

SCHOOLS WEEK

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

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Green light for Ofsted MAT inspection changes



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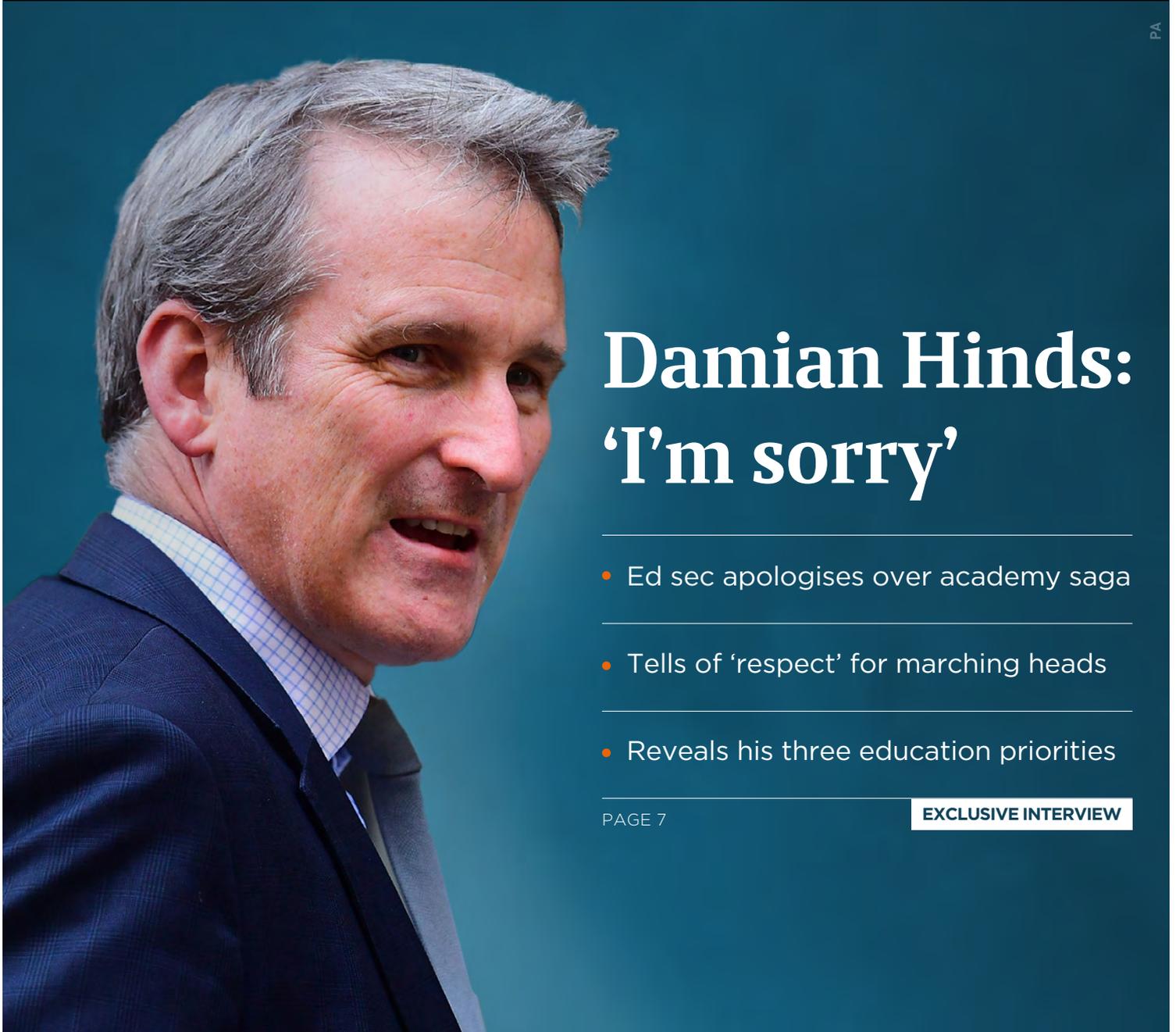


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Opinion



**SAM
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**LEORA
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Chief executive,
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OF THE WEEK**

Julia Skinner

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The editor's top picks

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Bye bye free schools: Labour conference special

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SEND funding cuts prompt court action

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The failing schools left in limbo



Complex legal issues are still thwarting the potentially transformative takeovers of failing schools, including one "orphan school" that has been waiting seven years to convert.

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News: Ofsted

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Harford clears up Bousted Twitter row

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Ofsted's director of education Sean Harford has admitted his use of the word "impossible" to describe the inspectorate's working relationship with union boss Mary Bousted was "incorrect".

The admission comes after a social media spat when Harford tweeted that it was impossible under Bousted's leadership to work with her union, the NEU, because it constantly called for the abolition of Ofsted.

Bousted said the comment was "startling" and showed the inspectorate would "engage only with those who believe it has an inalienable right to exist".

She has since lodged a more formal complaint in a letter to the chief inspector, Amanda Spielman, suggesting Harford may have broken the civil service code on impartiality.

The code states that civil servants must not "act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals or interests".

Harford has since tweeted that his use of the word "impossible" was "incorrect", but said Bousted "seems to think it's OK to be personal about a public servant but expect no pushback".

His comments followed claims from Bousted that the Ofsted chief inspector was "not a safe pair of hands".

Harford tweeted: "Unfortunately, maybe for her [Bousted], the new SM [social media] world means that public servants, who are expected to engage and listen, also have a voice to challenge."

Ofsted has also refused to back down after the row, which started on Saturday. An Ofsted spokesperson said: "Once again it is Dr Bousted providing the constant stream of criticism and negativity about the education system."

The row flared up after Harford responded to a tweet that said all unions should be "working together for a common good".

Spielman backed Harford, saying that he was highlighting the difficulties of "getting constructive input from NEU".

Ofsted plans changes to academy trust inspections

ALIX ROBERTSON

@ALIXROBERTSON4

EXCLUSIVE

Academy bosses will get a seat at the table with Ofsted inspectors as the watchdog moves forward on plans to beef up its inspection of trusts.

The watchdog has completed a series of trials visiting a "small number" of trusts to test a more open approach to inspecting groups of schools in academy chains.

Schools Week understands this involves academy trust leaders now meeting with inspectors to talk about the findings of their batch inspections – where a number of a trust's schools are all inspected in a few days.

Normally the inspector would just send a letter detailing the findings, but Ofsted hopes the new approach will "improve the inspection experience for trusts leaders, for their academies and for inspectors".

The move is still some way off Ofsted's desire to fully inspect actual academy trusts, but seems to be a happy compromise for both the inspectorate and the Department for Education.

Amanda Spielman (pictured), chief inspector of Ofsted, said the aim is for Ofsted to better understand the way trusts are organised and operate, improve its reporting on the impact academy chains are having, and share evidence between inspection teams more effectively.

Ofsted has confirmed to *Schools Week* that the trials are now completed and outcomes are being analysed to inform guidance on focused reviews of multi-academy trusts, which will be published "in due course".

Leora Cruddas, chief executive of pro-autonomy group FASNA, said the work was welcome, provided the watchdog stayed focused on the education being provided to pupils.

"Ofsted's role is to inspect the quality of education in schools," she said. "Where it helps the inspectors to talk to MAT leaders to understand the quality of education being provided in a school, then a dialogue will be welcomed."

"However, it is important that this is not an attempt to inspect the trust as an entity."

Spielman told the parliamentary education committee last year that she would welcome powers for the watchdog to inspect trusts in their entirety, rather than just looking at a subset of their schools.



There was resistance to that idea, particularly from the DfE. But in an interview with *Schools Week* education secretary Damian Hinds said the government is still "looking at the question of assessment of trusts".

"I've said in the past we need to think more broadly about this as a bigger part of the system and it's right that we do."

He wouldn't commit to whether the full inspection of trusts – where inspectors would observe trust executives and scrutinise centralised data – would be introduced but the new approach appears to be a step in that direction.

Hugh Greenway, chief executive of the Elliot Foundation Academies Trust, said it was a positive move that will enable a trust to "bring the context of the challenges they deal with" to the forefront.

