

SCHOOLS WEEK

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

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P18-19

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IS IT JUST ONE BAD APPLE?

- MORE academy trusts slapped for misuse of building improvement grants
- Government hiring EIGHT new fraud inspectors to beef up oversight
- Academies minister claims he's handling the problem... but is he?

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EXCLUSIVE

SCHOOLS WEEK

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Opinion



**KAREN
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Director of operations,
Driver Youth Trust

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driving awareness course**

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**MICHAEL
PAIN**

CEO of Forum Strategy

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The Debate: Too many or too few?



As the debate on school exclusions becomes increasingly polarised, we brought together two people with opposing views to see where there might be common ground.

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News

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Two more academy trusts flout building improvement fund rules

JOHN DICKENS AND FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

EXCLUSIVE

A Panorama investigation this week accused the Bright Tribe academy trust of making repeated false claims for building and maintenance grants.

Schools Week can now reveal at least two more trusts have misused the same funds, and that academies minister, Lord Agnew, responded to concerns about such misuse by admitting "there will always be bad apples in any system".

New trustees at Bright Tribe, parachuted in to oversee the trust, are now investigating Panorama's claims that public money given for building works, lighting upgrades and fire safety improvements was wasted as the jobs were either not finished, or never started in the first place.

In response, critics have suggested the ESFA just does not have the resources to adequately oversee the finances of thousands of academies.

Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the "insistence that there are just 'some bad apples' just won't cut the mustard. It's not good enough, because we know what a bad apple does, it rots the rest of the crop."

Agnew made his comment in a letter to the union leader after she raised a series of issues about Bright Tribe prior to the airing of Panorama and pledged his "commitment" to ensuring academy governance is "strengthening".

The government is now advertising for a new fleet of fraud inspectors to beef up its oversight team.

It comes as the Labour party calls for an "urgent and independent inquiry" into how multi-academy trusts are regulated after the Bright Tribe accusations.

Most of Panorama's allegations centred on the Whitehaven Academy, in Cumbria, where Bright Tribe, founded by businessman Michael Dwan, is alleged to have claimed hundreds of thousands of pounds for incomplete works.

One of the allegations involved substantial funding for LED lighting at the school in 2015. However the work was not completed, with Panorama capturing images of the



Lord Agnew



Michael Dwan

BrightTribe
learn grow prosper

lights still stored in a shed.

Agnew, in his letter, stated he will "continue to investigate this", adding his job is to "minimise these [instances] and ensure that it is robust in its ability to deal with failure when it occurs".

He said his "priority" was to "sort out" Whitehaven, but added it had been "very challenging given its remoteness". The school will now get funding for a "major rebuild".

However *Schools Week* can reveal at least two others trusts have misused capital funding, given via the Condition Improvement Fund – normally used urgently to repair dangerous buildings.

A financial notice to improve, issued to the now defunct Lilac Sky Schools Trust in August 2016, stated the government had stopped CIF cash being used to prop up revenue costs.

It was part of a long list of "significant irregular financial and governance practice over a number of years" at the trust.

Schools Week revealed last year that accounts for the trust listed misdemeanours including staff being paid severance cash before getting re-hired the next day, and public money spent on "luxury" booze.

The trust, which had nine schools, has now been dissolved. But an Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) investigation into Lilac Sky has still not been published – despite being launched more than two years ago.

The Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust was also issued a financial notice to improve in February this year, which found the Yorkshire trust had "misused" CIF funding. The ESFA was alerted to the abuse by a whistleblower.

Trust chief executive Andy Goulty told *Schools Week* the trust underspent on CIF funding, so used the remaining money on other building work, for example putting a fence around the fields of one of its schools.

But Goulty said the trust was wrong and admitted it should have contacted the ESFA for permission first, adding Rodillian had now "tightened up" as an organisation, with new finance and legal staff in position.

Bousted said the ESFA appears to "have neither the personnel nor the resources to keep in check the thousands of academies and hundreds of MATs it is responsible for".

"What we see is whistleblowers, parental complaints, but nothing happens. Even when the ESFA identifies something as being seriously wrong, nothing happens... where is the action?"

Schools Week can reveal the DfE is advertising for eight investigation officers to beef up its counter fraud team.

The inspectors, paid up to £40,000 each, will be tasked with "providing assurance funding is being used for its agreed purpose, and that fraud and irregularity are minimised".

The DfE did not comment, but said of the Bright Tribe allegations that academies have to provide more information on their accounts than other schools, and 95 per cent of trusts had no problems.

Deficit of £1 million? No worries, have more schools...

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

EXCLUSIVE

The Department for Education (DfE) allowed an academy trust to take over two schools and approved bids for it to open two new free schools – despite it being £1 million in deficit and the government monitoring its finances.

The TBAP multi-academy trust, which runs 11 alternative provision academies, was served with a financial notice to improve (FNtI) by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in August this year.

It followed a warning notice issued by the government to TBAP in January, triggered after the trust requested £300,000 advance funding to cover its shortfall.

TBAP's financial statement for the year ending August 2017, published in February, showed the trust was already more than £1 million in deficit – 12 months before the FNtI was handed out.

Board minutes also reveal that throughout those 12 months the DfE was encouraging the trust to sponsor two more schools as well as approving its bids for two free schools.

Schools Week has been told that the free schools have now been returned for the next round of bidding and it is likely that the government will rebroker the two sponsorship schools too.



Matthew Clements-Wheeler, chair of the Institute of School Business Leadership, said the case shows the DfE has neglected its oversight responsibilities, particularly completing due diligence on expanding trusts.

He said: "In situations like this which go wrong, the pragmatic reality is that it should have been seen and it should have been avoided."

The ESFA wrote to TBAP chief executive Seamus Oates (pictured), who used to sit on the North-West London and South-Central England Headteacher Board, on August 17 this year to explain that requests for financial support made by the trust had triggered a financial notice to improve.

Subsequently the ESFA provided another £650,000 of funding to address "further financial cashflow deficits".

Despite this, Oates' chief executive report,

published in board minutes from March, show the trust was "asked by the DfE to consider three sponsorship projects in the North West".

And in June's report, Oates wrote: "We are continuing with due diligence on two pipeline sponsorship projects in the North West one of which is Wennington Hall."

Schools Week understands the other is Chadwick High School.

Board minutes from December last year also show TBAP bid for four new social, mental and emotional health free schools, and were accepted for one in Hounslow and one in Essex.

But minutes show by June this year the trust was advised by the government to step away from the bids because of its financial struggles.

A joint statement from Oates and Paul Dix, chair of the trust's board, said they "first became aware of cash flow issues and a likely significant deficit in December 2017" during an audit process.

"We are also implementing a recovery plan which involves restructuring at trust and academy level."

TBAP hired school financial management company SAAF Education this year to help improve its financial processes and systems and appointed a new finance director in May.

The DfE said TBAP is subject to a rigorous accountability system.

ALIX ROBERTSON | @ALIXROBERTSON4

Education department property head on Future Academies board

The head of the Department for Education's property arm is also a director on the board of the trust founded by former academies minister Lord Nash, *Schools Week* has learned.

Lara Newman, chief executive of LocatED – the company set up by the government to find and buy land for the free schools programme – joined the board of Future Academies in November last year, around eight months after she took up her government role.

Her term of office at Future Academies will run until 2020, and the position is her

only governance role in an educational institution.

A spokesperson for LocatED told *Schools Week* that Newman "has operated at the heart of the free schools policy since its inception prior to the 2010 election" and "is dedicated to using her expertise to support the delivery of quality education".

"This interest is listed in LocatED's register of interests," she added, confirming that if LocatED did any work related to Future Academies, "this interest would be declared to those involved" and Newman would "recuse herself from

decision-making".

Future Academies was established in 2008 and hit the headlines in 2016 when The Guardian reported that Lord Nash's daughter, Jo Nash, was teaching history at one of the trust's secondary schools, Pimlico Academy.

She was said to have also helped draw up a new curriculum for the subject, despite being unqualified and unpaid for the work.

A spokesperson for Future Academies told *Schools Week* that Jo Nash now works for its Pimlico Primary school.

News

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FUND FOR DISADVANTAGED 'FUTURE TALENT' SCRAPPED

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The government has cancelled a key strand of its social mobility action plan, withdrawing £18 million of funding that would have helped secondary schools improve the performance of the brightest poor pupils.

The future talent fund was unveiled by former education secretary Justine Greening last December.

It was one of the most significant proposals in Unlock Talent and Fulfil Potential, a document that set out the Department for Education's (DfE) plan to improve social mobility.

But the government has now admitted to *Schools Week* that it has taken the "difficult decision" to cancel the fund, choosing instead to prioritise improvements in the early years.

It is not known whether the money saved by scrapping the fund will be put towards another specific scheme or go back into the department's general budget.

The decision to cancel the funding has been criticised by Impetus-PEF, a charity that supports pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Ben Gadsby, policy manager at the Impetus-PEF charity, said: "The future talent fund was a bright spot in domestic policymaking, at a time when Brexit is hogging the headlines. Today the future for disadvantaged young people looks a little less bright."

He said disadvantaged young people are half as likely as their peers to get the grades they need to succeed, adding that over a thousand miss out on top GCSEs despite being among the highest attainers at age 11.

"We are generations away from closing these gaps. This fund would have channelled vital funding to address this," he added.

The fund cancellation follows an earlier decision by the government to slash the funding available by £5 million.

When the policy was announced last December, £23 million was pledged. But only £18 million was offered to schools when the DfE invited bids in April, and officials said schools would have to raise millions themselves.

It was also scrapped despite the government running a tender for schools to lead the work.

A DfE spokesperson said they are "constantly looking at how funding is allocated to make sure every pound counts", adding that "there is a wide range of other programmes to support disadvantaged pupils".

"We know that the largest point of impact on child development are the early years, which is why the education secretary is prioritising early communication skills."

£13m cash pot to entice 'career changers' into the classroom

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

A new multi-million pound government scheme will seek to bring more "career changers" into the classroom.

The Department for Education recently invited organisations to tender for two teacher recruitment and retention support services, with contracts totalling £20.5 million between them.

The first contract, worth around £13.5 million, is for a company to "aid the recruitment, transition, training and retention" of career changers – professionals in other industries who want to move into teaching.

A DfE spokesperson said the new programme "builds on the experience of Now Teach to help

with recruitment and training of new teachers".

Schools Week reported in July that three quarters of the 47 people who joined Now Teach, co-founded last September by Financial Times journalist Lucy Kellaway, were set to graduate.

The remainder of the £20.5 million will be spent on an extension of the DfE's existing maths and physics chairs scheme, which sees post-doctoral researchers placed in schools.

Officials say they want to "increase the flexibility of the programme to include both School Direct (fee) and School Direct (salaried) teacher training routes to give schools and participants more choice".

The scheme, run by Researchers in Schools, is currently only on offer on the salaried route.



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Pension problems threaten future teacher pay rises

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Schools may be forced to withhold teacher pay rises if the government does not commit to funding a possible increase in employer pension contributions beyond 2020, according to funding experts.

The Treasury announced last week that the employer contributions schools pay towards the Teachers' Pension Scheme look set to rise from April next year.

The move followed a valuation of teachers' pensions, which takes place every four years, and also suggested public sector workers will see improved benefits.

Details of the benefits and extra costs to schools are not yet known. The Financial Times has reported the total of increased pension contribution payments across the public sector could be as high as £4 billion.

But the government has only agreed to cover the potential increase in schools' contributions until 2019-20, stating that any additional commitment will be made during the spending review.

The news of further budget squeezes will ramp up pressure on school leaders who are already making wide-ranging cuts with their government funding falling in real terms.

The Department for Education has also announced a 3.5 per cent rise to the main pay range and unqualified teacher pay range for classroom teachers, in response to recommendations from the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB).

Teachers in the upper pay band can receive a 2 per cent rise and school leaders a 1.5 per cent rise.

But the rise is only partly funded by the government, with schools having to find the first 1 per cent from their own budgets. Again, the government is waiting on the outcome of the spending review to commit to extending its funding support past 2020.

Kate Atkinson, pensions specialist at school leaders' union NAHT, said the uncertainty over pay rises and pensions was the "perfect storm", with schools trying to plan future budgets having "no real detail to go on".

