, research in very poor countries is greater than in developed countries like ours, often because the interventions are funded by big foundations that insist that there is evaluation and research alongside them," he says.

This example nicely illustrates EPI's mission, which is to be "for education what the IFS is for the fiscal policy space," explains Laws, "a highly quantitative, rigorous, independent, data-led organisation, but one that does want to have an impact on policy, and ultimately on outcomes".

Perera concurs: "one of the things we want to avoid is plucking solutions out of the air that aren't evidence-based."

Some may call this dream for evidence-led policy naive. In fact, the policy U-turn for which Laws' Lib Dems will be forever excoriated by an entire generation of millennials – that they allowed their Tory coalition partners to massively raise university tuition fees in exchange for investment in early-years education – was a classic example of the dangers of imposing an evidence-based policy (ie



that more money for the early years would do more to close the disadvantage gap than ditching tuition fees) without first convincing your grass roots.

No longer an MP, if Laws ever returned to the education department – which he stresses is "immensely unlikely" – the early years would be an integral part of his plan to improve the quality of policymaking.

"I wouldn't have ministers responsible for early years, schools and post-16. I really don't think that leads to joined-up policymaking," he declares. He would instead allocate ministerial responsibility by theme, so there would be one minister responsible for "improving quality of learning" throughout all the education phases, for example, and another for "capital and revenue funding".

"I think the way the DfE was and is, to some extent, broken up between age phases, is actually quite corrosive of good education policy," he muses. "If the schools minister were responsible for early-years quality, there would be a much more joined-up process."

# Opinion



## KEZIAH FEATHERSTONE

Head designate, Q3 Academy Tipton

### Punk leadership means daring to think outside the system

**The education community has a jaundiced view of school leadership at present, which is seen as risk-averse or even cowardly, says Keziah Featherstone, who has seen the alternative**

It's doubtful that the model answer to the interview question "describe your leadership style" involves exhibiting so little moral backbone that you'll do almost anything in pursuit of personal glory. The usual list of the best leadership qualities doesn't often include being so subservient to your line managers that you'll do anything they ask of you.

And yet, for many, this is the perception of educational leadership these days: leaders hiding in offices, plotting ways to demoralise staff, spending all the money, ridding themselves of troublesome children and playing the accountability game on a crest of a wave.

To be fair, we all know a few leaders like this – but I hold on to the belief that they are few and far between. I truly believe that the system as it is, which seemingly rewards appalling leadership behaviours, will be eradicated by

good people.

I'm talking about "punk leadership". I don't mean an aggressive, shouty, anarchic, Dr Martens-style of leadership, but one driven by uncompromising values and the determination to make

dreams a reality.

As punk genius Joe Strummer said, "I will always believe in punk rock, because it's about creating something for yourself. Part of it was – stop being a sap! Lift your head up and see what is really going on in the political, social and religious situations, and try and see through the smoke screens".

This chimed with something that ASCL's Geoff Barton said at the Headteachers' Roundtable summit this year. He quoted *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in an analogy for the direction of educational leadership at the moment: "Once a victim, always a victim; that's the law."

Indeed, when did we just roll over



and accept that there is nothing to be done about the way things are? Why do we fret over a Progress 8 score that will always put certain demographics to the back of the table? Why is it now commonplace for some schools to refuse to admit children with SEND (especially the more difficult types) because of the cost implications and the impact on outcomes? Why have some schools steadfastly refused to consider

**“ It's ethical, values-driven leadership, with care for the children, the staff and the community at the core”**

that flexible working may be one solution for the recruitment and retention crisis, or that going part-time is something you can do as an effective leader?

There is a hegemonic dialogue that too many have bought into. It suggests that school leadership is more about winning battles rather than considering what the battle is about.

So how do we ensure we have the strength to continue doing what's right? As Joey Ramone said, "To me, punk is about an individual going against the grain and standing up and saying 'this is who I am.'"

Essentially, it's ethical, values-driven leadership, with care for

the children, the staff and the community at the core. It cares about outcomes, but it also knows that examination outcomes at any cost is no solution.