He highlighted issues such as size, number and location of a trust's schools all creating different circumstances that need to be considered.

"I think it will bring transparency and scrutiny and lead to better sharing," he added. "But the context must be taken into account, not all MATs are created equal."

An Ofsted spokesperson said the consultation findings will "inform operational guidance about carrying out focused reviews of multi-academy trusts".

News: Politics

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Damian Hinds says 'sorry' for Whitehaven Academy scandal

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The education secretary Damian Hinds has apologised to the families affected by the Whitehaven Academy scandal, and pledged to "do everything we can to stop it happening again".

In an exclusive interview with *Schools Week* ahead of the Conservative Party conference, Hinds said images of the Cumbria school's squalid facilities depicted in a recent BBC Panorama investigation were "very striking", and said he was "sorry" for everyone affected.

The secondary school has been at the centre of a row over the way the Bright Tribe runs its schools in the north of England for years, but matters came to a head last autumn when flooding damaged already "dilapidated" buildings on the school site, and the chain announced it was walking away.

It has since emerged that the Department for Education was informed of problems as early as 2016.

"I am sorry for the families involved with Whitehaven, of course I am, and as secretary of state for education, ultimately responsibility for the school system sits with me, and particularly the academy part of the school system, then especially so," Hinds told *Schools Week*.

"I want to make sure that we learn from what happened, and make sure that we do everything we can to stop it happening again."

Hinds also revealed he will focus on academic standards, parity of esteem for vocational education and the importance of "breadth and balance" in schools when he delivers his first party conference speech since taking office.

The MP for East Hampshire said he will use his address on Tuesday to set out his three main priorities for the job he has held since January.

Although he remained tight-lipped about whether he would make any significant policy announcements, Hinds said he would speak about an improving picture in school standards.

He pointed to the latest phonics



"I want to make sure that we learn from what happened, and make sure that we do everything we can to stop it happening again."

screening check results, which show that 82 per cent of year 1 pupils met the "expected standard" this year, and warned his government "can't afford a let-up" on such improvements.

The focus on standards is a stark contrast to the Labour party's education proposals this week, which mostly highlighted structural changes (see page 8).

Hinds also warned that his government has "not had enough focus in the past on vocational and technical education", and that righting that wrong is his second priority.

"We need to have [that focus], without losing anything from the [academic], we do need to have something of a rebalancing of our national interest, if you like."

The education secretary's third priority is around the wider role that schools play "in

kids growing up".

"It's about a broad and balanced education, it's about discovery, partly about the joy of learning and widening horizons, but it's also about everything else, about extra-curricular activities and so on, and how everything about being at school and growing up can help to develop your character and resilience for later life.

"Obviously these days we all have more of a focus on mental health, closely related, and indeed from an employer's point of view, you hear a lot about the need for young people to be leaving schools with workplace skills, employability skills, which are going to help them set up for their careers as well. So it's that whole idea of the breadth and balance in education as well."

Hinds' insistence schools offer a breadth of education, such as extra-curricular activities, won't go down well with heads who say stagnating government funding is forcing them to slash such provision just to stay afloat.

He spoke of his "respect" for these school leaders, many of whom will march on Downing Street today (Friday) as part of the Worth Less? campaign for better school funding, accepting that "things are tight" for schools.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies states total school spending per pupil has fallen by 8 per cent in real terms since 2009-10.

Hinds said: "I accept that managing these budgets, there have been and are pressures, and I also realise, and I'm not surprised in the slightest that of course schools want to do more, but it is also true that if you look over time the funding in schools is higher than it used to be.

"Of course I'm not saying that there are no pressures. I know that there have been very big pressures to deal with, and as I say, schools will always want to do more."

He also takes "very seriously" concerns raised by Ofsted and others in the schools community about the use of off-rolling – whereby pupils are illegally removed from their schools' roll so they don't count towards league table performance.

He said the use of illegal off-rolling was "just not on", adding: "I haven't ruled anything out in terms of specific actions or general rules and system."

Labour Party conference

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

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Labour will ban related-party payments

Labour's proposed ban on related-party transactions will apply only to linked commercial companies, *Schools Week* has learned.

The party announced proposals to ban such transactions – deals between academy trusts or schools and linked private companies – on Sunday. It has now confirmed that the policy will be extended to local authority-maintained schools and academies.

It follows high-profile instances of large sums of money being paid from trusts to companies linked with their bosses.

But Labour officials did not say how far the ban would go, prompting critics to warn against a catch-all policy that would block reasonable attempts by schools to save money and prevent deals with the public sector.

Sam Freedman, a former adviser to Michael Gove, tweeted that related-party transactions "happen all the time" and that "most are perfectly reasonable".

Labour sources told *Schools Week* the policy would apply to academies and council-maintained schools, but said it would only cover transactions with private commercial companies.

That means deals with charities or public sector organisations, like other councils, would not be outlawed.

In 2016, 40 per cent of academy trusts engaged in related-party transactions to the tune of £120 million.

A damning report by the Public Accounts Committee in March warned that the Department for Education's current rules, which allow such transactions as long as no one profits from the deals, are "too weak".

Working out what constitutes the cost of providing a service "can be complex and open to manipulation", the committee warned.

The education secretary Damian Hinds pledged to take a "tough approach" on the "rare cases" where those involved in running schools broke the rules.

The government has since ruled that all related-party transactions over £20,000 must be signed off by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This restriction is set to come into effect over the course of this academic year and be fully in place by September 2019.



Give academy power back to councils, says Rayner

The Labour Party is determined to clip academies' wings, including plans that councils take back power over the institutions.

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, told the party's annual conference in Liverpool this week that a Labour government would also allow councils to open new schools, a rare occurrence since 2011.

No new free schools or academies would open, but existing academies would keep going – with reduced autonomy over teacher pay and conditions.

Councils would also be allowed to take academies back under their oversight if the trust running them failed.

But the proposals, a compromise aimed at placating anti-academy campaigners in the party who want all schools back under council oversight, have prompted fears about pressure on stagnating town hall funding.

Councils have also lost vast swathes of their education staff as more and more schools have converted. Currently, 72 per cent of secondary schools and 27 per cent of primaries are academies.

It is thought that Labour will seek to use a combination of new money pledged for town halls from its manifesto last year, and cash from central government coffers currently reserved for academies.

Last year, the party pledged a £1.5 billion cash injection for local authorities in the first full financial year after it wins power; *Schools Week* understands Labour wants some of this to pay for extra council staff.

Mike Kane, the shadow schools minister, also indicated during an interview with

Radio 4's PM programme on Monday that budgets currently held by the Department for Education, including for its regional schools commissioner (RSC) network, would also be transferred.

Last year, the government set aside a budget of £31 million for its network of commissioners, which works out about £200,000 for every local education authority if shared evenly.

However, Labour hasn't officially said if it would scrap the commissioner roles.

In the longer term, councils would also receive more money through top-slicing central services cash from the dedicated schools grant they get for maintained schools. As councils took on more schools, they would get more money, Labour said.

Ian Hudspeth, the Conservative leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said he was "sceptical" of Labour's plans, but admitted the power for councils to open new schools again would be "useful".

"I wouldn't imagine there will be sufficient funding coming back to local authorities."

The funding concerns were echoed by Joe Calouri, a Labour councillor and lead member for children, young people and families at Islington Council, north London, who said any new education system would need "new finance to get it going".

Labour also said it would again put councils in charge of admissions to all schools, but it gave no details of how this would work.

Education secretary Damian Hinds said Labour's proposals would "turn the clock back on successful education reforms we have enacted".

Labour Party conference

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Labour plots state supply agency

A state-funded supply teacher agency to compete with commercial providers would save schools £500 million a year, says the shadow education secretary.

Announcing a Labour plan to look at the feasibility of such an agency, Angela Rayner also said that a Labour government would create a "national substitute teacher register", modelled on a system already used in Northern Ireland.

The service would allow schools to book local staff at short notice from a government-held register of accredited teachers.