She warned that as a result many schools may end up withholding pay rises to fund the increase in employer contributions.

"The only thing left in the budget to cut for most schools is payroll. There's no more fat to



cut. It's an invidious position for school leaders to be in."

She added that schools would be wise to make a conservative budget for beyond 2019 and not assume funding for contribution rises will be forthcoming.

Philip Reynolds, senior manager at accountancy firm Kreston Reeves, agreed that schools could "well decide not to award" teachers the pay rise in order to fund the increased Teacher Pension Scheme contribution instead, adding it "really will stretch budgets".

He pointed out that if teachers are awarded pay rises, schools would also then have to pay more in pension contributions as well.

For instance, if a teacher on a £26,500 salary gets a 3.5 per cent salary increase to £27,428, and the employer pension contribution is set at 16.48 per cent, then the school will have to cough up an extra £775 in pension contributions – along with the pay rise itself.

Schools are also waiting for the government to publish its teacher pay and conditions document for 2018-19.

This time last year the DfE had already confirmed the new pay rates, but *Schools Week* has been repeatedly told that its response will be published "in due course".

The DfE spokesperson said: "We will be consulting with the education sector on these proposals on the basis that the Government will cover the extra costs involved for state-funded schools and colleges for the rest of the spending review."

Grammar school transport aid cancelled

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

The government has quietly scrapped a £20 million scheme to provide free transport to grammar schools.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, confirmed in a written answer to a question from the shadow education secretary Angela Rayner last week that the scheme, which could have cost up to £5,000 per pupil in taxi fares, would not proceed.

He subsequently confirmed this week that the money has been returned to the Treasury.

Last March, the chancellor Philip Hammond announced that disadvantaged pupils would be offered free transport to grammar schools up to 15 miles from their home, allocating £5 million a year for the scheme between this year and 2022.

The proposal extended a scheme that currently offers free transport to certain schools for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or come from families that receive maximum working tax credit. Selective schools are not currently covered by the policy.

Although plans to build the first new grammar schools in decades were scrapped last year following the Conservatives' poorer-than-expected election performance, the transport proposals were never explicitly shelved, and Damian Hinds appeared to give them his backing on Monday.

Asked about the policy at education questions in the House of Commons, the education secretary defended the reforms, saying there were "many different angles" to the government's social mobility approach.

But in his response to Rayner, issued on Tuesday last week (4), Gibb said his government is "not taking forward plans".

Rayner criticised the government's grammar schools "vanity project", and said it was "incredible" that ministers "ever thought this was a good use of taxpayers' money at a time when they are breaking their promises to protect funding for all children".

"It is unbelievable that this money has now just been handed back to the Treasury rather than reinvested in schools that face the worst cuts in a generation," she said.

But Gibb said his department is "committed to ensuring every child is able to access a good school place, regardless of background".

He added: "Children will be eligible for free transport to a selective school if they meet the existing eligibility criteria."

£100-a-week 'no-frills' private school planned for London

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

EXCLUSIVE

A "no frills" private school charging parents £100 a week is being mooted for London – with one of its key architects claiming it could close down state schools.

The school, which would offer a traditional education but cut down on additional costs such as extra-curricular activities, is in the early stages of planning but could open in north London in two years according to one of its proponents.

Sophie Sandor, a former employee at right-leaning think tanks the Adam Smith Institute and the Institute of Economic Affairs, said investors are being sought and a site in north London is targeted.

But Melissa Benn, a prominent campaigner for local state-run schools, warned parents could be misled about such enterprises and called instead for a better funded public sector system.

The London "no frills" school would be the second of its kind to open. The first, the Independent Grammar School: Durham, will open on Monday (see box below). It will charge parents £52 a week.

The Durham school is the brainchild of James Tooley, professor of education at Newcastle university, who is also involved in the London project.



Sophie Sandor

Sandor said she is working alongside Smita Bora, the former founding principal of the International Academy of Greenwich in south London.

She said if the "no-frills" schools prove successful their potential is "probably limitless".

Speaking at the ResearchEd conference on Saturday, she added: "Where the worst state school options are, a low-cost private school could open up next to it.

"If so many parents were willing to pay £100 a week for a secondary school, some of the poorest parents, we might start to question the state school model."

Sandor wouldn't comment further on the site location, but when asked about the potential impact on state schools, said: "With pupil numbers increasing, we would help fill that gap. Or schools would close."

She said high start-up costs were a barrier to opening a secondary school, adding that



Melissa Benn

investors would want to see it making a profit within four years.

The low-cost private school model is the idea of Tooley, who believes it can offer an alternative for parents who want a private school education, without the costs which average £15,000 a year.

He founded the Omega Schools Franchise which runs pay-as-you-learn schools in Ghana, and also set up schools in India and Liberia.

Benn said: "I understand how these schools appeal to parents, because they're told 'private is the best'. But many of the private schools they admire charge up to £35,000 a year.

"This will be a very different kind of school," she said, adding that founders were "chipping in" on the private school brand without necessarily having sufficient long-term funding.

... while FIRST bargain-basement school to finally open this week

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

England's first low-cost "no frills" private school will open on Monday after a year's delay.

The Independent Grammar School: Durham is opening its doors to pupils from reception to year four.

Parents will pay £52 a week for a "traditional private education".

The project was delayed for a year after Ofsted raised technical issues over its refurbished church site.

The school did not respond to repeated requests for comment, including questions over how many pupils have signed up.

Writing for the Telegraph newspaper in July its founder James Tooley [pictured] said he expected 65 pupils to attend and three teachers had been hired.

In a talk to ResearchEd on Saturday, Sophie Sandor, an associate of Tooley's in a proposed "no frills" school project in London, said "about a few dozen pupils" were due to start in Durham on Monday.

It is not clear how much the teachers will be paid. In an essay for the Institute of Economic Affairs Tooley has previously said the model involves "fresh, new and so lower-paid teachers" with "larger class sizes".



The Durham school's principal is Chris Gray, who resigned from Grindon Christian Hall in Sunderland after it was rated 'inadequate' in 2015.

It had converted from an independent to a free school in 2012.

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Labour MP joins millionaire Tory donor to open new free school

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

Veteran Labour politician Frank Field and high-profile Tory donor David Ross have been granted permission to jointly open a free school with a view to taking control of some existing schools later this year.

The Frank Field Education Trust is the brainchild of the MP for Birkenhead, and Ross, the millionaire founder of Carphone Warehouse, who chairs the New Schools Network.

Initially called The Cathedral Academies Trust, Field's chain was approved as an academy sponsor in 2016, but changed its name in April to acknowledge that "most people referred to it as Frank Field's Trust".

Documents show the government has cleared the trust to open the Liverpool Free School, though it is not known where and when the school will start accepting pupils.

The chain has also expressed its desire to take control of a number of existing "outstanding" schools later this academic year.

The move follows Field's decision on August 30 to resign from the Labour Party whip, meaning he is no longer required to vote with the party in Parliament. He quit in protest over Jeremy Corbyn's handling of Labour's ongoing antisemitism crisis.

An ardent Brexiteer, Field was also one of four Labour MPs who saved Theresa May from a humiliating defeat when he voted with the government in July.

Since his resignation, the politician has spoken of his desire to continue "spearheading a whole series of major projects" in his patch.

Field did not respond to requests from *Schools Week* for a comment.

But a spokesperson for the trust said it hoped a number of schools will join "over the course of this academic year", with all growth "carefully managed and in the best interest of pupils".

"We are continuing our plans for a free



school and will update on this in due course."

The spokesperson also defended Field's partnership with Ross, who has donated thousands to the Conservative Party and runs his own chain – the David Ross Education Trust - which has been criticised in recent years over flagging school performance, financial challenges and management changes.

Last January, DRET was hit by a series of high-profile resignations including former education secretary David Blunkett, who stood down as chair. In November, the chain was warned about pupil progress at its schools, and in July, funding bosses raised concerns about finances, despite clearing the trust over wrongdoing over governance.

The Frank Field Education Trust said it was "important to learn from the experiences and ideas of other larger, well-established multi-academy trusts, specifically including those that operate

outside of London and the south east, which at times face different challenges to other MATs".

"Frank's long-term commitment to resolving social inequality remains a key focus, and the aims of the trust transcend any political interests," the spokesperson said.

According to Companies House, Field and Ross are currently the two controlling members of the trust, but both also sit as trustees, a set-up that seems to conflict with the government's recommendation for "robust governance".

According to the Academies Financial Handbook, the best structures have a "significant degree of separation between the individuals who are members and those who are trustees". The DfE recommends that the "majority of members" should be "independent of the board of trustees".

Field also serves as the trust's chair, a spokesperson confirmed.

DFE DENY EXISTENCE OF REVIEW (& COVER IT UP)

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

EXCLUSIVE

The Department for Education is still denying it conducted a formal review into the flagging studio schools programme – despite *Schools Week* discovering an attempt to cover-up internal emails which openly discussed the existence and timescale of the review.

Schools Week revealed last year that the former academies minister Lord Nash had met with the Studio Schools Trust (SST) to “review the concept of studio schools”, according to official minutes.

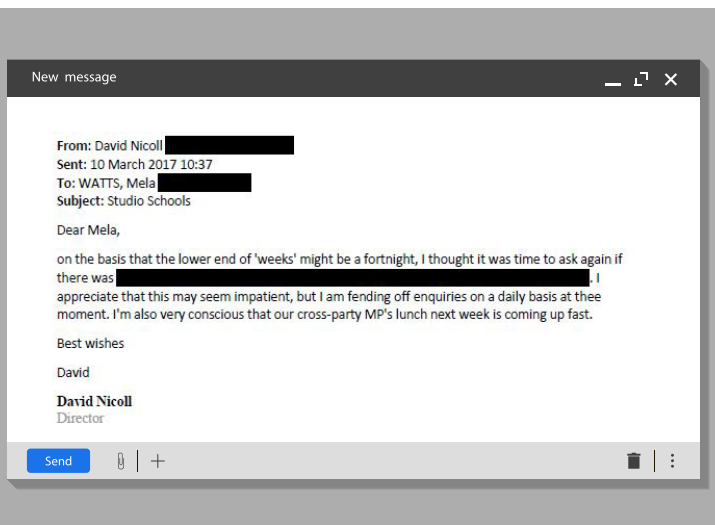
However *Schools Week* was told by David Nicoll, then chair of the SST which supports and promotes studio schools, that a review was “definitely not on the agenda of any meeting I attended”.

Under the freedom of information (FOI) act, *Schools Week* requested all written correspondence between ministers and employees at the Department for Education (DfE) and the SST from September 1, 2016, to March 6, 2018.

Many of the emails between Nicolls and officials were released but were heavily redacted.

However, *Schools Week* has seen full copies of the documents and discovered that many of the blacked-out sentences mentioned a “review” of studio schools.

The small, vocationally-focused 14-to-19 studio schools have struggled to survive due to poor Ofsted ratings and low pupil numbers, with 26 closing or planning



to close since the scheme was introduced in 2010 – despite millions of pounds of government investment.

One previously redacted message showed that, on February 16, 2017, Nicoll asked the DfE if he could postpone a meeting with Lord Nash “since it seems that the review will not have been completed in time”. Four days later Nicoll said he would be “back in touch as soon as we know what is happening with the review timing”.

On March 10, Nicoll emailed: “I thought it was

time to ask again if there was any progress and/or timetable you could share regarding the studio school review. I appreciate that this may seem impatient, but I am fending off enquiries on a daily basis at the moment”.

Three days later he received a response from a government official saying “we are making progress and hope to be in a position to make a decision shortly”.

All mentions of a review were redacted in the government’s official FOI response. The DfE stated the

sentences were withheld under FOI rules because ministers and officials “need the freedom to make decisions based on the best advice available, including correspondence from outside bodies, without fear of this advice being disclosed”.

It also said that a minister had decided disclosing some of the information would have a “prejudicial effect” in the conduct of public affairs as it could inhibit “free and frank” exchanges of views and advice.