When I think about punk leaders, I think most often about my Headteachers' Roundtable colleagues: we debate, we disagree, we try and influence others' thinking, despite the fact that getting through the door itself can be one hell of a challenge.

I think of Stephen Tierney, the chair, who eschews the normal way of doing things. School self-evaluation form? Sorry, we don't do this, but let me show you what we do instead. Lesson observations? Again, nope, let me explain what we do instead.

I think of Vic Goddard, who never turns a child away from his school, swelling his numbers of SEND and hard-to-place children, knowing he'll argue his outcomes with whoever comes knocking at his door.

I think also of my friend Iesha Small, a fierce, dedicated leader, incredibly effective even though she would call herself introverted. She provides a voice for others and does what is right and ethical for each human being.

And hopefully, I think of you – the next to join our ranks, or at least the next to shout out for punk leadership. In numbers we can change the world.

Keziah Featherstone is delivering a presentation on "Punk leadership" at the WomenEd strand of the Festival of Education on 22 June



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**The ESFA's annual academies accounts direction document is usually fairly dry, but this year there are a few important things for trusts to look out for, writes Phillip Reynolds**

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) have released the academies accounts direction (AAD) 2017 to 2018 – a nattily named document that offers guidance on academy schools' financial reporting.

While changes usually tend to be quite small and often technical most years, this time there are some rather more significant changes which academy schools need to keep in mind. Alcohol purchases and group transactions all come under the spotlight.

#### Alcohol

For a while now, alcohol purchases made by academy trusts have been a touchy subject. Many ESFA investigation reports highlight such expenditures – suggesting that isn't happy.

The lack of guidance has created problems for academy trusts. For example, is buying a member of staff a bottle of wine for £10 as a thank-you any different to buying them a box of chocolates at the same value?

The AAD has, finally, clarified the situation and it probably comes as no surprise to find that purchases of alcohol or excessive gifts are examples of irregular expenditure.

#### Related-party transactions

Another key change concerns transactions between trusts and subsidiaries, associated and joint ventures. From 2018, the related party-transactions note must



PHILLIP  
REYNOLDS

Education manager, Kreston Reeves

## Booze and backroom deals are under the accounting spotlight

disclose all inter-group transactions. This is a clear attempt from the ESFA to get more transparency between trusts and their trading subsidiaries.

- The percentage of pay bill spent on facility time
- Details of paid trade union activities

“ It probably comes as no surprise to find that purchases of alcohol or excessive gifts are examples of irregular expenditure ”

#### Trustees report

This is perhaps the most significant change to trust financial statements for 2018 and will require some preparation time. There is a new requirement to include information on trade union facility time to comply with the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017. This requirement only applies where trusts have more than 49 full-time equivalent employees throughout any seven months during the reporting period.

Financial statements will need to include information on:

- The number of employees who were relevant union officials during the period
- The number of employees and their percentage of time spent on facility time

In addition, trusts must also now include a section dedicated to fundraising practices, to enable compliance with the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016. This covers:

- The trust's approach to fundraising
- Details of any work with, and oversight of, any commercial participators/professional fundraisers
- Confirmation that fundraising is conforming to recognised standards
- Details of the monitoring of fundraising carried out on its behalf
- Any complaints
- Protection of the public, including vulnerable people, from unreasonably intrusive or persistent fundraising approaches, and undue pressure to donate

#### Accounts disclosures

Finally, there are a number of new disclosure requirements including:

- Church academies which decide not to capitalise site improvement costs and instead show them as expenditure must now disclose this expenditure as a separate note.
- Last year's AAD asked for costs incurred by the apprenticeship levy as a separate item in the staff costs note. This year the AAD requests that these costs are included as part of social security costs in the same note. Therefore, a restatement of the prior year figures will be required.
- In addition, where apprenticeship levy-funded training is received in year, this should be recognised as notional income and notional expenditure. The 10-per-cent top-up funding provided by the government should also be recognised in this manner.
- The AAD now requests that related-party transactions are separated between income and expenditure items. In addition, any expenditure above £2,500 must now state it has been provided "at no more than cost" and the trust has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.