It follows a similar service created by the government earlier this year, which gives schools access to a pool of government-approved supply teacher agencies, which includes details such as the mark-up charged by each provider. Labour's plan, however, will cut out the agencies.

Rayner also announced a plan to review whether further regulation of supply teacher fees was needed to "stop the exorbitant and escalating costs seen in the industry in recent years".

She said schools spent £556 million on recruitment agency fees in 2015-16, an average of more than £25,000 for every school in England.

"The cost of free market failure is highest in the most important area of schools' spending, their staff.

"Years of real terms pay cuts, rising workload, and failure to plan the workforce have created a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention.

"The result is that private recruitment agencies rake in over half a billion pounds of taxpayers' money every year, in fees alone. Our money, spent on profit not pay."

The National Association of Head Teachers, which has campaigned against exorbitant supply agency fees for several years, welcomed the proposal.

Paul Whiteman, the association's general secretary, said a "reliable system" for school leaders that would bring costs down would be "music to our ears".

"But it must be reliable, as even though supply agency fees can be high, many schools depend on these agencies as trusted suppliers who often get them out of a fix at very short notice."

But he warned that cutting supply teacher costs alone would not be enough to "solve the school funding crisis".

Tom Hadley, the director of policy at the Recruitment & Employment Confederation, said Labour's idea that cutting out agencies would save significant cash was "misguided". He said there would be "huge costs in establishing new structures and paying staff to try and replicate the expertise and 24/7 service that recruiters provide".

Shadow schools minister Mike Kane (pictured) will lead on the state supply teacher project.

The government's own national supply teacher agency database launched last month. It includes a list of recommended agencies, which must be transparent over their costs and the mark-up they charge schools.

Party in co-operative mood over future of parent-led schools

Labour will encourage parents and teachers to set up a new wave of co-operative schools if it forms a government after the next election.

The party sees the institutions – publicly funded schools that subscribe to co-operative values of "self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity" – as the antidote to the free school programme, which it has pledged to scrap if it takes over.

However critics have suggested the move is simply rebranding free schools.

Mark Lehain, director of the New Schools Network, questioned why free schools were to be banned by Labour, while co-op schools, which promote a similar level of parental and teacher involvement, would be allowed.

Dr Adrian Hilton, a former adviser to Michael Gove, accused Labour of "politicking" over the issue.

Invented in 2006 by the Blair government, there are two types of co-operative school. The first type is co-operative trust schools, which are foundation schools that answer to local authorities and have to teach the national curriculum. The second is co-operative academies.

Labour wants teachers and parents to work with local councils to open new co-operative trust schools, and will encourage existing schools to convert. However, new co-operative academies will not be allowed under the party's plans.

According to the Co-operative Schools Network, there are more than 500 co-operative schools in England.

However, at its peak in the late 2000s, the network had around 800 members. Numbers have dwindled as a result of the expansion of the academies programme, with many former schools having adopted a different ethos upon converting.

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, said the new co-op schools "will just be one part of the most ambitious school-building programme ever, delivered without the waste and inefficiency of free schools and, as we set out in the election, backed by £8 billion of investment".

Jon O'Connor, director of the Co-operative Schools Network, said: "It's always good to see recognition of the potential for many more cooperative schools partnerships which share best practice and best value in public service."

Labour Party conference

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LABOUR'S 9 ACADEMIES POLICIES

LABOUR ANNOUNCED SWEEPING REFORMS TO ENGLAND'S SCHOOL SYSTEM AT ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE THIS WEEK. *SCHOOLS WEEK* HAS THE NINE POLICIES.

1 Councils will be able to open schools

The free schools programme has pretty much been the only way to open new schools since 2011, and councils have only been able to do so under very rare circumstances.

That will all change under Labour, which has pointed to concerns about the cost-effectiveness of the free schools programme. Councils would also be allowed to open new schools again, backed by £8.4 million in capital investment, which was announced in Labour's 2017 general election manifesto.

2 No more forced academisation

This means local authority-maintained schools will no longer become academies, even if they are rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted.

However, Labour is not planning to immediately convert all existing academies and free schools back into local authority-maintained schools, something that trade unionists and large parts of the Labour membership have been pushing for.

3 Councils can take back failing academies

Pending the outcome of another consultation on school regulation, Labour plans to maintain the existing "re-brokering" process for schools that need to leave their academy trust.

However, the big difference under Labour's proposals will be that councils will be allowed to take academies that are being rebrokered back under their oversight.

Schools Week understands that the regional schools commissioners network could have their roles changed, or be scrapped entirely.

4 A new generation of "co-operative schools"

These are publicly-funded foundation schools with a co-operative ethos. They have more freedoms than local authority-maintained schools, and are linked to the national co-operative movement, and based on the values of "self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity".

The schools were actually invented under the Blair government, and at the policy's peak there were more than 500 in England.

Numbers have dwindled since the introduction of the academies programme, but Labour wants more to open again, and says it will allow parents and teachers to work with councils to run the schools.

5 Related-party transactions banned

Related-party transactions, which involve schools or academy trusts buying services from a commercial company with links to their staff or leaders, would be outlawed.

However, it is not clear if this will also apply to LA-maintained schools, which are also currently allowed to use RPTs.

6 National pay rules and a cap on CEO salaries

Following on from Labour's manifesto commitment last year to reintroduce the Schools Support Staff Negotiating Body and a national pay settlement for teachers, Rayner set out plans to implement "national pay rules" across all schools.

The details on this are vague, but one thing the proposal does include is a 20:1 ratio for CEO pay, meaning academy chiefs will only be allowed to earn 20 times the salary of their lowest-paid employee.

7 Councils will take charge of admissions

One of the features of the academies movement is that academies became their own "admissions authorities". This means admissions arrangements can vary from school to school in the same area.

Under Labour, councils will once again become the admissions authorities for all schools, including academies.

8 Academies will be compelled to expand

At the moment, local authorities have no power to compel an academy in their area to expand.

This has been criticised by the Local Government Association, among others, because it means that although councils are responsible for school place planning, they cannot create those places themselves.

Labour wants to change this, and introduce such a power in town halls.

9 A new regulatory framework for schools

This is Labour's end-game, a long-term ambition for the national education service.

This framework will have "community control at its heart and national rules applying to all schools, parents and communities given a meaningful say in decision making".

Beyond that, the party isn't ready to talk about the policy in any detail yet, and plans to consult on it.

In the meantime, councils will pick up the slack with their extra powers over academies.

News: Academies

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High salaries don't attract the best, says trust CEO

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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EXCLUSIVE

Academy trusts give too much control to "ambitious" leaders and offer them huge six-figure salaries in the mistaken belief that it will attract the best candidates, says the leader of one of England's fastest-growing chains.

Frank Norris, the director of the Co-operative Academies Trust, told *Schools Week* the governance structures of trusts that allowed their chief executives or executive heads to serve as trustees and members were "fundamentally flawed".

Many trusts let their executive leaders serve at board level or take significant control of their chains, despite warnings from the government that it is not considered best practice.

"In my view, we cannot have that level of control in the hands of an individual," said Norris, who is the highest-paid employee at the Co-operative trust, but not a trustee or a "member" with significant legal control.

"I do feel as though I'm held to account by the board. That doesn't mean to say that other CEOs that are on the trust board aren't held to account, but actually, to the outsider, it's difficult to get over the sense of proving that."

Norris, whose trust is set to grow over

the next four years from a relatively small group of 12 schools to a chain of about 40, is also critical of academy executive pay, which has become an increasing headache for the government in recent years.

He earns £135,000, an annual salary that is not allowed to be more than eight times that of the lowest-paid employee.

But despite claims that high pay often reflects the "size and scale" of the job and is needed to secure the best leaders, Norris does not believe the restriction on his pay will make it difficult to recruit the right replacement when he retires.