When asked about the legitimacy of the DfE’s redaction response, Maurice Frankel, director of the UK Campaign for Freedom of Information, said: “They are trying to conceal that 18 months ago there was a review, or some other word they prefer, and they are trying to keep it from the public.”

Asked about the review in the light of the redacted emails, a spokesperson for the DfE said: “There has been no formal review of studio schools and we have never set out the expectation that there is one.”

The spokesperson said they regularly monitor activity of different schools to ensure they are delivering a good education.

They added that while studio schools “can be popular and provide a strong mix of academic and vocational education, we know that there have been challenges which is why we will continue to look into their performance”.

The DfE would not give any further details about what the “monitoring” of the programme consisted of.

Nicoll could not be reached for comment.

News: Computing restart

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Low uptake for computer science GCSE spurs review

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

EXCLUSIVE

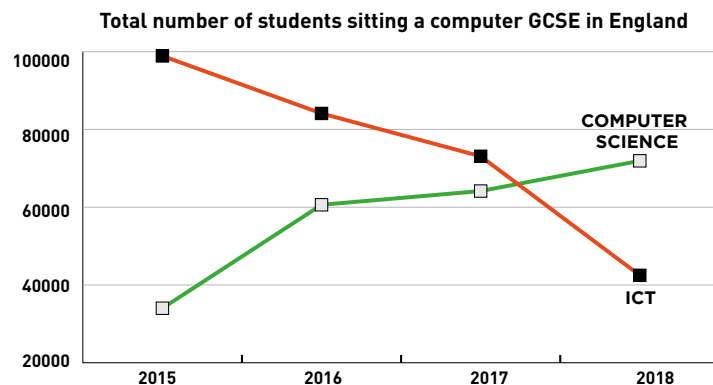
The key architects of the computer science GCSE have launched a major review into the qualification as pupil uptake stagnates, with girls particularly shunning the subject.

Schools Week can reveal the British Computer Society (BCS) review will also look at whether the subject – only introduced in 2015 – now needs to be overhauled in favour of a “broader qualification”.

While 12 per cent more pupils took the computing GCSE this year, the numbers of pupils studying ICT plunged by 44 per cent, attributed to the decision by schools minister Nick Gibb to scrap the latter qualification from last year.

Gibb hoped the move – heavily criticised by many in the sector, including the BCS – would push pupils into the “more academic” computing GCSE, one of former education secretary Michael Gove’s reforms.

However, new figures show that nearly 23,000 fewer pupils left school this year without a qualification in a computer-



related subject, a drop of 17 per cent from last year.

BCS director of education Julia Adamson said that when the body proposed a more “theoretical” computer science qualification, they assumed the ICT GCSE would continue as an alternative.

“Now we’re in a position where ICT is no longer available and the focus is too narrow.”

The school curriculum and qualifications review committee will be launched next month and it will be led by Muffy Calder, professor of computer science at the University of Glasgow.

Adamson told Schools Week that the review will look at whether a “broader” qualification is required, rather than the current focus on solely

coding and programming.

The idea has the backing of Miles Berry, a lecturer in computing education at the University of Roehampton, who added: “At the moment we have a national curriculum with a GCSE in only part of it.”

National figures also show 57,245 boys sat the computer science GCSE, compared with only 14,683 girls this summer.

It means that 30,000 fewer girls sat a key stage 4 computing subject this year than four years ago.

Berry added that Ofsted should also review computing in schools to investigate anecdotal evidence that girls are engaged in coding at primary school, but drop off later on in their school life.

Research by the Roehampton

Annual Computing Education Report in 2016 also found pupil premium pupils were under-represented in GCSE computing.

Teacher Kay Sawbridge added that the decline could also be attributed to schools promoting the traditional triple sciences at the expense of computer science. She said this pushes the subject, which counts as an EBacc science under progress 8, into the final “bucket” of subject choices, where most pupils prefer to pick a creative subject like drama or art.

Ofqual will also launch a consultation later this year over its plan to scrap the GCSE computing practical assessment last year after tests were leaked.

The ban will extend until 2020.

However, immediate change doesn’t look likely after education secretary Damian Hinds said there will be no more curriculum changes during this Parliament.

A Department for Education spokesperson said entries to computer science “continue to rise” and an £84 million cash injection will “drive up participation in computer science”.

‘Girls say no’: new fund for gender balance

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

A £2.4 million pilot to attract more girls into computing will launch next year as ministers desperately seek to redress the subject’s emerging gender imbalance.

The tender for a ‘Gender Balance in Computing’ pilot published in June asked for “innovative interventions” to encourage girls to choose computer science GCSE and A-level.

Set to run from January 2019, the pilot follows alarm among teachers about the failure of computer science to attract

enough girls since the subject was launched in 2015.

Girls made up only 16 per cent of computing GCSE pupils in 2015, rising to just 20 per cent this year, according to the Joint Council for Qualifications, compared to 43 per cent in the ICT GCSE three years ago.

At A-level, only nine per cent of computing pupils were girls in 2015, rising to just 12 per cent this year. Again, 35 per cent were girls in the ICT A-level

three years ago.

The programme will run across “a range of state-funded schools” up until 2022.

Interventions will be designed so they can be “robustly tested” and can be scaled up if there is evidence of a positive impact.

The DfE said the pilot should help girls to “see themselves as active creators of digital technology, not just passive consumers”.

News: Computing restart

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEK.CO.UK

MASTER TEACHER TARGET ACHIEVED! BUT NOW WHAT?

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

EXCLUSIVE

The government has finally hit its original target to train 400 computing master teachers – three years later and costing £1 million more than expected.

However, despite eventually hitting its target the contract ended in March and it is now uncertain whether the new National Centre of Computing Education will make use of the newly-trained experts.

The government will pump £84 million into the new organisation, due to launch in the autumn.

However, with just weeks to go the successful bidder, and further details of projects, have yet to be announced.

Simon Humphreys, national co-ordinator for Computing At School (CAS), which ran the master teachers programme, said the government's computing drive was in a "new phase", with focus shifting to the new centre.

The government has already changed tack on the master teachers programme, introducing 10 'regional hubs' based at universities to lead the training after slow take up.

Former education secretary Michael Gove handed £2 million to the British Computer Society (BCS) in 2013 to create a pool of 400 master teachers over two years.

The Network of Teaching Excellence contract was run by its sister company CAS. However a further £1 million was handed



out in 2016 after the target was missed.

BCS told *Schools Week* it had trained about 540 master teachers over the last five years. However 90 of these teachers are no longer "active", meaning just 450 remain in post.

Humphreys said he hopes master teachers will be incorporated into the centre's new work. Universities also "want to remain being regional centres", but no funding has been confirmed.

The scramble to train enough computing specialists comes as only 66 per cent of initial teacher training places were filled this year - the lowest of any subject.

John Palmer, a master teacher since 2012 based at the Chase School in Malvern, has run training and meet-ups with teachers in about 50 schools, supported by Birmingham city, Warwick and Coventry universities.

Hamish Arnold, a master teacher and

primary computing specialist, said it has taken him the "best part of five years" to train up neighbouring schools and develop a scheme of work.

Both said the role needed more funding and more timetable space to reach the more rural and disinterested schools.

CAS told *Schools Week* there has been no external impact assessment of the master teacher programme. But the company said its own assessment found pupils in Network of Teaching Excellence schools seemed to be benefitting.

The company said it compared the results of every student in a Network of Excellence school with every student in a non-Network of Excellence school.

The most common computer science grade over the last three years for pupils in schools supporting by the master teacher programme was a B, CAS found, compared to a C for pupils in schools that were not supported.

CAS did not share the data with *Schools Week*.

The Department for Education (DfE) told *Schools Week* the master teacher funding only ran until March, and funding for the regional centres stopped in July.

A spokesperson said further plans will be announced "in due course".

They added the National Centre of Computing Education will "support teachers in both primary and secondary schools" and 40 computing hubs will be "responsive to the CPD needs in the local area."

ECDL loss wipes £3m profit from BCS

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

The company behind the controversial European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) has lost £3 million in income after the government scrapped the qualification from performance tables.

Company accounts for the British Computer Society Learning and Development, which delivers the level 2 qualification, reveal a 10 per cent drop in income during 2016-17, from £29 million to £26 million last year.

It was blamed on the "slowdown in

growth in the schools' market" after the government stopped the ECDL qualification counting in the 'optional bucket' for Progress 8 this year.

This followed investigations by *Schools Week* which revealed some schools were teaching it in just three days, and that pupil entries had soared by nearly 350 per cent from 2015 to 2016.

Data experts at Education Datalab revealed that, on average, pupils taking the ECDL achieved 52 points – the

equivalent of an A grade – in 2015, while scoring an average of 38 points – below a C grade – across all their GCSEs.

Bob Harrison, who chaired an advisory group to the DfE on computing in 2013, accused BCS of using the qualification as a "cash cow" that was picked up by "schools gaming the system".

However a BCS spokesperson said the ECDL provides an "understanding of the basic skills and competencies necessary to use a computer".

Fast-track headship college forges ahead

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

EXCLUSIVE

Sir Anthony Seldon has insisted his fast-track headship college will go ahead, despite not re-applying for government funding and losing a key partner in the plans.

Seldon, a former headteacher at Wellington College in Berkshire, was in talks with ministers in 2016 over the college which proposed parachuting promising candidates into headship roles after one year's training.

Seldon had partnered with free schools pioneer Toby Young and former Ofsted boss Michael Wilshaw for the project.

But Young, who stepped away from his roles in education earlier this year after details of controversial comment he had made on social media came to light, is no longer working with Seldon, it has emerged.

Wilshaw also had to step back due to other commitments.

Last year *Schools Week* revealed the college proposals had stalled when the government turned down its application for £10 million from the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF).

Seldon is yet to reapply for funding, despite originally saying he would when the first bid was rejected.

But he told *Schools Week*: "I'm very confident that we will get the money when we go looking for it next year to secure the launch in September 2020."

He has also tweaked plans for the college. After originally proposing that graduates straight from university could apply, Seldon has now said only leaders switching from other sectors, such as the arts, business and military, may do so.

The first cohort at the college, to be based at the University of Buckingham where Seldon is vice-chancellor, would have 100 trainees who would "lead from the heart as well as the head."

"Leadership is about inspiration. If your priority is GCSE results, you're not going to inspire," he said, adding that the mantra was "unknown to too many people in government."

"We will be training a completely different kind of leader."

Schools failing to meet Lord Baker's career guidance rules

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA_AK

EXCLUSIVE

Schools are failing to comply with new careers guidance rules, a *Schools Week* investigation has found.

None of the 10 biggest multi-academy trusts in England have conformed to a new requirement that all schools must publish detailed careers information online.

And in a survey of FE providers commissioned by the Department for Education, only five per cent of respondents said all schools were compliant in their area in allowing providers to enter schools to speak to learners.

From September 1 schools now have to publish details about the careers programme they deliver to pupils from Year 8 until Year 13, contact details for their careers leader, how the success of careers programmes is measured, and when the published information will be reviewed.

The DfE said it plans to begin auditing schools and will directly intervene where necessary to ensure that all schools are complying with the Baker clause, a law requiring them to allow technical education providers in to speak to their students.

Skills minister Anne Milton has encouraged providers to report non-compliant schools to her directly.

However, none of the 10 biggest trusts in England have 100 per cent compliance from all their secondary schools. *Schools Week's* investigation unearthed empty careers webpages, expectations that the "vast majority" of pupils will simply attend university and some websites which do not mention careers at all.

A spokesperson for the DfE said if a school does not provide this information, the department "will write to the school and ask for evidence of compliance" and would "take appropriate action" if it was not followed.

Oasis Academy Don Valley, run by Oasis Community Learning, has a blank careers page, while Oasis Academy Enfield and Oasis Academy Hadley have only published careers information in a section for post-16

learners, which states: "We expect that the vast majority of our Year 13 students will go on to university when they leave."

An Oasis spokesperson said its academies will publish new information "in the coming weeks".