#### Inactive academy trusts

The AAD has now clarified that academy trusts must all submit their financial statements to the ESFA four months after the accounting reference date. Where trusts become inactive, for example, when the final academy has transferred out of the trust, the four-month rule continues to apply.

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## Reviews

## BOOK REVIEW



## Other people's children: What happens to those in the bottom 50% academically?

By Barnaby Lenon

Published by John Catt Educational

Reviewed by Gemma Gathercole

Whenever I hear the phrase "other people's children", I cringe, largely because what follows is a series of generalisations on a phase of education that is not universally understood. So, despite my apprehension before starting this review, I am happy to report it was unfounded.

What becomes clear even from the first chapter is that it is well-researched, ambitious in scope and detailed in its understanding. It addresses the question in its subtitle, but if you're looking for a simple answer, you won't find one here – for reasons this book explains well.

The first four chapters are dedicated to the bottom 50 per cent at particular ages: five, 11, 16 and post-16. These chapters make use of existing data to set the scene for the analysis of post-16 education that follows.

Fair warning, they are quite depressing reading. Lenon quotes Education Policy Institute research, which shows that "40 per cent of the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and the rest at age 16 can be attributed to the gaps that were seen at age five". For those well versed in educational statistics this isn't news, but it does set the scene well for the biggest chunk of the book, which examines including vocational, further and higher education opportunities.

At just a few pages under the 300 mark, discounting the extensive bibliography and index, the book is certainly meaty, although Lenon could have expanded further in most places. But this tells you something of the breadth of

topics he covers and the complexity of the landscape. For example, a chapter on 'Failure in vocational education' covers 215 years (1800-2015), which could fill at least a book in its own right.

By setting the review of vocation and technical education in the statistical context of education below 16, Lenon avoids the trap of considering elements of the system in isolation. In a section entitled 'The jungle of qualifications', he recognises the complexity of the vocational system, but accurately asserts that "vocational qualifications are much more complex because they reflect the needs of a diverse labour market". He also recognises the policy history that has sought to create this vast array of qualifications, and provides any number of conclusions that had me nodding my head in agreement. In the section on T-levels, for example, he notes "the reforms look radical but are little different from very similar reforms attempted by previous governments".

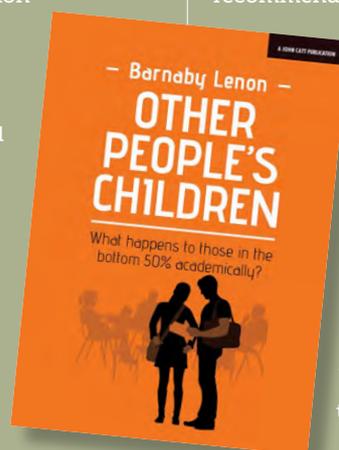
Perhaps the most interesting perspective is his conclusion that simplification is "almost impossible". He mentions the broad knowledge employers and the public have of GCSEs and A-levels – largely because the brands (although not necessarily the content) have remained stable. Lenon concludes that due to the many different

courses and levels needed in technical education, "it cannot easily be reduced to simple structures". Perhaps another warning for T-levels.

At this point, you may be thinking there must be a "but", and there is, but it does not take away from a very good synthesis of the data, complexity and policy churn. The biggest weakness, for me, is that the analysis does not go far enough. There are some conclusions I agree with, but the data to back them up isn't always there. Now, of course, if you cross-reference some of the many resources to which Lenon refers, you will no doubt get that data. However, although this book is rich with charts, there could have been more.

The biggest drawback is the lack of any concrete solutions for change, from a book that so consistently outlines the problems. When you reach the end, you're still searching for an answer to the question: "So what do we do about it?"

For those new to further and/or technical education, I thoroughly recommend this book. And even for some of those better versed in the issues of the sector, it provides a comprehensive and illuminating summary. In fact, it should be required reading for civil servants before they start tinkering with policy – if not the whole book, then certainly at least the summary of recent trends at the end of chapter 5.