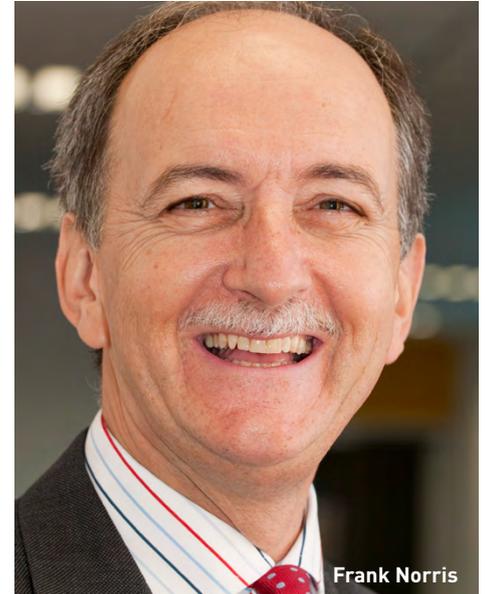
"You don't need to pay £450,000 to get a new CEO," he said.

The shadow education secretary Angela Rayner said this week that a Labour government would cap the pay of academy trust bosses at 20 times the salary of their lowest-paid employee.

However, based on the current pay levels, the cap would affect few current chief executives.

For trusts with an employee on the £7.83 an hour minimum for a 25-year-old, the cap would be just over £325,000. The only chief executive known to earn more than that is Sir Dan Moynihan of the Harris Federation who, in 2016-17, earned a minimum of £440,000.

Schools Week approached Harris to ask whether it supported the cap, but received



Frank Norris

no response.

An academy trust employing a full-time worker aged 18 to 21 on the £5.90 hourly minimum wage for that age would have a cap of about £245,000, still above the CEO salaries offered by most of the largest trusts in England.

There are some exceptions, however. Lois Reed, who recently quit as acting chief executive of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust, earned at least £270,000 a year after receiving a £50,000 pay rise. The trust has since changed its pay policies.

Profile of Frank Norris, page 26

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

Ban bad trustees from academy boards

Trustees responsible for the mismanagement of academy trusts should be banned from governing again, the head of an academies body has said.

Michael Pain, chief executive of Forum Strategy, which operates four regional networks of trust bosses, has said he is "very concerned" some problematic trustees are still in post.

Speaking at his group's annual conference yesterday (Thursday), he said: "Academy trusts are multi-million-pound organisations with a responsibility – first and foremost – to serve the public; this isn't a place for amateur

governance or leadership."

Pain said some of the alleged mismanagement in academy trusts would have resulted in disqualification for trustees should it have happened in the charitable sector.

This was because the charity sector has tighter rules, he said, urging the government to replicate the "strong position".

Instead, the government's emphasis on increasing oversight of academy trusts through the regional school commissioner role has been "at the expense" of bolstering oversight through high-quality trusteeship on the ground.

The announcement comes after high-profile scandals across the academy sector, many resulting in trusts being shut down.

Pain, whose network covers the north and Midlands, said the mismanagement of a minority of trustees was undermining trusts' ability to attract talented volunteers to their governing boards.

"We need all trusts, not just some, to benefit from the highest standards of corporate governance. But, just as importantly, we also need values-based governance. There needs to be a strong message here.



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Supersized academy trusts



Schools Week has delved into the data to reveal which academy trusts grew the most last year. Despite increasing reports of trusts shedding their schools over financial and standards issues, we reveal there's a boom in those supersizing, too.

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

EXCLUSIVE

A surge in brand-new academy trusts that open with at least five schools is propping up the number of academy conversions, despite the government backing off its academisation drive.

Schools Week analysis of Department for Education data on open academies has revealed more trusts are supersizing.

A total of 31 trusts took on five or more schools in the last academic year, compared with 20 in 2016-17.

However of the supersizing trusts last year, a total of 18 of these were brand-new organisations – meaning they opened

from scratch with multiple schools that choose to convert together.

Four trusts actually opened last year with ten or more schools.

The findings come as the government scales back its focus on forcing schools to become academies. Education secretary Damian Hinds announced in May that only an Ofsted "inadequate" rating would

Investigation

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Revealed: The trusts starting from scratch with multiple schools

trigger forced conversion of schools into academies, and the government's coasting and floor standards would be scrapped as levers to force conversion.

But this change doesn't seem to have impacted greatly on academisation, with 1,027 new academies opening last year, compared to 1,175 in 2016-17.

An analysis of the top five largest new academy trusts shows the conversions were normally of schools rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted that had already been working together.

Putting primaries first

Epping Forest Schools Partnership Trust, created in March this year, took on five primaries in April and seven in July, with another two joining the trust this month.

CEO Peter Tidmarsh said the trust took on schools in waves to make the process more manageable, and all the schools had chosen to join the trust, creating "enthusiasm and good will".

However, he acknowledged the challenges of opening en masse, for example having to bring all admissions processes into individual schools, and co-ordinating the schools' bursars and business managers who "need to work absolutely consistently and take on new skills".

Galileo Multi-Academy Trust is another new all-primary trust with ten schools. Galileo's schools in Redcar and Cleveland had worked together within a teaching schools alliance of 20 schools before breaking away to form the trust.

Chief executive Anna Coulson said it is already working to address tight budgets, including bringing catering in-house.

Part-time leadership

Dales Academies Trust in North Yorkshire formed this year by joining nine primaries with a secondary to create a Church of England majority trust.

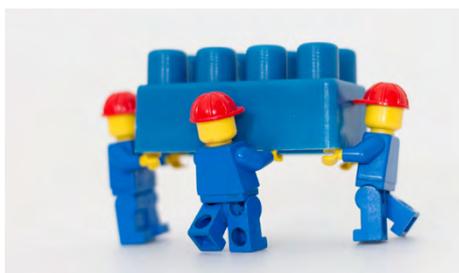
However the trust's new chief executive Damian Chubb is also deputy chief executive of the Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust, another Church of England trust, with 15 schools.

Former schools commissioner David Carter has recently spoken about there

TRUST NAME	NO. OF ACADEMIES MAT OPENED WITH IN 2017-18
DARTMOOR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST	15
EPPING FOREST SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP TRUST	12
GALILEO MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST/LIVERPOOL DIOCESAN SCHOOLS TRUST	10
DALES ACADEMIES TRUST/HERTS FOR LEARNING MULTI ACADEMY TRUST/THE STAR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST	9
SDBE MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST	8



*Nerd box: Schools Week's analysis is based on the Department for Education's most recent 'open academies' data for England, published in August 2018. It does not include academies that are in the pipeline for conversion or sponsorship, or free schools



being "real potential" in trust chief executives supporting other trusts, such as being trustees at other chains.

While Chubb's case of dual executive roles across two trusts is different, Carter did warn over conflict of interests if bosses helping over trusts were too close geographically.

Chubb would not comment directly on his dual roles, but the trust's website explains he splits his time 60/40 between Dales and BDAT.

Following the faith

Devon-based Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust opened with the greatest number of schools in 2017-18, with 12 primaries and three secondaries. Another primary joined in September this year. The trust was built on the "values of both the co-operative movement and the Church of England".

Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust, ranking joint third, formed with ten schools this year including one secondary.

The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) Multi Academy Trust featured in fifth place, opening with

eight primaries. The trust was set up in partnership with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education "to lead schools rooted in Christian values".

SEND focus

The Esteem Multi-Academy Trust was set up in June this year and in August took on six special schools and one alternative provision academy from across Derbyshire and Staffordshire.

The schools had worked together as a soft federation before becoming a trust and a further two schools are waiting to join this academic year.

CEO Julian Scholefield said setting up the trust was "very rigorous and quite difficult". But he added formalising their work together was important, as there was a fear that individual schools in the group might be "subsumed by a larger mainstream trust that wouldn't really share our ethos".

"We're seen as a Cinderella service. I felt that forming a trust would give us strength in numbers and give us the opportunity to put the needs of our pupils first in a larger group. We felt we'll jump before we are pushed."

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "Trusts have the flexibility to expand and adapt to local circumstances. However, the regional schools commissioners will only approve a trust to expand where they demonstrate it has the capacity to sustainably improve all its schools."