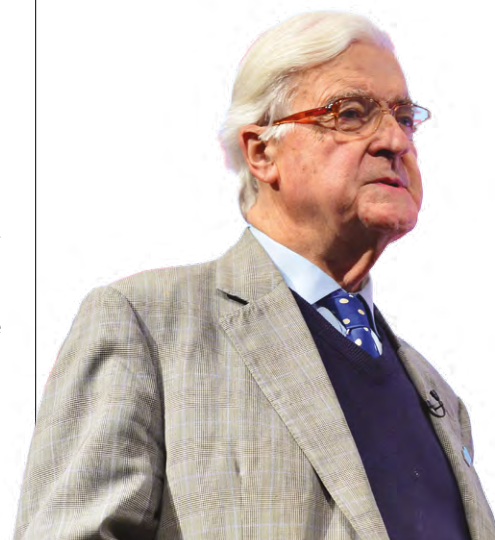
Fewer than half the 31 secondary schools run by Ormiston Academies Trust have followed the requirements for publishing careers guidance, while just two of the 11 secondaries run by the David Ross Education Trust have complied.

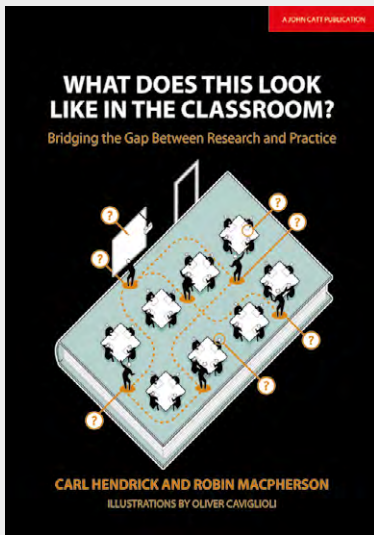
A spokesperson for Ormiston said the trust would ensure it was completely compliant by the end of September, adding that its careers guidance "has not been driven by a need to meet website regulation, which is not an indication of quality, but by a firm belief that best-practice careers guidance transforms life chances".

Kemnal and Greenwood academies trusts said their schools were working towards being fully compliant, and Delta Academies Trust said new websites for all its academies will go live this month.

A spokesperson for Academies Enterprise Trust said the trust expected all its academies to be compliant and was supporting them to make sure they were.

Mark Dawe, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said it had to be asked "whether the schools failing on careers guidance are really serving the interests of their students."





WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM?

Bridging The Gap Between Research And Practice

By Carl Hendrick And Robin Macpherson

There are no silver bullets for what works in classroom. There is however, sound research that gives us all at least the starting point to consider and develop our own practice. Carl and Robin provide you with access to a lot of this and then point you in the direction of even more.

“Marvellous!” – Daniel T. Willingham

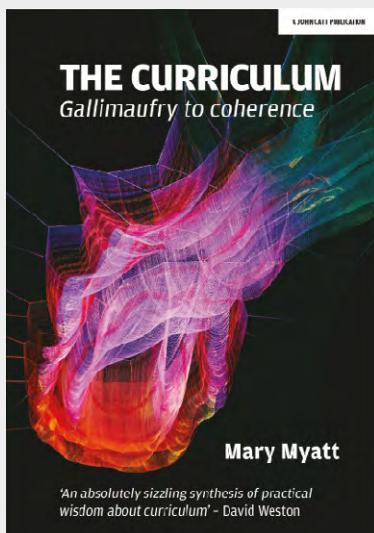
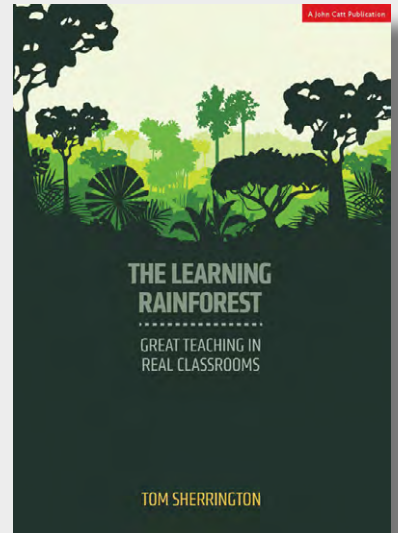
THE LEARNING RAINFOREST

GREAT TEACHING IN REAL CLASSROOMS

By Tom Sherrington

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THE CURRICULUM

Gallimaufry to coherence

By Mary Myatt

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‘An absolutely sizzling synthesis of practical wisdom about curriculum’ – David Weston

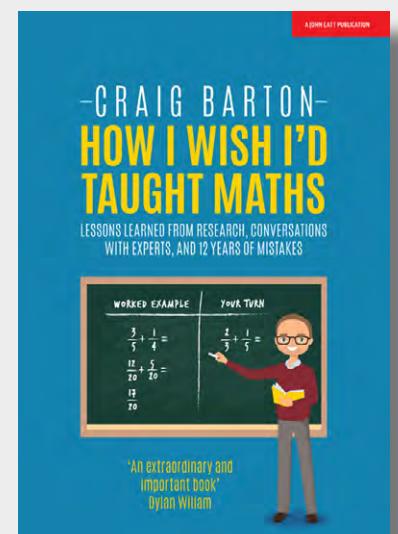
HOW I WISH I TAUGHT MATHS

LESSONS LEARNED FROM RESEARCH, CONVERSATIONS WITH EXPERTS, AND 12 YEARS OF MISTAKES

By Craig Barton

When you speak to the likes of Dylan Wiliam, Doug Lemov, Daisy Christodoulou, Kris Boulton and the Bjorks, you are bound to learn a thing or two. But when he started his Mr Barton Maths Podcast, Craig Barton wasn't expecting to have his whole outlook on teaching and learning turned upside down. How I Wish I'd Taught Maths is the story of an experienced and successful maths teacher's journey into the world of research, and what it looks like in the classroom.

‘An extraordinary and important book’
Dylan Wiliam



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Independent thinking for education

News: School uniforms

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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EXCLUSIVE

FLEECED: Are schools pulling the wool over parents' eyes?

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4



An academy sponsor's uniform supplier is charging double the price for blazers in its grammar school than in its non-selective schools, while a *Schools Week* investigation has also discovered one school selling branded 'drama socks' for nearly £5 a pair.

Government guidance urges all schools not to use exclusive suppliers for school uniform as it can drive up prices for parents.

But schools appear to be flouting these rules. Some academy chains insist numerous items of uniform carry their logo – which parents said prevents them from buying cheaper alternatives in supermarkets.

Now the government has been urged to honour its pledge to introduce new school uniform rules to ensure parents get a fair deal.

In November 2015, the Treasury promised to put the

"best practice guidance" onto a statutory footing to "ensure that effective competition is used to drive better value for money".

Parents are still waiting. Sarah Jones, Labour MP for Croydon Central, has written to academies minister Lord Agnew this month demanding the pledge is honoured.

She said it was "mind-

boggling" that the government hadn't followed through on the commitment, "which requires no additional government spending nor primary legislation".

The existing Department for Education (DfE) guidance from 2013 advises school governing bodies to prioritise value for money for parents and avoid exclusive single supplier contracts unless regular tendering competitions are run by the school.

The Competition and Markets Authority also wrote to heads in October 2015 to warn against using exclusive suppliers, stating it had pushed up costs by as much as £10 per item.

But *Schools Week* spoke to parents of children at primary schools with one uniform supplier, the online company School Trends.

As revealed by this newspaper last month, the company missed its deadline delivery for some orders this summer – leaving pupils without uniforms for the start of term.

St John's CE Primary School in Kent requires that school polo shirts, sweatshirts, cardigans, jackets and house colour PE

t-shirts can only be bought from School Trends. The company has been its uniform supplier for over twenty years.

The only other option available to parents is a "monthly uniform shop", where second-hand uniform can be purchased at lower prices.

A parent who did not want to be named told *Schools Week* that uniform for Moss Lane School in Surrey has to be bought from School Trends. Its website suggests jumpers can only be bought from the company.

Headteacher Victoria Abbott told *Schools Week* that School Trends had been chosen as a supplier in 2012 before she joined the school, because of "competitive pricing and good quality". No tendering process was carried out, she said, but added they are "very open with parents that they don't have to use that supplier, I'm quite flexible."

The £4.50 branded drama socks

The uniform policy of Heathcote School in Chingford requires pupils to have special "drama socks with a gripped sole" for their drama lessons. They cost £4.50 a pair from SpeedStitch, listed on its website as the school's uniform supplier. However the school's website does state some uniform can be bought from other suppliers.



Heathcote School - HEATHCOTE DRAMA SOCKS

From: **£4.50**

Colour: * ▾

Navy

Size: * ▾

CODE: 00009540

Quantity: ▾

ADD TO BASKET

Continued
on the next
page

News: School uniforms

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Stowmarket High School in Suffolk, requires pupils to wear several items embroidered with the school logo including a "stitch-down pleat pencil skirt with waistband by Beau Brummel", with only one supplier listed on the school website.

St John's and Stowmarket refused to comment.

The Harris Federation specifies a single supplier on each of its schools' websites, with 29 Harris schools listing online company 'Brigade' as the only option for branded items. These include blazers, jumpers and PE kit, while some schools also require year 7 and 8 pupils to have a coat and school bag displaying their logo.

A Harris spokesperson said "there is always a competitive tender to select uniform suppliers", and they are chosen on value for money and durability.

Exclusive suppliers are not the only inequality. The Skinners' Company sponsors five schools. Pupils attending the grammar, The Skinners' School, are required to purchase wool blazers costing £108.95 and with coloured piping reflecting their house. At the non-selective Skinners' Kent Academy, blazers

are made from polyester and are £37.95.

Former teacher and education consultant Debra Kidd tweeted last month that it cost £300 to for her youngest child's secondary school uniform, at least twice the cost of what he had worn at primary school.

She blamed this on the "branding and insistence on a limited number of suppliers that is making the difference".

Research by The Children's Society published last month found school uniform costs have increased by an average of £24 for secondary schools and £4 for primaries since 2015.

Parents spend an average of £340 per year on secondary school uniforms, increasing by £71 when schools have an exclusive supplier. At primary level, the average is £255, increasing by £77 when only one supplier is used.

A DfE spokesperson said school uniform costs "should not be a barrier for any pupil", and "schools should keep costs to a minimum".

The Treasury still plans to introduce its uniform rules, but only when "a suitable legislative opportunity arises".

The grammar school blazer – at MORE THAN twice the price

The Skinners' Company sponsors five academies, three of which are in Tunbridge Wells. A blazer for a child attending its grammar school, The Skinners' School, costs £108.95 through local supplier Simmonds. The blazer is 90 per cent wool, and comes with coloured piping reflecting their house. But blazers from the same supplier for the Skinners' Kent Academy, a non-selective school, cost just £37.95. These blazers are polyester.



Skinners Hunt blazer (33092)

From £108.95



Skinner Kent Academy boys blazer (33132)

From £37.95

Girls pay a premium for gingham shirts

St Gabriel's Roman Catholic High School in Bury specify that girls wear a "light blue 'gingham' open neck Trutex shirt", while boys only need a "plain white shirt". St Gabriel's offers three uniform suppliers, one of them offering the girls' shirt for £28.50, compared to £13.25 for the boys'. A pack of two plain boys' shirts could also be bought from Asda for £5.50.



Trutex Boys Twin Pack Easycare Long Sleeve White Shirt

from £13.25



Trutex Twin Pack Short Sleeve Reve Blue/White Check Blouse

from £28.50



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**SCHOOLS
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Global shout-out for workload reduction ideas

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

An international pilot scheme for reducing workload associated with assessment is calling for teachers around the world with innovative ideas to step forward.

The "making waves" pilot, launched by think tank LKMco and education company Pearson, wants to hear about schools and countries with smart ways of making assessment more efficient.

The announcement comes after the Department for Education (DfE) published its delayed "workload reduction toolkit" in July - a day after most schools broke up for summer - in a bid to help teachers streamline their planning and marking.

Individual teachers, schools, multi-academy trusts, local authorities and

teaching alliances re invited to submit their ideas to the pilot scheme.

Eight successful applicants will be chosen to work with LKMco researchers for a year who will analyse the findings.

Ideas for how to increase teachers' expertise about assessment will also be sought.

A report by Pearson and LKMco revealed "limited assessment literacy" among many teachers last year.