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## TOP BLOGS of the week

Our blog reviewer of the week is **Jill Berry**, a former head, now educational consultant, author and Twitter addict

[@JILLBERRY102](#)

### How I learn 26 names within five minutes

[@Jobaker9](#)

This brilliantly practical post details Jo Baker's strategy for quickly learning the names of pupils she teaches. I am absolutely with Jo in her conviction that being able to address each student by name from the very beginning of your time with them is key to good classroom management – and also to establishing warm, mutually respectful relationships. If this is something you find difficult, talk to others about the techniques they use. But don't fail to try.

### What middle class teachers need to know about their working-class pupils in poverty

[@ieshasmall](#)

Iesha Small, my colleague as a *Schools Week* blog reviewer, considers the fact that our school communities are predominantly staffed by middle-class professionals who may care deeply about working-class children, and the families with whom they interact, but the underlying message may still reflect "the unspoken rule in education that (white) middle-class culture

is the only meaningful culture and that we must all aspire to it". Iesha challenges this and attempts to raise awareness of what these children and their families may be dealing with, and how it inevitably affects preoccupations, motivation and performance.

### Stop all the clocks

[@rondelle10\\_b](#)

Bukky Yusuf is a well-known and highly respected figure in the educational Twitter community, and at blogging and spin-off events. She writes movingly here of visiting a friend with a terminal illness. This is a sensitive, touching post which helps to remind us why we should keep clear in our minds what matters most, perhaps especially when we are busy and feeling pressured by the demands of our professional lives.

"Even though the roles we undertake in schools are important (my friend knew how much I love teaching and learning), times with our nearest and dearest are even more important," she writes.

### Eyes wide open

[@MsHMFL](#)

Julie Hunter describes her journey over the past nine months as a deputy head at a brand new school. She discusses the stimulation, the opportunities and the pressures of taking a senior leader role at a

school where everything is to be established and no-one is walking into the legacy of what went before.

Julie concludes that, for her, the "three Rs: resilience, responsibility and reward" have summed up her experience, and she has learnt a considerable amount about herself, and about effective education. "If you are considering working in a brand new school, prepare for the 3 Rs and go into it with your eyes wide open," she concludes.

### 'Good question' questions: How to get more of them

[@MrSamPullan](#)

Sam Pullan's post is based on his presentation at the recent St Albans School Forum on Education, and it focuses on the types of questions students ask, how to deal with them and how to encourage those really "good questions" which "take whatever it is you are discussing and move it on a level. They show interest, understanding and curiosity and they are relevant."

Sam's advice is to reduce the number of poor questions you receive, create the right environment and model the approach you want to see.

### The real honour

[@samtwiselton](#)

Sam Twiselton writes about her experience of being awarded an OBE in the Queen's birthday honours list, reflecting on the work she has done leading up to it and what she has learned in the process. Considering her involvement in the Carter Review of initial teacher training and the social mobility and school improvement work she is engaged in at Sheffield Hallam University, 'South Yorkshire Futures', Sam concludes: "I feel more positive than I have for some time that universities can and should have a distinctive role in school improvement and increasing social mobility and that this is beginning to be recognised by policymakers."

Congratulations on all you have achieved, Sam. Your mum would be very proud.

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**International schools will cause a teaching exodus**

**Pran Patel @MrPatelsAwesome**

Will cause? Nope the insidious lack of societal respect and workload are the cause.

**Kimberley Emma @Kimbo\_H**

I did it! Big pay rise, two thirds the class size, a full stock cupboard and about fifteen hours a week less...

**Terry Fish @terryfish**

The government should be very happy because they believe market forces should prevail... until there are no teachers left for the UK!

**Lisa Parsons**

It's not about money, it's about the conditions and well behaved students. Here you plan and deliver good lessons to grateful students without working into the early hours and the stress of a bullying culture. Want a life and to see your children? Leave the UK.