Investigation

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High-performing schools drive increase of supersizing trusts

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

Supersizing academy trusts have bolstered their ranks by taking over high-performing schools en masse, a *Schools Week* analysis has found.

Schools Week delved into the Department for Education open academies data to analyse takeovers during the 2017-18 academic year, revealing the five trusts that grew by the most last year (see table).

The Lighthouse Schools Partnership in Somerset posted the largest increase (167 per cent) – growing from six to 16 academies. All the ten schools that joined the trust were rated either good or outstanding by Ofsted before conversion.

Academies minister Lord Agnew has previously said he believes the “sweet spot” for academy trusts is “somewhere between 12 and 20 schools” – which Lighthouse now falls into.

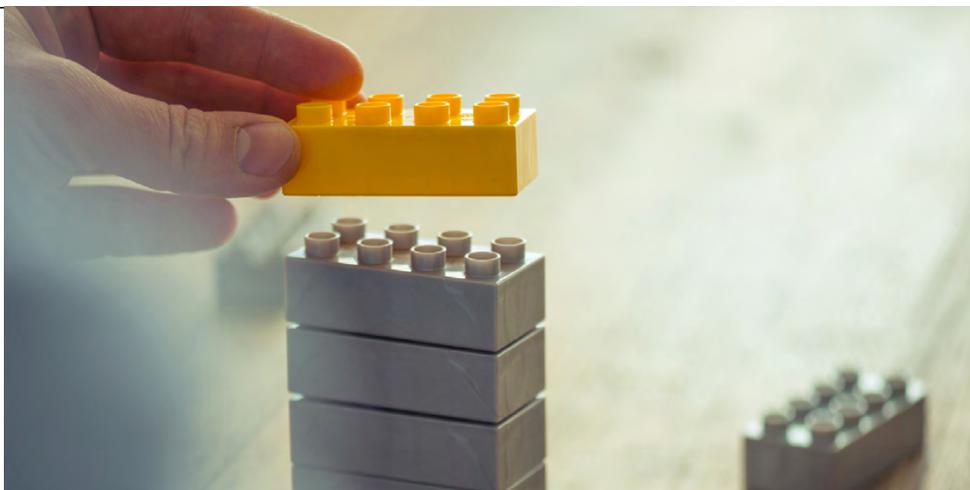
The East Midlands Education Trust took over five schools last year, growing from six to 11 academies under its umbrella. Our analysis only looked at academies, but the trust also took over an alternative provision free school – CP Riverside School – in March.

The trust originally had all secondary schools, but its five takeovers were all primaries.

Trust chief executive Rob McDonough said the primaries were feeder schools for one of the trust’s secondaries, and they took the decision to join this year en masse.

There are a further three primaries that were part of this group, all located in Nottinghamshire, still waiting for takeover.

Despite the rapid rise, McDonough said that the trust has actually still been turning



away offers from the Department for Education to take over more schools.

He said: “If we do expand it has got to be right for us and for the school in question, and we’ve got to be able to make a difference.”

The government, through its network of regional schools commissioners, has been keen to warn off trusts from expanding too quickly.

Ministers have had to place trusts on the pause list – barring them from taking over more schools – after some ran into trouble from expanding too quickly, such as the Academies Enterprise Trust.

But *Schools Week* has previously revealed how the government has offered struggling trusts the chance to expand despite them being in financial trouble.

The Sapientia Education Trust, based in Norfolk and Suffolk, also grew from six schools to 11 in 2017-18, and has taken on another at the start of this academic year.

Chief executive Jonathan Taylor said the planned expansion included several schools that already had “existing working partnerships” with the trust.

Like the East Midland Education Trust,

Sapientia has aimed to “support existing links” such as keeping secondaries and their feeder primaries together so it can provide education from nursery through to secondary.

Ebor Academy Trust, which featured in *Schools Week*’s analysis of expanding trusts last year, grew again in 2017-18, with another eight schools.

In 2016-17, Ebor expanded from five to 11 schools. It now has 21, with two more joining the trust at the start of 2018-19. It has 19 primaries, one secondary and one special school.

Chief executive Richard Ludlow said the increase was in line with plans to establish four hubs in York, Selby, East Riding and The Humber, and on the Yorkshire Coast. It aims to have up to ten schools per hub.

The Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust took on the most schools overall, with 12 new schools from Bath and Somerset joining last year.

The trust, which has a Christian ethos, now has 30 primary schools.

Lighthouse Schools Partnership and the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust were approached for comment.

TRUST NAME	NO. OF ACADEMIES OPEN UP TO AUG 2017	NO. OF ACADEMIES OPENED SEPT 2017 TO AUG 2018	PERCENTAGE INCREASE
LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP	6	10	167%
EAST MIDLANDS EDUCATION TRUST	6	5	83%
SAPIENTIA EDUCATION TRUST	6	5	83%
EBOR ACADEMY TRUST	11	8	73%
THE BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ACADEMIES TRUST	18	12	67%

Investigation

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Failing schools left in takeover limbo

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

“It has been a hugely frustrating process from the start”

Complex legal issues are still thwarting the potentially transformative takeovers of failing schools, including one “orphan school” that has been waiting seven years to convert.

A *Schools Week* investigation reveals that five failing schools given government orders to convert more than three years ago are still to become academies.

Most of the “orphans” have willing sponsors, but the trusts are blocked, often by building issues such as hefty private finance initiative contracts.

The former education secretary Nicky Morgan (pictured) once said of her academy takeover plans that “a day spent in a failing school is a day too long when their education is at stake”.

But the Hanson School, in Bradford, has now been waiting more than seven years – more than 2,700 days – to become an academy (although it already brands itself as an academy on its website).

Julia Harnden, a funding specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was “increasingly frustrating” and called on the government to “look for ways to remove these barriers”.

“We need to be more careful about the implications of making an academy order – these are the unintended consequences of decisions made in the past about schools that need improvement.”

Two academy trusts have already

pulled out of sponsoring Hanson School after it was given an academy order in April, 2011.

The Gorse Academies Trust – the third chain to help the school – has been providing leadership support on an 18-month contract, which was due to run out last month.

In that time the school has moved from an Ofsted rating of “special measures” to “requires improvement” after an inspection in January.

Ofsted said the numerous changes in support for the school had prevented long-term strategic planning and slowed the pace of improvement, but added Gorse was providing “valuable support” and “rapid improvement”.

However, unresolved talks between Bradford council and a leisure provider on the school’s site are thwarting the trust from taking over full-time.

Hanson also has a hefty annual £1 million PFI contract – repayments made to the private firm that built the school – and a reported deficit of £3 million.

The Gorse Trust chief executive, Sir John Townsley, said: “We would be happy to sponsor them. Hanson has been really positive with things going forward.”

The other four schools waiting more than three years are in Kent. The Royal Harbour Academy in Ramsgate (also rebranded as an academy but still a mixed secondary school) was given an academy order in October 2012, with The North School in Ashford ordered to convert in December 2014.

Trusts waiting to take over both schools have seen their plans go nowhere as talks on PFI issues between the council and government drag on.

Jon Whitcombe, the chief executive of the Swale Academies Trust, the approved sponsor for The North School, said: “It has been a hugely

frustrating process from the start.”

His trust has been supporting the school since March 2014, overseeing it moving from Ofsted “inadequate” to a “good” rating in September last year.

Because of the Ofsted improvement, the Swale Trust has now been told it will no longer be eligible to receive the £80,000 sponsored academy grant – given to trusts that take over failing schools – if the school does eventually convert.

Whitcombe also said two other Kent schools recently went into special measures, which pushed The North School “to the back of the queue” for conversion.

“It’s just depressingly sad, and doesn’t do a huge amount to give much faith in the system.”

Kent council said the PFI contracts at both schools predated academy legislation and “do not lend themselves to the conversion process”, adding the issues potentially left the council facing an “unacceptable and significant risk”.

Land issues are holding up the conversion of West Kingsdown C of E primary in Sevenoaks which was given an academy order in March 2014.