Only 34 per cent of classroom teachers said they felt very confident conducting assessments as part of their teaching, compared with 51 per cent of middle leaders and 71 per cent of headteachers, the Testing the Water report found.

Only 19 per cent of classroom teachers said they would know where to go for information about assessment if they needed it, the report found.

The DfE's toolkit is meant to provide "ready-made tools" to help schools cut down on tasks such as emails. It also provides advice and workshops on burdensome tasks such as pupil feedback and data management.

But last week, another report for the DfE revealed teachers are so short of time they are increasingly unable to answer government surveys - including ones about their own workload.

The "administrative burden" on staff as well as coursework-based assessment and external audit by Ofsted are behind a stark drop-off in professionals responding to surveys, a report by Ipsos Mori found.

The DfE has previously surveyed teachers who left the profession since 2015 and found that three-quarters gave workload as the reason. Government initiatives was another common cause.

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The Schools Week summer scoops you may have missed

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

DfE warns against 'party politics'

School staff have been warned they must "act appropriately" when expressing political views, and should not use school resources for "party political purposes," under new government advice.

The 'Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools' guidance was updated last week to state "all staff have a responsibility to ensure that they act appropriately in terms of their behaviour, the views they express (in particular political views)".

It adds staff "should not use school resources for party political purposes".

The update follows criticism from Conservative politicians of headteachers' conduct during last year's general election, which saw thousands of leaders write to parents over the state of school funding.

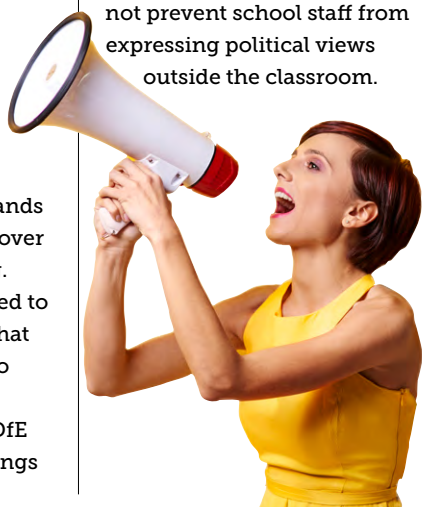
But the new advice has led to accusations from Labour that the government is trying to silence teachers.

A spokesperson for the DfE said the update "simply brings

this guidance in line with the law, which makes clear that headteachers and local authorities must not promote partisan political views in school".

"Headteachers have long had a legal responsibility to provide a balanced presentation of opposing views when teaching political or controversial subjects."

The 1996 education act states governors, councils and heads must "forbid the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school". However, it does not prevent school staff from expressing political views outside the classroom.



FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Advisors get £2.3m to help save cash

The Department for Education will spend £2.3 million on at least 160 money-saving advisers who will be parachuted into struggling schools to help them cut costs.

A team of school resource management advisers has been working with a small number of schools since January, providing "impartial, expert business advice" on using revenue and capital resources.

The Department for Education (DfE) said the trial, involving the Institute of School Business Leadership, got positive feedback from the sector, and will now significantly ramp up the scheme.

Official documents show the department wants to recruit at least 160 advisers over the course of between two and three years – however it could rise to as many as 250. A pot of £2.3 million has been set aside to fund it.

Schools Week understands that advisers will be paid £400 a day, a similar rate to the pilot. Documents show



advisers will use data and benchmarking to "help schools understand their position and how it compares to that of schools which are similar in characteristics and challenges".

However in the "highest risk cases" advisers will provide "advice and support to address current or future forecast deficits".

This could include developing approaches that "combine curriculum and financial planning into a joint, data-informed exercise".

They will work with schools, academy trusts and local authorities, and the initial programme will run from October 2018 to the end of August 2020.

ALIX ROBERTSON | @ALIXROBERTSON4

NATIONAL SUPPLY TEACHER AGENCY DATABASE NOW AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLS

A database that reveals the mark-up each company charges, under a new government drive to help school leaders avoid rip-off fees.

Developed by the Department for Education and the Crown Commercial Service (CCS), all schools have been emailed the new national list of recommended suppliers to use when recruiting supply teachers and other temporary staff.

Agencies signed up to the service have



agreed to guarantee they have completed all necessary checks on their workers, have the relevant accreditation in place, are transparent about the rates and mark-up they charge, and give schools the chance to avoid paying 'temp-to-perm' fees if they choose to employ someone full-time.

When asking for a quote from the agency, schools can try to negotiate a better deal than what is advertised if they want.

The new database will also provide schools with a list of 'managed service providers' who can take on all their temporary staff needs if they choose.

The idea was introduced in May 2017, when the CCS revealed that spending on supply staff rose from £918 million in 2011-12, to £1.2 billion in 2014-15.

The Schools Week summer scoops you may have missed

Trainee teachers too busy to answer surveys

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Workload pressures have been cited as one of the reasons behind a dramatic drop in the number of trainee teachers responding to an important government survey – meant to measure their actual workload levels.

A report by Ipsos Mori for the Department for Education (DfE) found new teachers are “survey fatigued” after receiving a deluge of documents during and after their training.

Researchers stated that trainee teachers are “busy professionals, spending much of their time in the classroom and working in the evenings”.

While the report stated the fall is in line with declining response rates across the general population, it attributed a wider drop across all education professionals to the “administrative burden” on staff, as well as coursework-based assessment and external audit through Ofsted.

The report was released as part of the Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) Annual Survey, published today, which is classed as an “important way” for the National College of Training and Leadership to monitor new teachers’ experience of training.

However the response rate is now so low for the NQT Annual Survey that it has “undermined stakeholders faith in the reliability of the data”.

The department has also had to change its model for collecting responses because of the dramatic drop. It has moved from a census survey, to a sample-based one instead – meaning provider-level data can no longer be provided.

Ipsos Mori interviewed 15 trainees and 13 providers to find out how engagement with the NQT survey can be improved.

But they found that trainees are suffering from ‘survey fatigue’, with NQTs potentially receiving more than 10 surveys about their training year before they even receive the government’s official annual survey.

Some trainees said they receive a survey at the end of each term, with many asking identical questions.

Citizenship fee causes schools to miss out on pupil premium funding

About 120,000 pupils in the UK are estimated not to have British citizenship despite many of them being born in the country.

This is because their parents are not yet citizens and cannot afford the £1,012 fee slapped down by the government for a child’s citizenship application.

Now school leaders have warned their non-citizen status makes those families ineligible for income benefits and so the children cannot claim free school meals, upon which pupil premium money is based.

At £1,320 extra per pupil in primary school and £935 extra per pupil in secondary school, the loss of pupil premium cash for schools is considerable, warned one accountancy expert.

Tim Borton, academy partner at accountancy firm Bishop Fleming, noted that up to £156 million could be missing across the whole UK schools sector.

Micon Metcalfe, chief operating officer of Langley Park Academies and a fellow of the Institute of School Business Leadership, added that most migrants without citizenship are not eligible for public funds, “hence [their children] receiving no pupil premium or free school meals”.

“They may be very poor, but aren’t entitled,” she said, explaining that schools will have to provide meals from their own budgets.

In August, 100 school leaders wrote to the

Child citizen registration numbers and fees



Home Office with civil society organisation Citizens UK demanding that the current sky-high fee for citizenship application stop increasing and instead be reduced to its actual cost of £350.

Unlike most other European countries, pupils born in Britain but whose parents were not formally settled in the country at the time of their birth are not considered British. The current cost is almost 10 times that of other countries with a similar policy such as France, Sweden, and Spain.

Analysis by immigration advice website Free Movement has calculated that the Home Office made almost £100 million in profit from children registering as British citizens over the last five years. A fall in registrations in that time suggests high fees are preventing pupils from obtaining citizenship.

FASNA rebrands as Confederation of School Trusts

Academy trusts are one step closer to having a new membership organisation after proposals for a “Confederation of School Trusts” were overwhelmingly backed.

Members of pro-autonomy group FASNA will now officially vote on plans to rebrand the organisation later this month after 96 per cent of respondents to a consultation on the plans expressed their support. More than 100 people responded.

FASNA, which stands for Freedom and Autonomy for Schools – National Association, currently aims to “promote and secure

autonomy for schools and evidence its success”, and supports all multi-academy trusts, single-academy trusts and school leaders.

In July, leaders asked members if they wanted to “reshape, rebrand and rename” the organisation as the “sector body for the emerging landscape of legally independent school trusts”.

Leora Cruddas, the chief executive of FASNA, told *Schools Week* trusts are “dispersed with no way of making or influencing policy”.

She drew parallels with other sector bodies, such as the Association of Colleges.

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK



A new term, some new faces, but we'll still be delivering the same agenda-setting scoops

Welcome back! I hope you all had a restful summer and have settled back into the new term.

We've also had our own settling-in here at *Schools Week*, a rejigged team of reporters, a freshen-up of our feature pages, and a new editor.

Having re-joined *Schools Week* (after taking a year off to travel) in mid-August, I used the first weeks to meet up with lots of our readers and contributors.

They all asked me the same question - what are your plans for *Schools Week*? It's a fair question, and I wanted to share it with all our readers.

We've already had some big changes over the past year. We've moved from

having a printed edition to a fully revamped digital-only version.

Our website has also had a makeover. And we have said goodbye to reporter Pippa Allen-Kinross, who has joined our sister publication *FE Week*.

So there won't be any major changes.

Instead we'll be focusing on the agenda-setting stories we're known for, alongside a comprehensive round-up of the week's most important news.

This week's edition reveals how the government has ditched one of its key social mobility funding pledges (page 8), as well as the latest budget cut for schools (page 9).

Alongside the news, our

award-winning reporters will be investigating the most important issues in the sector.

This week Alix Robertson looks at whether parents are being ripped off in the school uniform market (page 12) - finding one trust which, incredibly, charges parents more than double the price for a blazer at its grammar school, compared to its non-selective schools.

Jess Staufenberg has also delved into the government's flagging computing revolution (page 14).

While there are no major changes, we have tweaked our features section, including some exciting new faces rounding up the best blogs (page 33).

And we've got some exciting new features, too. Our profile interviews will now be tri-weekly, with the first of our new features, 'The Debate', published today.

Two educators with fiercely opposing views will go head-to-head over the week's most contentious issues. This week Mark Lehain takes on Jules Daulby (page 26 and 27).

You may also notice our formidable former editor Laura McInerney doesn't have her usual weekly column.

Fear not, Laura will be contributing to the new Research Review feature, so stay tuned!

Enjoy our exclusive-packed edition. Would love your feedback.



SCHOOLS WEEK



Get in touch.

CONTACT:
NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK
OR CALL 0203 4321 392

The Debate

Mark Lehain, director,
Parents and Teachers
for Excellence



Exclusions: too many or too few?

CATH MURRAY

@CATHMURRAY_

As the debate on school exclusions becomes increasingly polarised, we brought together two people with opposing views to see where there might be common ground. Mark Lehain, director of campaigning group Parents and Teachers for Excellence, chatted with Jules Daulby, director of education for literacy charity Driver Youth Trust.

Qu: Are there too many or too few exclusions?

Mark Lehain: I don't think we know whether we're making too many or too few exclusions. There is so much noise around the data – we could do with more standardised recording of information across the country.

Jules Daulby: I agree on transparency – I don't think we know enough. But the data will show a massive increase in exclusions. We have a lot of illegal exclusions, off-rolling, and a rise in home education.

ML: Headteachers only ever exclude as a very last resort. Blaming schools for their exclusion rate is like blaming hospitals for their admission rate on a Saturday night. They're dealing with societal and family issues, and we should support them in that, but I think exclusions are the symptom and not the cause.

JD: The analogy to A&E is a very poor one. A&E is a reactive response unit – schools are preventative, and they can do something in terms of providing wrap-around family care.

We should have so few pupil referral units and/or exclusions that we wouldn't even have to debate this. We currently have 42 permanent exclusions and 2010 fixed-term exclusions per day, and we're creating a culture that thinks that's ok. If we argue for more exclusions, it's like arguing that if we had more people in prison we'd have a better society.