**Councils begin to top-slice from school budgets to replace ESG funding**

**Matthew Clements-Wheeler**

Given that schools forum consent was sought, perhaps an alternative headline might have been 'Schools band together to procure services' – an approach which actually meets the government's efficiency agenda...

**'No need to finish your A-levels,' universities tell school pupils**

**K M Enayet Hossain**

Education is being commercialised so much so many ways for so many reasons that the true essence of education is fading away – not a good sign.

**Samantha Pugh**

Not at my university! Please don't generalise – it's not helpful.

**REPLY OF THE WEEK** **Julie Cordiner**

**Councils begin to top-slice from school budgets to replace ESG funding**

I have no idea why DfE thought it was a good idea to withdraw a grant and put LAs in the situation of having to go cap in hand to schools for the money to replace it, when these are statutory duties that the LA cannot refuse to do! Authorities that haven't asked schools for money must have found it from council funding, as these items can't be charged to the schools block.

**61 councils forced into fresh school budgets raid**



**Why schools need a coherent curriculum**

**Michael Rosen @MichaelRosenYes**

Does "important knowledge" include: rules of plumbing, first aid for most likely fatal, near-fatal likely occurrences, how to cook with optimum outcomes, how to identify lying and deception, history of migrations?

**Simon Smith @smithsmm**

Completely agree with this.

**Yrotitna @yrotitna**

Instead of devising a curriculum based on personal preferences we need to build one based on evidence about what works. Cambridge Primary Review would be a good place to start.

**Forget the 11-plus. Is a world without selection at 18 possible?**

**Andy Macnaughton-Jon @AndyMacJones**

Logically you're heading towards not being able to select anybody based on anything. #alwaysPickedLastInGames

**Plymouth Ed @plymIOE**

It's what the OU was built on methinks

**Kieran McLaughlin @HeadDurham**

A fascinating article. There is so much sociopolitical baggage associated with Oxbridge, etc, that it is hard to envisage a change. But certainly there has always been a question about whether the best teaching is at the unis that are most difficult to access.



# WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

## MONDAY

Schools hoping the NHS cash announcement might signal more funding for education were quickly disappointed when the government immediately announced there's "no more money".

Theresa May announced at the weekend that the health service will get an extra £20 billion a year by 2023.

But apparently the chief cheque-writer Philip Hammond has told other ministers their departments will not be getting a similar windfall. Not only this, but as the Institute for Fiscal Studies said this week, given it's not clear where the NHS money is coming from, the DfE may even face further cuts to pay for it.

## TUESDAY

Week in Westminster is very much enjoying the addition of DfE staffer Zara McDermott to the cast of hit ITV show *Love Island*.

But the bikini-clad civil servant has ruffled a few feathers among the department's alumni.

For Jonathan Simons, a former education adviser to Gordon Brown and David Cameron, a selfie posted by McDermott on Instagram of her face in front of a plush Downing Street sitting room, was the last straw.

"She had all my sympathies till now," fumed Simons. "But she's broken the rule about leaving your phone in No10 reception and now she's dead to me."

Meanwhile, Sam Freedman, who was once Michael Gove's policy advisor, and who is very strict about journalists phrasing this correctly, wondered if the

new islander was overselling herself.

"Is it wrong that I'm slightly annoyed she's calling herself a policy adviser when she's actually a junior official?" he asked.



Sam Freedman  
@Samtr

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Replying to @jonathansimons

Is it wrong that I'm slightly annoyed she's calling herself a policy adviser when she's actually a junior official?

10:13 PM - 19 Jun 2018

Given politicians' penchant for bullshit, we'd have thought she's merely lining herself up to take a future seat in the Commons. After all, reality TV did wonders for Donald Trump...

The *Love Island* homepage meanwhile



Jonathan Simons  
@jonathansimons

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She had all my sympathies till now. But she's now broken the rule about leaving your phone in No10 reception and now she's dead to me



Richard Johnstone @CSW\_DepEd  
Latest #loveisland arrival is a civil servant | Department for Education policy advisor reportedly failed to tell Whitehall she was appearing on reality TV show buff.ly/211H6mo

tells us there's still time to apply to join this series. Perhaps Freedman and Simons should don their budgie smugglers and set the record straight?