Meanwhile, HR issues and new governors against conversion have held up a takeover of St Francis Catholic primary in Maidstone by the Kent Catholic Schools’ Partnership. The school was given an academy order in April 2014.

A Department for Education spokesperson said the department would not hesitate to take action for underperformance, adding schools with issues were offered “sufficient support to make improvements in the interim”.



Lawyers wants sixth form exclusion 'loophole' closed

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

EXCLUSIVE

A legal loophole means sixth forms can get away with pushing out low-attaining pupils halfway through their A-levels – leaving other schools to pick up the pieces.

The law prevents mainstream schools from excluding pupils on the basis of academic performance, however government guidance makes clear this does not apply to 16-19 free schools or sixth form colleges.

Now lawyers have called on the government to shut down the loophole, claiming more pupils are being pushed out or forced to retake a year, without being "technically excluded".

Alice de Coverley, barrister at law firm 3PB, said: "These schools usually say they are doing it in the child's best interest. But in reality the pupil is put in a terribly difficult position."

Last year *Schools Week* revealed that Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre (The NCS), a selective 16-19 academy in east London, stopped about 20 pupils from entering year 13 because they didn't achieve three Cs in internal year 12 tests.

It appears The NCS is continuing the practice.

A parent, who did not want to be named, told *Schools Week* that her son had been pushed out of The NCS a month before he was due to start year 13 this September.

The parent said principal Mouhssin Ismail told her son he could not continue after scoring three Ds in internal tests, leaving his confidence "shattered".

Despite the sixth form having since been taken over by the City of London Academies Trust, it still falls outside the admission rules that ban any such practice in schools, or sixth forms attached to schools.

But Russell Holland, barrister at law firm Michelmores, said even with the legal loophole, preventing pupils from continuing into year 13 is "highly questionable".

"If a pupil meets the requirements to be admitted to a school and behaves, they should be entitled to carry on," said Holland.

The NCS website states pupils can be



excluded because of behaviour breaches "and/or poor academic progress".

However the City of London Academies trust, which took over the sixth form last year, claimed "no pupil is excluded from NCS on the basis of their grades".

A trust spokesperson said pupils are instead offered "appropriate progression routes into year 13".

A "progression policy" on the school website says pupils must get three passes in year 12 to continue, however what constitutes a pass is not defined.

The anonymous parent said any criteria over the progression policy was not explained when her son applied.

She claimed Ismail, during a meeting in August, said her son could re-take year 12 in different subjects, but these didn't fit his chosen university course.

The progression policy also claims pupils without a "viable year 13 programme" will be offered "guidance" about other options.

But as the sixth form only spoke to the parent in August, most alternatives were full and the pupil now has more than an hour's commute.

Nearby City and Islington Sixth Form College said at least two former NCS

students had joined in September.

Director Peter Murray said despite the "upheaval" of moving, NCS pupils are learning well.

Local Labour MP Stephen Timms, when asked about the practice by *Schools Week*, said he will seek a discussion with Ismail about the school's policy.

Last year, St Olave's grammar school, in Kent, was forced into readmitting pupils the Guardian newspaper revealed it had pushed out halfway through sixth form.

However as the sixth form was attached to a school, it falls under stricter rules banning exclusions of pupils for non-disciplinary reasons.

Now de Coverley has suggested exclusions legislation should be extended to cover all pupils until the end of their education.

Holland also stated equalities legislation could be used to challenge a sixth form for failing to consider the learning needs or mental health issues of pupils removed from subjects.

A DfE spokesperson confirmed 16-19 academies should "take all reasonable steps to ensure a student can complete their studies once they are enrolled".

News: Funding

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SCHOOLS' PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS SHOOT UP 40 PER CENT

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Headteachers have been warned that their schools' contributions towards teachers' pensions are set to rise by more than 40 per cent.

An email sent last week from the Local Government Association (LGA) said the estimated contribution rate for schools under the Teachers' Pensions Scheme will rise to 23.6 per cent from September next year.

The current employer contribution rate is 16.48 per cent.

The hike follows a Treasury valuation of public service pension schemes and comes as more than 1,000 heads are set to march on Downing Street today (Friday) over funding cuts (see page 20).

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said schools would be "very concerned" about the impact of the rise.

"They cannot afford yet another

unfunded cost on budgets that are already under severe pressure."

As previously reported by *Schools Week*, the Department for Education intends to provide extra funding to cover the hike in the 2019-20 financial year.

But it said it would consult on its plans, while Barton said he would be "seeking assurances" next year's increase would be fully funded.

However any further funding guarantee hinges on the outcome of the government's spending review next year, which Barton said left schools facing "uncertainty".

"We will be making strong representations that the increased contribution rate must be fully funded beyond that date."

Schools were told of the contribution rise in an email sent by Employer Link, on behalf of the DfE, last Friday.

The email to heads said the biggest impact on the contribution rate was a change to the SCAPE discount rate, which is used to assess the current cost of future benefit payments.

It said the rise followed the government's actuaries completing calculations to provide indicative results of the 2016 valuation of the Teachers' Pensions Scheme.

The Financial Times has previously reported the total of increased payments across the public sector could be as high as £4 billion.

While costs will rise for schools, previous reports have suggested that the changes will give public sector workers improved benefits.

But the news of potential budget squeezes will ramp up pressure on school leaders who are already making wide-ranging cuts as their government funding falls in real terms.

A report in July by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that total per-pupil spending had fallen by about 8 per cent in real terms since 2009-10.

A DfE spokesperson said it would "consult with the education sector on these proposals".

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DfE 'poster boy' marches on Downing Street over cuts

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

EXCLUSIVE

Just two years ago The Weald School was lauded as an example of financial efficiency by the Education Skills and Funding Agency.

Today (Friday) its headteacher will march on Downing Street to deliver a letter to chancellor Phillip Hammond protesting against school funding cuts.

"I am the poster boy on efficiency for the Department for Education," said Peter Woodman (pictured). "If you look up curriculum financial efficiency on the DfE website – my school is there, I am that person."

Woodman – who has spent the past two years advising other heads on finding efficiencies – says there's nothing left to cut at the West Sussex maintained secondary school where he has been headteacher for 10 years.

"We've done everything we can. You try and spend less, but you just get to a point where people can't cope with teaching any more. Our rooms will not take more than 32."

Over a thousand heads will be joining the march on No 11, according to organiser Jules White, head of Tanbridge House school in Horsham.

Their demands include "adequate" funding for all schools and a reversal of the "real-terms cuts", an immediate cash injection for the high needs block, and improved post-16 funding.

There has been speculation over how the DfE might react, having updated its employment guidance two weeks ago to include a prohibition on school resources being used for political purposes.

"If standing up for your kids and saying when something is wrong is political, well, that will muffle everything," said Woodman. "That would be a huge tragedy if we live in some dystopian society when big brother is watching and you're not allowed to say when something is wrong. We're not in that position, I hope."

The DfE insists there is more money going into schools than ever before. "It's rising to a record £43.5 billion by 2020 – 50



Marjike Miles, headteacher at Baycroft School in Hampshire, will march on Downing St on Friday

per cent more in real terms per pupil than in 2000," it said.

A recent Institute for Fiscal Studies report disputed this claim, calculating an eight per cent drop in overall school funding between 2009–10 and 2017–18, once cuts to school sixth form spending (25 per cent) and local authority spending (55 per cent) were factored in. Local authority services include home-to-school transport, additional support for pupils with special educational needs, and central administration.

A DfE spokesperson said: "We know that we are asking schools to do more, which is why we are helping them to reduce the £10 billion spent each year on non-staffing costs, providing government-backed deals for things like



printers and energy suppliers that are helping to save millions of pounds."

Sean Maher, headmaster of Richard Challoner School in Kingston upon Thames, says these measures aren't enough.

"That's an insult on every level. The sort of efficiencies they're talking about, I'd say there's £2-3000 across the school – that's a drop in the ocean. To even mention that is so out of touch with the reality of what's going on in schools, that it's frightening."

Maher insists if they could see any solution other than a government cash injection, they would take it.