ML: I think schools have a moral obligation do everything possible to keep children

“Blaming schools for their exclusion rate is like blaming A&E for their admission rate”



in their school. But where it is clearly not working – they are a danger to themselves, or to other children or staff, or they are too disruptive to the running of that organisation – you have to be able to remove the child. I think there's a whole discussion about what you can do before that point, and to support the families, but there does need to be a terminal point. I don't think Jules would argue that we should never have permanent or fixed-term exclusions – probably what we're arguing about is the rate and where the red lines are.

JD: There are schools getting away with practices that mean they are not educating children in need. Yet the schools I see being truly inclusive, going above and beyond for those who are disadvantaged, are often not

rewarded.

Local authorities have been decimated, meaning there's no support for students with behaviour issues, so exclusions is all that's left. The paucity of provision for children with SEND means they end up getting excluded because they can't cope with the Ebacc and the high-stakes testing.

Qu: Do you really think schools are excluding children over results?

JD: I don't think I need to say that! I think Ofsted and Education Datalab and the select committee are all saying that.

ML: I don't think they are saying that. They're saying there are questions to be asked. I think it's very poor form when

Exclusions: too many or too few?

The Debate

Jules Daulby, director of education, Driver Youth Trust



“It’s like arguing that if we had more people in prison we’d have a better society”

anecdotally, that every headteacher he knows takes exclusions very seriously – and if they have, they should be able to defend their decision.

ML: I think that sometimes, even if a mistake has been made, we have to recognise that the consequences of sending that child back in are too horrific to even consider. What used to happen is that they would walk round a school saying “I’m untouchable”. I know I’m referring to anecdote, but I have too many friends who pre-2012 faced that situation in their schools.

JD: A school shouldn’t lose face, but they should be accountable for their mistakes. I think it’s a weak argument to say we can’t get a child back because we’ve made a mistake – the child’s future is on the line.

ML: If an independent review panel finds against you, that’s already pretty embarrassing. It can lead to a big financial penalty, as you lose all the money attached to that child.

JD: Children with SEND are seven times more likely to be excluded. If you’ve got children from families who are struggling, they’re not even going to go through that complex process. And this is where I agree with the select committee, that as soon as you’ve had five non-consecutive days of exclusions, you get an independent advocate.

ML: I think I can agree with that. Why would anyone have a problem with parents getting an advocate?

I won’t budge on schools taking back pupils. But whether schools should wash their hands of them, or retain legal responsibility for their education and/or results is absolutely up for debate.

I really like what was in the 2015 white paper, Education Excellence Everywhere, that a school should keep hold of a pupil’s results even after they’ve permanently excluded them.

JD: I can agree with that one!

people have taken a very nuanced statement by Ofsted and immediately judged those 300 schools with high rates of pupils leaving after year 10, when the only reason Ofsted came out with that data was to enable them to go in and form a professional judgement.

JD: Why would they bring it up, if they didn’t think it was a problem?

ML: I think you look at the data and try and form some hypotheses, then you go and test it. It sounds to me like you’re jumping to a conclusion.

JD: It’s not just Ofsted. It’s also Education Datalab finding 7,000 children missing between years 10 and 11. I think we’re seeing lots of different studies raising concerns

about off-rolling, and guesing, where children are told to get educated at home and coming in for exams as guests. I think it would be naive to think there is not something happening in some schools.

Qu: Another of the committee’s recommendations was that independent review panels should be able to direct a school to reinstate a pupil. Do you agree?

ML: That used to happen pre-2012 and it was a terrible shadow for school communities to live under. What a wonderful way to completely destroy the headteacher’s credibility and authority .

JD: I actually agree with that recommendation. Mark is saying,

Opinion



KAREN WESPIESER

Director of operations,
Driver Youth Trust

Why inset days should be like a driving awareness course

Teachers should get excited about inset days -- after all, they are a luxury most professionals don't get, says Karen Wespieser, who shares some tips to inject the enthusiasm back into school-based CPD

I need to make a confession. Following a period of intense learning and testing, I have for the past 18 years been doing a skilled task with an increasing amount of automation and a decreasing amount of concentration.

"Just learn to pass the test," they said, "you can adapt your technique a bit to do it your own way after that." But then I got caught doing it wrong. And last month, rather than face other penalties, I elected to undertake re-training. I went on a speed awareness course.

I tweeted that I was undertaking this penance and was surprised at the number of responses from people I know – educated, professional, and mostly from the education community – who had also been on the course and learnt from it. And they were right, it was a good course. CPD for my driving, if you like.

Since then I have been approaching driving slightly differently. Remembering not only

how to do things, but the evidence that was shared on the course about why we are asked to drive in different ways in different areas.

It got me thinking, what was it about this training that was so useful and is there a metaphor

“ What would the teaching equivalent of a speed awareness course be?”

here for teacher CPD? There are clear parallels in the intensity and the precision of the initial training, but what about after that? What happens when teachers get a bit complacent and start speeding?

The penalty is often severe, including negative Ofsted outcomes that – to stretch a metaphor – expect you to get to your destination faster while putting speed bumps in your path. Equally, performance management might put the driving instructor back in the passenger seat but may not always acknowledge the skill and experience the driver has developed over the years.



What would the teaching equivalent of a speed awareness course be? Obviously, there is a lot of regular CPD available for teachers. Not working in a school myself, I am often jealous of my husband's inset days. The idea of whole-organisation professional learning days is not common outside of teaching. But I rarely see teachers' eyes light up at

[metacognition and self-regulated learning](#). And, obviously, some evidence around pedagogy. There's an article by Megan Sumeracki and Yana Weinstein on [optimising learning using retrieval practice](#) that would be a good start and is available free from the Chartered College of Teaching.

For something practical, I always recommend the short blog by Stephen Tierney on [reducing absences](#) based on research by Todd Rogers and Avi Feller. And in terms of the bigger picture, you might look at the new evidence on longer-term outcomes, the report from the DfE on [school and labour market outcomes by pupil characteristics](#) makes sobering reading.

The speed awareness course was not delivered by the scientists who undertook stopping distance research or road safety tests, but by people who were passionate about their subject area. Similarly, a teaching awareness course need not be delivered by expensive external experts.

Learning and remembering why we do things is a powerful behaviour change technique. I hope that as teachers return to schools their inset includes at least a bit of it. Think of it as a teaching awareness course.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEK.CO.UK

With speculation rife that the national schools commissioner role might disappear, Michael Pain lays out what he thinks DfE priorities should be going forward

As the academy trust sector waves goodbye to the national schools commissioner and enters a period of uncertainty around the long-term future of the role, it is useful to assess just how much needs to be done by the Department for Education. While some multi-academy trusts have demonstrated the potential to transform thousands of pupils' life chances, others have struggled and in some cases imploded, failing pupils and their parents. Taken as a whole, the sector can still be considered as "requiring improvement" and the DfE needs to find a better way going forward.

Of course, it is the responsibility of MAT boards and CEOs to ensure the sustainable development of their trusts, learning from others in the sector and beyond. However, I also hear of frustration at the impenetrable barriers government has failed to make headway on. So where should the department's priorities lie in the new chapter ahead?

Secure robust corporate governance

Almost all failures of MATs can be traced back to poor corporate governance, whether that is failing to challenge an executive team sufficiently, being complacent on the risks of rapid expansion or disregarding duties such as avoiding conflicts of interests or ensuring organisational solvency.

We need a better strategy for recruiting and training MAT trustees



MICHAEL PAIN

CEO of Forum Strategy

Three things the government must do to better support MATs

nationwide so that all trustees are adequately qualified and prepared for the role. Trustees should also be better supported to understand what sustainable MAT development looks like, something that is clearly lacking

majority of CEOs and their teams are already expert in, and not enough on how to scale up school improvement across multiple sites and develop organisations sustainably.

The Department should consider

“ **The DfE has been lacklustre in this area, with too much focus on how to improve individual schools** ”

in places.

There should be mandatory induction and regular corporate governance training for trustees, backed up by sufficient investment that reflects the fact that trust boards are the frontline of accountability in the academy trust sector. A lack of investment in securing strong corporate governance has been a huge opportunity missed by the Department for Education.

Invest in relevant thought leadership

One of the tragedies of losing the National College for School Leadership some years ago has been the dearth in thought leadership across the sector. The DfE has been lacklustre in this area, with too much of a focus on how to improve individual schools, something the vast

how it contributes to the learning and development of CEOs and trustees, including drawing on the potential and expertise of existing networks and providers. The National Schools Commissioner's office does not, in my view, have the capacity or expertise to do this well enough, and the Department should consider establishing a National College for Academy Leadership – or something along the lines of the health service's NHS Improvement body. They dismantled the NCSL at exactly the wrong moment.

Hold academy trusts to account, intelligently

The MAT sector is still very young and it is fundamental that trusts learn from one another and share expertise, resources and learning. Resorting to the default approach

of academy trust league tables encourages a culture of competition and, in the worst cases, an underlying reluctance to serve some of the most vulnerable pupils.

Instead of relying simply on a "scores on the doors" approach to accountability, MATs should be encouraged to engage in peer review, with the department encouraging a range of providers – including consortia of MATs themselves – to develop frameworks.

Ofsted should also be given a role in the inspection of trusts, but – as Forum Strategy's recent policy roundtable recommended – these inspections should focus on development and avoid labelling MATs with grades that represent a "moment in time" which can discourage diversity of provision.

Ofsted could also review how well MATs make themselves publicly accountable to their various stakeholders, including pupils, the community and staff. This will take work, but when compared with other sectors, education desperately needs to do more to involve and empower its end-users in the accountability process.

These are just a few considerations in securing improvement in a complex multi-academy trust landscape. Each one looks to enable trustees, leaders and teachers to be the masters of improvement for all settings, ensuring all pupils reap the benefits. That, ultimately, is the true potential of well-led, well-governed and intelligently accountable school partnerships.

Reviews

FILM REVIEW



H is for Harry

Directed by Edward Owles and Jaime Taylor

Reviewed by Cath Murray

Given the aspirational philosophy that underpins the South-London free school Reach Academy Feltham, it seems apt that when it decided to invite in a film crew, it wasn't to produce a TV series for Channel 4, but an art house documentary.

"We are all on the path to university", the new Year 7s are told in their inaugural assembly, and while this film might prove the statement not strictly true, it was the third best school in the country last year for improving progress of disadvantaged pupils.

The all-through school is a spin-off of King Solomon Academy – one of the UK's first "no excuses" schools, whose strict behaviour policy has drawn praise and criticism in equal measure.

The school's governors (bravely, it must be noted – inviting cameras of any kind into a school is always a risk) agreed to host a tiny film crew over a period of two years, to follow a class as it moves through years 7 and 8.

The filmmakers originally intended to focus on a handful of students in a class. It ended up being principally about one student, Harry, who entered the school with low attainment, and his English teacher, Sophie, who puts in hours of work to try and bring him up to speed.

What comes across most strongly in the opening scenes is that the school's "warm-strict" approach is heavily weighted towards the "warm" end of the spectrum.

One example is a moving scene between a teacher and a girl who's in

detention for being late for school. After she explains her complicated home life – where her mum works three nights a week and she's left looking after her autistic four-year-old brother – the teacher responds by offering her a meeting with the pupil support officer once a week. "I imagine it's hard for you to get the attention you deserve at home," she observes.

We see the familiar classroom management techniques popularised by Doug Lemov, including countdowns from five and tracking the teacher – as well as the regimented whole-class double-clap to congratulate good behaviour. At lunchtime, the children are trained to parrot, "everyone needs a plate, knife, cup, plate, water" until it's engrained in their memory.

There's also a healthy dose of the motivational quotes and speeches typical of schools inspired by the US-based Knowledge is Power Program.

The motto that turns out to be most pertinent as the film develops, however, is the one that is progressively called into question as the narrative unfolds: "We believe that every single child is capable of academic success".

In short, Harry makes progress, but not enough to integrate into the mainstream class, and he ends up transferring elsewhere (it's unclear exactly what kind of provision this is).

There's a sense in which the documentary functions as one large question mark, and doesn't attempt to delve into the school's decision-



making. While this might make the film less appealing for an education audience, the filmmakers have made efforts to communicate with specialist observers – for example by adding subtitles stating that the school is spending twice its "allocated resources" for Harry (read EHCP).