## WEDNESDAY

Matt Hancock, the culture secretary, has happened upon an idea. Why don't we

protect young people from the perils of the internet by banning phones in schools? What a marvellous idea!

Hancock, who was also previously the skills minister, was so pleased with his new plan that he decided to write all about it in *The Telegraph*.

Thank goodness we have such a forward-thinking cabinet minister! If only someone at the DfE had considered this before. Except, it turns out they have. Schools are already allowed to ban or restrict the use of mobile phones, and 95 per cent of respondents to a DfE survey in 2013 said their school already did so.

Hancock also launched his own app earlier this year, the Matt Hancock app, which gives insights into his life as an MP. Given that he's responsible for promoting digital business in Britain, this isn't as strange as it sounds, but EdTech developers may be startled that the MP supposedly in charge of cheerleading them is now asking children to turn off their phones. What a cock app.

## THURSDAY

Shameless plug: at the Festival of Education!



# PRINCIPAL BIG PICTURE DONCASTER

**Organisation Type:** Secondary, Alternative Provision

**Contract type:** Full-time, permanent

**Start date:** January 2019 | **Salary** £65,000 – £85,000 depending on experience

## The Principal Role

We are seeking to appoint an exceptional leader who is inspired by the opportunity and challenge of establishing and leading the UK's first Big Picture Learning school - and doing so in a way that it can become the prototype for future Big Picture schools in the UK.

Specifically, we are seeking someone with leadership experience who is passionate about the potential of all young people to succeed in their learning regardless of prior learning histories or personal circumstances. He or she will have the opportunity to mold an accomplished team of staff and to create a school with the potential to influence educational provision much more widely.

## The school

Opening in January 2019 with a small intake of learners (increasing to 60 in year 2), Big Picture Doncaster will be the first school in the UK founded on the Big Picture Learning school design. The Principal will lead a small team of highly committed Teacher Advisors and other adults. The school, which will be independently funded, will be actively supported by local partners, including Doncaster Council. Big Picture Learning UK (established by the Innovation Unit) will provide support and it, in turn, will be assisted by the expertise of Big Picture Learning International.

The Principal will lead a team that will include three Teacher Advisors in Year 1, as well as other actively engaged support staff. S/he will report to the CEO of Big Picture Learning UK, and will work directly with the trustees of Big Picture Doncaster.

## Big Picture

Big Picture Learning has supported thousands of students in the US and Australia to succeed against the odds. It provides a radically different approach to schooling and learning based on the mantra 'one student at a time'. It is designed to combat disengagement and to inspire young people to develop and follow their passions in support of their learning. Deep relationships, family partnerships, community-based internships and personalized learning programmes are also features of the design. More information can be gained from their website: [www.bigpicture.org/](http://www.bigpicture.org/).

**BIGPICTURE.ORG**

## More details and a full job description can be found here:

<https://www.innovationunit.org/wp-content/uploads/Big-Picture-Principal-Job-Description.pdf>. Applicants should submit a CV, a covering letter telling us why you believe you have what it takes to be the founding principal and a short blog (500 words), video (2 mins) or other format on the topic: 'The story of how I made a leadership breakthrough that was transformative for one or more young people.'

**Please submit applications to Louise Thomas ([louise.thomas@innovationunit.org](mailto:louise.thomas@innovationunit.org)) by midnight on 7th July 2018.**

**Applications: by midnight 7th July 2018**

**BIG  
PICTURE  
LEARNING** <sup>UK</sup>



# Head of Schools Exams

**Salary:** Senior Leadership Band

Flexible location

The British Council is looking for an experienced Head of School Exams to join the English & Exams Strategic Business Unit (SBU).

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

The Head of School Exams will develop a school exams strategy in line with the global exams strategy to ensure we are positioned for significant growth with our key clients (Cambridge International, Pearson and OxfordAQA).