"We are not people who take to uprising and revolt," he said. "We're people who care about our communities. We don't want to be marching on Downing Street, we want to be in our schools, working with children."



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News: Funding

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Families crowdfund legal challenge to SEND cuts

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The government is facing a legal challenge over its SEND funding cuts, as councils around the country are also being taken to court because of plans to slash services.

Families representing two boys with special educational needs – under the campaign SEND Family Action – are crowdfunding a legal challenge against education secretary Damian Hinds and chancellor Philip Hammond over SEND budget cuts.

The parents, from North Yorkshire and East Sussex, believe government grants are leaving councils unable to fulfil legal obligations to pupils with disabilities.

Elsewhere, Surrey council is facing a judicial review in the High Court over planned cuts of £20 million from services for disabled pupils next month.

Families have also been granted permission to challenge Hackney council's plans to reduce its special educational needs budget in the High Court next month.

The wave of legal action against government funding decisions comes as schools face a continued squeeze on core budgets, with 1,000 headteachers set to march on Westminster today (Friday) in protest over funding cuts. Anna Cole, inclusion specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said schools would be watching the progression of the legal challenges closely, and may consider bringing their own cases.

Schools Week can also reveal that at least one academy trust has considered taking the government to judicial review because of SEND cuts (see box out).

Campaigners will also be buoyed by a landmark case last month where the High Court backed three mothers who challenged Bristol council over £5 million of planned cuts to their SEND budget, ruling them unlawful and ordering them to be reversed.

The judge ruled that the council's decision-making process was entirely motivated towards balancing the books – rather than considering pupil welfare.

Stephen Broach of Monckton Chambers, who advised the families challenging the



government, said councils are at risk of breaching the Children and Families Act requirement that they support SEND pupils to achieve "the best possible educational outcomes".

He said councils "need to focus on what the law requires them to do", adding the government has questions to answer over its funding decisions causing "systematic cuts by councils across the country".

The Local Government Association said the cases show the government needs to provide "significant, ongoing and sustainable funding to help councils manage the rising demand in support from pupils with SEND", and called for an urgent review.

Anne-Marie Irwin, a lawyer at Irwin Mitchell representing SEND Family Action, said campaigners believe "thousands of children across the UK with special educational needs are currently unable to receive the support that they need".

The son of one of the SEND Family Action parents, Benedict McFinnigan, has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression and chronic insomnia.

However the 14-year-old has been refused an education healthcare assessment from North Yorkshire council, Irwin said, meaning he has not attended a mainstream school for two years. Instead he attends a pupil referral unit for under three hours a day.

The other pupil, Nico Heugh Simone, 15, has autism and anxiety, meaning he requires specialist education care. But East Sussex council wouldn't cover all costs – arguing his school should fund the shortfall.

A Department for Education spokesperson said it recognised increasing costs are putting "pressures on high needs budgets". But it said core funding for schools is increasing £43.5 billion by 2020 – 50 per cent more per pupil in real terms than in 2000.

Included in that is £6 billion in the national high needs budget for children and young people with more complex SEND, which a spokesperson said was the highest on record.

However the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that per-pupil spending has fallen by eight per cent since 2010 – a real-terms funding cut.

TRUST MULLED LEGAL ACTION, TOO

Board minutes from last year, seen by *Schools Week*, show the Bright Tribe and Adventure Learning Academies Trust was considering pursuing a judicial review against the government over SEND funding.

The minutes, part of a chief operating officer report for both the linked trusts in October, revealed SEND funding was a "significant risk" because the trusts had taken over lots of schools in areas of deprivation (which typically have higher levels of SEND pupils).

The report highlighted schools were spending their reserves in an "unsustainable way" to "accommodate vulnerable children".

For instance, Cornwall council was "demanding" that ALAT's schools in the region

stump up the £6,000 funding attached to pupils with Education and Health Care Plans.

The trust said this was "wrong" and had made representations to the government, with the possibility of a judicial review "in due course".

Other solutions proposed by the chief executive at the time included taking a more "harsh line on exclusions", the "easiest financial strategy", or ensuring pupils have a reserved budget to dip into for extra costs.

No further action appears to have been taken, with new trustees and leadership at the trust following financial and pupil performance concerns.

Bursary scheme for trainee teachers is extended

JESS STAUFENBERG
@STAUFENBERGJ

Trainee teachers in religious education, history, design and technology and music will get bursaries for the first time if they have a 2:2 degree under government plans to boost flagging recruitment numbers.

The Department for Education announced yesterday (Thursday) its trainee teacher bursaries scheme will be extended to graduates with lower-class degrees in the four subjects from next year.

At the moment, the tax-free bursaries are only offered to trainee teachers in those subjects if they have a first or 2:1.

It's the latest move by the government to boost teacher-recruitment numbers.

The DfE has missed its own teacher-recruitment targets for the past five years.

School standards minister Nick Gibb said: "I'm confident that these packages, along with the work we are doing to tackle workload and support teachers in the early

years of their career, will help to underline this government's determination to support the teaching sector and ensure it remains a rewarding and fulfilling career."

Under the proposed changes, DT and history trainees with at least a 2:2 degree will get a tax-free bursary of £12,000. Previously, trainees with a first got £12,000 and those with a 2:1 got £9,000.

Trainee RE and music trainees with at least a 2:2 will get £9,000, an amount previously only reserved for those with a first.

Government figures showed just a third of the required DT trainee teachers were recruited last year – the lowest of any subject.

RE was third lowest, with just 63 per cent of required trainees recruited.

History actually over-recruited last year, filling 102 per cent of places – one of only two subjects to do so.

But the new bursary follows a 2.2 per cent increase in entries into history at

GCSE this year, the government stated.

Trainee physics, languages, chemistry, biology, computing, geography and classics teachers will continue to get a £26,000 bursary if they have a 2:2 degree or higher.

Trials of a student loan reimbursement pilot for biology, chemistry, computer science, languages and physics teachers and early career payments for maths teachers will also continue.

And scholarships will also continue for next year. They are available in physics, maths, languages, chemistry, computing, and geography.

Successful scholars receive £28,000 in all subjects except maths, where scholars get £22,000 and the same additional early-career payments as those trainees on the bursary scheme.

At the same time, the funding for teaching apprenticeships in all subjects will increase by £2,000 per trainee in 2019-20.

Data: Early-years tests show regional and school-type variance

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

The proportion of pupils meeting the government's "expected standard" in the year 1 phonics screening check has increased to 82 per cent from 81 per cent last year.

The proportion of pupils meeting the standard by the end of year 2 remains stable at 92 per cent. But the proportion achieving full marks in the check fell from 16 per cent in 2017, to 13 per cent in 2018 (See graph).

Analysis by the Driver Youth Trust found huge regional variance for children with special education needs.

Just six per cent of pupils with education, health and care plans reached expected standards in Coventry, compared with 47 per cent of pupils in Hammersmith.

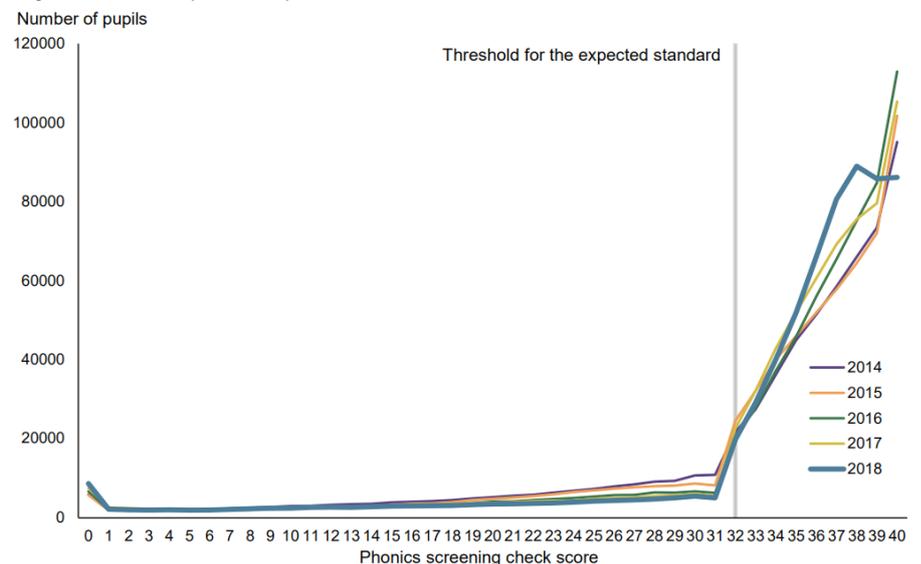
It also varied by school, with 80 per cent of pupils in sponsored academies getting the standard, compared to 88 per cent in free schools.