Also interesting (but not explicitly mentioned) is the fact that the one-on-one additional support Harry is seen receiving in class is provided by qualified teachers, not TAs.

In the absence of a narrative conclusion, the filmmakers have added written text that – despite its brutal simplicity – does a decent job of summarising the problem and proposing a solution. It cites the low attainment of white working class boys, explains that according to research early intervention is key, and informs the audience that Reach Feltham has established a community hub to try and redress these problems.

The film ends abruptly, and for a general audience, it may feel unresolved. For those in the education space, it will no doubt serve as a shared reference point for further debate.

Interview

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEK.CO.UK

Ed Vainker

Ed Vainker is the co-founder and executive principal of Reach Academy Feltham, the school featured in the documentary *H is for Harry* (see review p. 29). Schools Week chatted to him about some of the themes raised in the film.

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

The documentary says Reach Feltham was spending twice the amount of funding allocated by Harry's education, health and care plan (EHCP). Is there enough funding attached to EHCPs to encourage schools to be inclusive?

In my experience, there is a huge range. In the last 18 months we have, with parents, handed back two EHCPs – we said the pupil no longer needed it. We always get a shocked reaction from the local authority when we do that. I mean, they were grateful, but I think that doesn't happen often enough.

Some EHCPs have enough funding and others don't. I think frequently there isn't enough. This term, we've had nine children start Year 7 with EHCPs out of 60 – 15 per cent of our cohort. That puts a lot of pressure on the organisation and on teachers. Where you do have sufficient funding, however, it can have a really positive impact.

The film's protagonist was transferred to another type of provision because it was decided that Reach Feltham could no longer meet his needs. Do you think schools should be able to do that?

I think it's important to have that mechanism, because it can give schools the confidence to take children – particularly, perhaps, if they haven't been in a mainstream through primary and their parents would like them to go to a mainstream secondary.



“We've handed back two EHCPs”

There is uncertainty – no-one can be sure of how it's going to go. We've had pupils with EHCPs who've come from really quite specialist provisions and they've absolutely flourished. And in the case of Harry, he did flourish for a good while, but in the end we couldn't quite sustain that.

The film ends by mentioning early intervention – is that the answer?

I think we're behind the evidence, given what we now know about how the infant brain develops in the early years. And the state is not allocating sufficient resources at that stage.

We're going all-in on the early-intervention piece. We're an all-through school with two-

form entry and we've added a nursery with provision for disadvantaged two-year-olds. But what's interesting is that you see a real achievement gap between pupils, even at that level.

Our aspiration is to offer cradle-to-career support. We've got a partnership for new mums with the NCT and another with Save the Children to offer a range of support from nought to five, to support school readiness for children in the wider community.

Isn't this extending the remit of a school way beyond the academic – surely they can't be everything to families?

First, the richness of those relationships and that support at times of stress, I consider

to be integral to the school in terms of exam results.

Second, the interesting thing about the British system is the amount of autonomy headteachers have. We've chosen to invest in that family support and mental health.

We employ two full-time family support workers, and at any one time we have about 30 of our pupils accessing counselling – we spend approximately the cost of a teacher on therapy every year, and avoid the CAMHS waiting lists. They've paid for themselves in terms of the impact on pupils.

The film shows qualified teachers doing one-on-one classroom support that you would often associate with a teaching assistant. How do you manage that?

All the evidence is that a velcro TA doesn't support academic progress. So we've tried to work with parents to say “let's look at this differently and allocate your funding and support in different ways”.

Clearly, a child who is really struggling to read needs our most skilful teacher of reading, so having a fully-qualified teacher feels really important.

Most of our TAs are graduates who do one year then transition to do teacher training with us. So in secondary, we have just four or five TAs and it's a 100% graduate workforce.

That subject knowledge and confidence around reading and writing and numeracy feels really critical, especially for those who are going to be working with our pupils who need to make the most progress.

Research

Every month Harry Fletcher-Wood reviews the evidence on a school-related theme. Contact him on Twitter @HFletcherWood if you have a topic you would like him to cover.

What is the best way to use role models in schools?

Harry Fletcher-Wood, associate dean at the Institute for Teaching

Having decided what we want students to achieve by the end of the year, we need to work out how we are going to inspire them to achieve it. We know that role models are important, but how do they influence students, and how can we use them in the classroom? These four papers each taught me something important about role models.

Parents or pop culture – who do kids look up to?

Kids all look up to rappers, Love Island contestants, and sports players – right? Well, not quite. This dated but interesting paper analyses the role models of a group of 8-13 year olds in the USA. They found that young people tend to choose role models whom they knew personally. Parents came first. Boys were more likely to choose male role models and African-American and white children were more likely to choose role models who looked like them. The authors suggest that a lack of available role models in the media for girls and other ethnic minority students meant they were more likely to choose role models who differed from them.

[Anderson, K. and Cavallaro, D. \(2002\) Parents or pop culture? Children's heroes and role models. Childhood Education 2002 \(78-3\), 161.](#)

Can you choose their role models for them?

So what makes a role model? This thorough review emphasises that a role model is chosen by the individual, not foisted on them by others. An individual must see a potential role model as relevant to them and their lives in some way. But this does not



mean they have to know them personally – Harry Potter or Marie Curie might act as role models. Individuals try to become more like their role models, or, perhaps, less like them – sometimes people determine to be as different as possible from a role model who sets a negative example. Role models come in many varieties. We may admire everything about them, or just one quality. We may follow the detail of their actions or gain a broad sense of their charisma, and they may be peers or superiors. Role models set standards for a person's behaviour: but they are chosen by the individual student, not the teacher.

[Gibson, D. \(2003\). Role models in career development: New directions for theory and research. Journal of Vocational Behaviour. 65 \(134-156\)](#)

Can role models influence specific behaviour?

Students choose their own role models, but teachers may helpfully introduce them to potential candidates. In 2015 the Behavioural Insights Team tried using this to encourage students to apply to university, comparing the effect of a role model with offering information about the financial benefits of attending university and the support available. Financial information

made students less likely to apply – perhaps because students had a clearer idea of the costs – whereas a talk from a potential role model made them significantly more interested in university and more likely to apply.

[Behavioural Insights Team \(2015\). Behavioural Insights and the Somerset Challenge](#)

Do students need to meet their role models?

The 2015 trial by the Behavioural Insights Team required class time and the services of former students, but more recently they tried a simpler approach. They targeted students with high grades at schools where few students attend competitive universities and sent letters from students of a similar background at a top university, emphasising how much these universities valued students like them. When students received two separate letters – addressed to them at home and at school, from two students – they were much more likely to apply and much more likely to be accepted: 88% of their additional applications resulted in an accepted offer. This underscores the point that students need never meet a role model if they can see the relevance of their example.

[Behavioural Insights Team \(2017\). The Behavioural Insights Team Update Report 2016-17.](#)



Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is Debra Kidd author and former teacher

@DEBRAKIDD

Biologically primary and secondary knowledge?

@SuzyG001 – Sue Gerrard

Sue's detailed and intelligent exploration of some of the assumptions on which the theory of "biologically primary and secondary knowledge" is based, is a timely reminder for teachers not to jump on bandwagons of attractive simplicity. The idea of primary and secondary knowledge is used to argue the case for direct instruction on the basis that there are some things we just learn naturally and some (things we learn in school, conveniently) that we need to be taught. But as Sue points out, things are more complicated than that. It matters to us as teachers to understand these nuances and debates so that we remain resistant to myths and quick fixes (have we learned anything from the VAK fiasco, if we're willing to simply jump onto another flawed theory?). Sue's blog explains why we should always be wary of research that aims to make a model fit a theory rather than the evidence.

TOP BLOGS of the week

An argument for discovery learning in early years classrooms

@Edscacredprofane – Peter Ford and @SwailesRuth – Ruth Swailes

In this well referenced blog post, Peter Ford and Ruth Swailes unpick some of the misconceptions around discovery learning and constructivism as presented by researchers such as Kirschner, Sweller and Clarke. Arguments made by these and other academics against modes of learning such as inquiry, problem solving, discovery and constructivism have been increasingly influential among teachers and policy makers, but their definitions of these terms are vague. This blog looks closely at what is really meant by discovery learning with the specific developmental needs of young children in mind.

Five easy pieces

@MrEFinch – Ed Finch

This beautiful tribute to his wife, Diane, who passed away this summer, is a reminder to us all of the things that matter in our lives. Ed will be known to many through Twitter and for his work as a headteacher, blogger and for being the co-founder of #BrewEd – work he continued while caring for Diane throughout her debilitating illness. This heartbreaking but equally heartwarming reminder of the importance of love, of the

appreciation of small things and of the power we all have to face our trials with dignity, shows us how we must take the time to appreciate the things and the people we love and who make us happy. As we go back into the hurly-burly of a new academic year, let's keep that in mind.

Children making writing that matters to them

@jonnywalker_edu

This is a lovely blog post that reflects on Jonny's own experiences of writing and applies it to the spurious notions of time and purpose we impose on children in our classrooms. He explores how we can think about this differently to give children an opportunity to craft their writing while learning to appreciate that craft, their wider learning and each other. Jonny writes in a warm and humorous way that leaves you wanting to be a better teacher without making you feel inadequate. It's quite a skill and one that I expect comes in quite handy in the classroom.

Exploring nonsense stories through drama

@CarlERobinson

Carl is a rare species – a drama specialist working across a primary school – and he's keen to use that to develop and support children's literacy as they go. In this blog, he draws on a scheme of work I shared with him some years ago and how he developed the ideas for Year 2. In the event of not being able to find the right poem, he wrote one for them himself, paying particular attention to heightening vocabulary and firing the imagination. It will be lovely to see how this fantasy story unfolds as he teaches it. Even if you don't teach primary, the blog shows us how creativity and knowledge can be woven together to create wonderful contexts for learning.

CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +



DfE warns school staff over expression of 'political views'

Nikki Jones @KS2librarySOS

Who will speak up if not the people at the coal face? Libraries, schools, children's services, social care & many more ... should they sit back & take it? Absolutely not! Regardless of the party in power, they need to listen

School pension contributions could rise from next year

Phil Denton @Phil_TRFC

Yet again another potential cost for schools that takes money away from the children

Ofsted announces fresh clampdown on league table 'gaming' after ECDL scandal

Janet Downs, Comment

League table 'gaming' could be reduced if the excessive emphasis on GCSEs were reduced. These exams (and others taken at 16) should be regarded as stepping stones to further study or employment.

Any sensible exam reform in England should have moved towards graduation at 18 via multiple routes. This could include ECDL which should be regarded as a stand-alone qualification with no equivalence to other exams.

Uniform supplier School Trends leaves pupils in the lurch before new school term

Ellen, Comment

This is due to a company over-expanding and not being able to meet demand. The communication and attitude towards parents and upset children is shocking. However, schools have allowed this to happen. If schools didn't insist on expensive logo tops and tell you to order all uniform through an online supplier then this wouldn't happen.

At one point in the noughties schools needed to justify logos or uniforms that couldn't be picked up from a supermarket or department school which meant everyone was in the same coloured jumper or blazer and there was no excuse for not having uniform at the start of term.

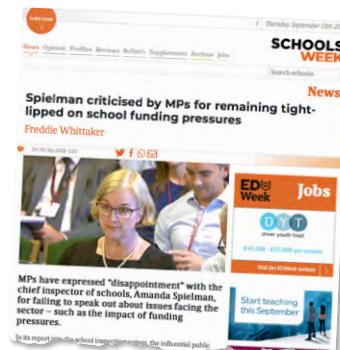
REPLY OF THE WEEK **Julie Cordiner**

Spielman criticised by MPs for remaining tight-lipped on school funding pressures

The reason Amanda Spielman can't comment is because inspectors shy away from looking at strategic financial leadership in schools – this is the real issue. There are clear examples of inspection reports where a school had a huge deficit but it wasn't mentioned.

A few years ago there was a case where the school with the highest deficit b/f in the country, around £2.8m from memory, was inspected in the autumn. Inspectors believed the head and governors who said it would be brought into balance by the year end. What happened? It increased to £3m by the end of March.