Reporting to the Head of Client Services you will lead on the development of the schools exams business to maximize our share of the international school exams market and ensure that we are operating to high standards efficiently. In addition to the above you will drive new business development opportunities across all our school exam clients and deliver income and surplus growth in line with ambitious global targets- by maximizing value from existing accounts including winning new business.

For full details please refer to the role profile on our website.

If you feel that you are suitable and would like to be considered for this role, **please apply before 23:59 UK time on the 3rd July 2018** using the following link; <https://bit.ly/2loiE5X>

## **Our Equality Commitment:**

*Valuing diversity is essential to the British Council's work. We aim to abide by and promote equality legislation by following both the letter and the spirit of it to try and avoid unjustified discrimination, recognising discrimination as a barrier to equality of opportunity, inclusion and human rights. All staff worldwide are required to ensure their behaviour is consistent with our policies.*

*The British Council is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and is keen to reflect the diversity of UK society at every level within the organisation. We welcome applications from all sections of the community. In line with the British Council's Child Protection policy, any appointment is contingent on thorough checks. In the UK, and in other countries where appropriate systems exist, these include criminal records checks.*

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We are looking for an experienced and passionate teacher, comfortable working with students, training and modelling to teachers, and presenting to school leaders. We want someone who will be dedicated to building and maintaining relationships with our schools, and supporting them to make our programmes transformational for their children.

Salary: £28,000-£32,000 subject to review in 12 months  
Closing Date: 9am on the 10th July 2018  
To apply please visit: [www.skillsbuilder.org/jobs-education-associate-2018](http://www.skillsbuilder.org/jobs-education-associate-2018)

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# HEADTEACHER

## Kibworth Primary School

Salary: L20 – 25 (£62,863 - £71,053)

Discovery Schools Academy Trust are seeking to appoint a Headteacher who shares our values and ambitions, and has the vision, drive, resilience and experience to build on our success to date and provide further capacity to our trust.

This is an exciting opportunity to join a large and thriving semi-rural primary school. Our school is a place of discovery and friendship, where all children develop a genuine love of learning, achieve to the best of their ability, and are prepared for the next stage of their education. opportunity to join a large and thriving

The successful candidate will work with many of our school improvement experts such as subject lead professionals, executive Headteachers and other cluster leaders to improve outcomes for children.

We would welcome applications from experienced Headteachers, aspiring leaders such as those who are currently in a Deputy headteacher or Head of School role.

### Discovery Schools Academies Trust offers:

- A peer network of like-minded professionals
- Recognition that all schools are unique, with an approach that encourages local accountability and governance that is responsive to community needs
- A commitment to excellence in education, grounded in a shared moral purpose of ensuring high quality provision for all learners
- An established track record of high quality education and experience of leading rapid school improvement
- An employer committed to offering all staff high quality professional development opportunities
- Shared resources and expertise
- Effective business management systems, ensuring that our academies are able to focus on delivering inspirational teaching and learning



We would encourage potential applicants to arrange an appointment to discuss the role informally and visit our school. Please contact **Sam Adams**, to arrange a visit before the application deadline – [sadams@dsatkibworth.org](mailto:sadams@dsatkibworth.org)

For an application pack, please contact **Emma Perkins** – [eperkins@discoveryschoolstrust.org.uk](mailto:eperkins@discoveryschoolstrust.org.uk) or telephone **0116 2793462**

**Closing Date for applications: 25th June 2018**  
**Interviews will take place on: 4th & 5th July 2018**

**Discovering joy in learning. Sharing the journey for All our Tomorrows.**

Dedicated to encouraging the aspirations of all in a supportive and safe culture of learning. Being visionary to create opportunities to develop both voice and partnerships across our diverse learning communities.

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# SCHOOLS WEEK

We hope you've enjoyed  
reading your new look  
Schools Week.

Let us know what you think of this week's edition on twitter  
(@schoolsweek) or email the editor Shane Mann,  
shane.mann@lsect.com.