How can an improvement plans be implemented without money, and what will happen to standards that are built on shifting sands of low class sizes and unaffordable staffing, if serious cuts have to be made, as they must be to comply with funding body requirements? Financial leadership is a key element in these fiscally-challenging times and Ofsted needs to take notice of it.



EBacc not to blame for decline in arts subjects, claims minister

Pat Thomson @ThomsonPat

Hmm. In a few weeks we will be releasing research results which show the EBacc effect. It's there even if the Minister believes otherwise. We've documented changes in school arts ed policies over three years.

Peter Smith @Socialistsmithy

Oh yes it is. Meanwhile private schools place music, drama and other creative arts at the centre of their curriculum. If you can pay, it's ok.

Steve Manderson @Mando_Nottm

Talk about head in the sand! If the national picture continues to deteriorate at this rate it'll be like trying to do a U-turn in the titanic. Arts will be lost for generations.

Rachel Jacob @racheljacob15

Ummm! Interesting take on why lots of schools are having to dump arts subjects because they don't link to national measures! Having a very creative child and seeing so many children suffer because of the core subjects expectation on students and teachers I say bring back the arts.

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

FRIDAY

Sleeping.

SATURDAY

Educationalists can be a fickle bunch, schools minister Nick Gibb discovered when he arrived to deliver his keynote speech to the ResearchED national conference in London at the weekend.

He arrived to a packed auditorium, where ResearchED top honcho and government behaviour Tsar Tom Bennett (he loves it when we call him that) was delivering his welcome address.

A beaming Gibb even took a picture of the crowds... seconds before they proceeded to walk out en-masse before his speech, leaving him with only a few score beguiled listeners.

Even worse, there was no lectern in the room so a minion was dispatched to steal one from a packed lecture hall next door. "Is this a metaphor for budget cuts?" one of the bemused audience shouted.

In Nick's defence, he was on at the same time as around a dozen other fantastic speakers, and we can't possibly understand why anyone would shun a lecture on the knowledge-rich curriculum and phonics in favour of, you know, something else.

That said, if they'd stayed they might have enjoyed the irony of watching the minister giving a half-arsed evidence-free defence of the expansion of grammar schools at a conference set up to promote research.

MONDAY

Damian Hinds was his usual non-committal self at parliamentary education questions this week, erring so hard that he erred himself into defending a policy that's already been scrapped.

Pressed on whether the government was proceeding with its madcap scheme to bung taxi drivers £5k a year to take poor kids to grammar schools up to 15 miles from their homes, Hinds dodged the question and insisted there are "many different angles to our social mobility approach".

His answer caused confusion, not just because it was helluva vague, but because one of Hinds's own ministers had confirmed the same scheme had been dumped almost a week before.

Admittedly, the announcement was snuck out on a written piece of paper on the first day back from the holidays, but one would like to think the secretary of state might have been, er, kept in the loop.

TUESDAY

Shout out to the Department for Education who this week scrapped gendered washrooms. Tweeters praised the free sanitary products now available everywhere (will schools be getting them?) and, in typical DfE over-blown fashion, the VERY LOUD SIGNAGE.



WEDNESDAY

Philip Davies, Conservative MP and men's rights activist, is angry about educational inequalities faced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, but not for the same reasons as most other people.

Davies, who is inexplicably a member of the parliamentary women and equalities committee, is so angry that he couldn't stop slamming his hand down on his desk during a hearing this week, where MPs heard about the huge barriers that Traveller children face in their schooling, including racism, a non-inclusive curriculum and a lack of external support.

But none of this concerns Davies. He's angry the government is spending money helping disadvantaged pupils of Traveller heritage AT ALL.

Losing his temper during the session, Davies demanded to know whether Traveller families bore any responsibility for their children's struggles at school, and moaned that it seemed to be "everybody else's fault but the families".

"It has to be paid for!" he boomed. "It's all very well saying that we need more funding for this and more funding for that, where do you think the funding comes from? Taxed income," says Davies, who was swiftly reminded by Irish Traveller Rose McCarthy that the majority of travellers live in houses and pay their taxes.

In the end, Davies's tirade was shut down by committee chair Maria Miller because it was "not about education really".



HEADTEACHER FROM APRIL 2019, OR EARLIER IF AVAILABLE

Salary negotiable, indicative range £50k - £60k

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- Polite and well behaved children who greatly enjoy coming to school
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- Parents who appreciate and support the school
- A collaborative Board of Governors committed to supporting you in your role and to investing in the ongoing development of the school
- Strong, supportive links with the Church

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An ambitious and dynamic leader who:

- will enhance the standards of teaching and learning to maximise the progress of every pupil whilst valuing each child as an individual and providing a wide range of opportunities for all
- has the passion and experience to engage and empower our staff
- has excellent interpersonal and communication skills, able to create effective and positive relationships with parents and all members of the school community
- will further strengthen our links with other local schools
- will continue to nurture and develop the Christian faith, values and ethos of our Church school

School visits are warmly welcome and will be hosted by one of our governors. Please contact **Richard Peet**, our Vice-Chair, to make arrangements by email:
richardpeet@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

If you would like an informal chat about this opportunity, in confidence, please contact our governance adviser, Andrea Morley at Balance Education Consultancy via andrea.morley@balanceec.com

How to apply

Please visit our advert on the Essex Schools Jobs website for an Application Pack and to apply online:
<http://www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk/Vacancies/Details.aspx?VacancyId=48104>

Closing date: Midday, Monday 1st October 2018

Selection event: **Friday 12th October 2018** with a late afternoon tea on **Thursday 11th October** to meet staff

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to enhanced DBS and other checks in line with safer recruitment practice.



VACANCIES

The Teacher Development Trust (TDT) is a fast-growing charity, based in London, dedicated to improving educational outcomes for children by raising the quality of teacher professional development.

Impact is key. Our work is always underpinned by the highest quality research and supported by the strongest engagement with stakeholders across the sector.

We are now seeking applications from suitably qualified candidates for the following key roles in the organisation:

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION £45 TO £55,000 PER ANNUM

To take strategic responsibility for leading and developing Teacher Development Trust Services, including the TDT Network, CPD Audit, regional hubs, events, courses and services for CPD providers as well as having responsibility for the strategic oversight and development of all aspects of the operation of TDT programmes, services and projects.

NATIONAL SCHOOL PROGRAMME LEADER (TRAINING) £30 TO £34,000 PER ANNUM

To develop and deliver a comprehensive, efficient and effective support service for the Trust's Network programme; to lead and be responsible for the Trust's courses and accreditations; and to deliver and support comprehensive and effective services for schools through the Trust's CPD Excellence Hubs.

These are exciting opportunities to lead on the development of a fast-growing and influential education charity. We are looking for experienced and enthusiastic individuals to lead our team in supporting the growth of existing programmes, our impact and our mission as well as developing new projects and areas of expertise. We have an excellent track record of staff developing within the charity, as well as staff who have developed their careers into schools, other charities, and the public sector.

**For further information go to <https://tdtrust.org/vacancies>
Closing date for applications: 5.00pm on Friday 21st September 2018**



The Russett School Deputy Head of Academy

The Russett School Middlehurst Avenue Weaverham Northwich Cheshire CW8 3BW.
Required for January 2019 or sooner

Leadership Point 4 to Leadership Point 8 (£42,398.00 to £46,799.00), subject to pay award

Following a recent expansion of The Russett Learning Trust an opportunity has arisen at the Russett School. The Governors are looking to appoint a further innovative and inspirational Deputy Head for the Academy.

The Russett School is a special academy providing outstanding education for pupils and young people from ages 2 to 19 years with Severe Learning Difficulties, Speech and Language Difficulties and Complex Needs.

This person must be committed to working in partnership with the Head of Academy, Executive Head Teacher and the Trust. We are looking for someone who has the highest expectations in terms of our pupils/students and staff. Who is passionate and committed to working with children with special educational needs and who will embrace the ethos and values of the academy and Trust.

We would welcome the opportunity to talk to you and show you around the academy. To arrange, please contact **Jane Palfreyman**, Office Manager The Russett School, on 01606 853005 or by email to jpalfreyman@russett.trlt.org.uk

An application pack (including job description and person specification for this role) is available to download <https://www.russettschool.co.uk/about-us/vacancies/>

For further information about the academy, please visit www.russettschool.co.uk

Completed application forms should be returned to jpalfreyman@russett.trlt.org.uk by noon on the 4th October 2018. Shortlisting 9th October 2018 and interviews will take place on the 16th and 17th October 2018.

The Russett Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service is required prior to appointment.



Education Associate, YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

Are you an outstanding teacher, who wants to transform how schools build the essential skills of their students?

Enabling Enterprise is an award-winning social enterprise. Our mission is to ensure that one day, all students leave school equipped with the skills, experiences and aspirations to succeed – beyond just a set of qualifications. We do this through creating innovative educational programmes for schools that introduce new, more enterprising teaching approaches. Our work is reinforced and supported by more than 130 top employers including PwC, London City Airport and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital.

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

**Salary: £28,000-£32,000 subject to review in 12 months
Closing Date: 9am on the 10th October 2018
To apply please visit: <https://www.skillsbuilder.org/jobs>**



We are delighted that you're interested in this role - it couldn't be a more exciting time to join us. We are a new organisation formed out of the merger of Ambition School Leadership and the Institute for Teaching.

We know that great teaching and school leadership are the most powerful levers for transforming children's outcomes. Effective leaders set the culture and create the conditions for improvements in teacher expertise, and expert teachers can close the attainment gap. Yet too much professional development for teachers and school leaders is low-quality, generic and fragmented.

Our new organisation, launching in Spring 2019, will have a single focus: to help teachers and school leaders to keep getting better. We think that this is the best way to make sure that every pupil, regardless of their background, gets a great education.

We will be the largest teaching and school leadership development provider in England, with more than ten years of collective experience working with everyone from new teachers to multi-academy trust CEOs and all of the roles in between.

Executive Director - School Leadership
Closing date - 30th September 2018
Salary: Competitive
London, Birmingham, Manchester (with occasional travel to our other offices) Full and part time considered.

This is an exciting, demanding role that will give the post-holder an opportunity to have system-wide impact. It is the most senior school leadership role within our Programmes Division.

You will be accountable for the successful execution of all school leadership programmes - from middle leadership through to headship. In addition you will also manage our schools advisory group and contribute to school leadership related business development. As an Executive Director within the Programmes Division you will manage a team of Deans, act as an external voice for the organisation when required, deputise for the Chief Education Officer when required, and take on wider leadership responsibilities across the organisation.

In order to excel in this role, the post-holder will need a clear vision for our school leadership programmes and the ability to apply this vision strategically to ensure our programmes are successful. The post holder will also have been a very effective leader within a school serving a low-income community. They will be a credible professional, both internally and externally and have experience of managing a large and complex team and its budget. The successful candidate will champion our values and embody them in interactions with colleagues and partners.

Dean - Learning Design
Closing date - 30th September 2018
Circa £60,000 - £64,000 plus £3,000 LW (If applicable)
London, Birmingham, Manchester (with occasional travel to our other offices)

We are looking for an exceptional individual to join our team as the Dean - Learning Design. This is an exciting, demanding role that will give the post-holder an opportunity to have system-wide impact. It is a leadership team post within our Programmes Division.

You will be accountable for the design of all programmes ensuring that they are high quality and aligned with our education model. You will also undertake some direct facilitation on those programmes as required. As a Dean within the Learning Design Team you will manage a team of Associate Deans - Learning Design, act as an external voice for the organisation when required, deputise for your Executive Director when required and take on wider leadership responsibilities across the organisation.

Our offer

- Agile working - a dynamic and flexible internal culture that gives employees control over the way they work and supports wellbeing
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- A generous employer pension contribution - 11% (10% pension plus 1% NI rebate)
- Competitive salaries rates and life assurance
- Access to interest free season ticket and bike loans, as well as childcare vouchers
- An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which gives staff confidential support and personalised information and resources when they are experiencing everyday challenges or more serious problems.
- A proactive, positive and progressive approach to team development.

How to Apply

To apply for any of our vacancies, or if you have any questions, please visit our website.

www.ambitionschoolleadership.org.uk/work-for-us/

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