Meanwhile data also released yesterday (Thursday) shows a lower proportion of pupils met the government's "expected standard" in key stage 1 reading teacher assessments this year, down one percentage point to 75 per cent.

Pupils hitting the standard in maths was 76 per cent, one percentage point up on last year.

Science results remained stable at 83 per cent, while in writing 70 per cent of pupils met the standard.

Figure 3: Year 1 phonics screening check mark distribution
England, 2014-2018 (All schools)



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**SCHOOLS
WEEK**

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Give heads a little more than just respect

Ministers have stuck their collective fingers in their collective ears over the ever-more-desperate pleas from school leaders that they need extra cash.

While politicians may have, reluctantly, admitted funding is getting squeezed, they've kept rigidly to their lines: there's no extra money coming from the treasury, so it's down to the sector to drive efficiencies.

But that just doesn't cut it for headteachers. Their pleas will turn into shouts today (Friday) as more than 1,000 heads from Cornwall to Cumbria travel to London to march on Downing Street over funding cuts.

Will it make the government sit up and listen? Our political editor Freddie Whittaker asked education minister Damian Hinds this week.

His response - more of the usual ramblings, "I accept there have been pressures" and "things are tight".

Will heads will be placated by his admission he has a lot of "respect" for them? We think not.

It's time for the government to do more than just provide reassuring words.

Show us your policies, Mr Hinds

Damian Hinds' commitment to academic standards, parity of esteem for technical education and educating the whole child should be lauded, but the schools community needs action, not words.

When he stands up to deliver his first conference speech as education secretary, school leaders will be expecting more than just a few soundbites from the man who holds not only their future, but the future of millions of children in his hands.

This is a time for bravery, for radicalism in education policy, and all eyes will be on the education secretary, especially given what his opposite number Angela Rayner announced this week.

This government needs serious, tangible reforms, not tinkering around the edges, if it is to end the teacher recruitment and retention crisis, stop inequality for disadvantaged and SEND pupils, sort out school funding and, once and for all, stamp out the scandal of off-rolling. And that's just the start of a long to-do list.

Is Hinds ready for the challenge?

SCHOOLS WEEK



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Profile

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER



'I've already got a pay cap'

**Frank Norris, director,
Co-op Academies Trust**

Frank Norris is either the most relaxed academy boss I've ever met or he's got an incredible poker face.

It could just be because he's due to retire in the near future, but Norris is immeasurably calm for a man whose schools empire is about to more than treble in size.

When we meet in a Westminster café, Norris is matter-of-fact about the limitations of the systems he's worked in, a rare quality in a maligned sector so often required to sing its own praises.

The 62-year-old director of the Co-op Academies Trust recently announced plans for the chain to grow from 12 schools to 40 by 2022, backed by a £3.6 million grant from its parent company, The Co-operative.

In a career spanning more than four decades, Norris has worked in a bank, been a primary teacher and head, risen through the ranks at Ofsted, and now runs the Co-op's schools arm, overseeing education in some of the most deprived communities in the north of England.

He is now well into his sixth year at the Co-op (he was headhunted in 2013). On his watch, the number of academies has

Profile: Frank Norris

doubled from six to 12 and is now preparing for that planned growth.

However, he is mindful that the trust must not grow too quickly.

"The strategy is one where, at regular intervals, we're just looking at it and saying 'is it time to halt it?' What we don't want to do is be told by the DfE it's time to halt it. We need to know and be honest with ourselves."

Despite the Co-op's ambitious plans, Norris is far from evangelical about the academies programme as a whole.

He says he understands why the Blair government created sponsored academies, troubled schools that moved to private sponsors to turn them around, but he's "less convinced" that introducing converter academies – schools that convert of their own free will – was "the right thing to do".

"Converters, especially those that are sitting there as single academies, I don't know what that's about. I don't get it," he says.

Norris also has concerns about the governance of some academy trusts.

Whereas most large chains have a chief executive who also serves as a trustee, controlling member, or in some cases both, Norris is simply the highest-paid employee of the Co-op Academies Trust. He isn't on the board, nor is he a person of "significant control".

He earns £135,000, and his salary is not allowed to rise to more than eight times that of the lowest-paid trust employee.

"To me there's a fundamental flaw in the governance structure of some of the MATs. Some MATs have – because they've grown from a single school – a headteacher, quite ambitious, entrepreneurial, who becomes an executive headteacher, trustee and a member.

"In my view, we cannot have that level of control in the hands of an individual."

He also takes a swipe at excessive executive pay in the sector. When he retires, he doesn't foresee a problem finding another leader at the salary on offer.

"You don't need to pay £450,000 to get a



Norris with a pupil from one of the Co-op's Manchester academies at the trust's headquarters

"You don't need to pay £450,000 to get a new CEO"

new CEO," he says, mischievously.

Norris clearly isn't afraid to say what he thinks, and I wonder if his quiet confidence has anything to do with his personal history.

Born in Essex in 1955 and educated in Southend, Norris dropped out of school before his A-levels after his lung collapsed "for no apparent reason" in year 10. Multiple operations later, he quit after he was told to repeat a year.

"I went to the careers office on a Thursday and got a job in a bank on the Monday. How things have changed," he says.

Three years later, his banking qualifications enabled him to go into primary teaching, and, spurred on by his management training, he set out to become a headteacher "as quickly as I possibly could".

Norris's first headship was at Millbank

Junior School in Partington, Trafford. The school was tough and the area deprived. In Norris's four years at the helm, only one pupil passed the 11-plus.

His next school, Lower Park Primary was in the more affluent area of Poynton, Cheshire. Here, Norris said he was able to "do more" for his pupils via a broader curriculum.

"I went into primary school teaching because I really enjoyed history and I really enjoyed PE and I just enjoyed being able to teach a range of subjects," he says. "I understand the reasons why teachers in primaries now seem to want to concentrate on quite a narrow experience because they're going to be tested, but actually for me, that isn't a good education for anybody."

In 1995, Norris spent a "gruelling year" seconded to Ofsted, where his mentor was Miriam Rosen, a "really hard taskmaster" who would go on to serve as interim chief inspector in 2011.

"Miriam was probably the most rigorous, able inspector I have ever worked with," he says. "It shaped my leadership and my work since."

Returning to Ofsted after a few more

Profile: Frank Norris



Norris with pupils

“Inspectors should give a ‘value for money’ judgment”

current capacity.

He believes inspectors no longer have the resources to continue to grade schools on their overall effectiveness, and should instead write a short “day in the life” report on the schools they visit, and present it alongside existing data and a parental survey.

He also wants Ofsted to introduce a requirement for schools to pass financial information to inspectors, so they can give a “value for money” judgment.

“I hope Amanda Spielman is writing that into the next framework.”

years of headship, Norris worked his way up from HMI to senior manager, and later served as assistant to the national director for schools. During his 11 years at the watchdog, Norris saw in significant changes to inspection, such as the introduction of

grade descriptors and shorter inspection notice periods.

But a lot has changed since he paced the corridors of power at the nation’s schools inspectorate, and he doesn’t hold back in his critique of the watchdog’s

It’s a personal thing

What’s your favourite book?

The Magus by John Fowles. My brother, who is HMI in Estyn and a prolific reader, brought the book to my attention many years ago. I’ve read it three times.

What’s your favourite holiday destination?

La Grand Tortue is a small campsite in the Loire. We’ve visited it many times and our children used to love it. Walking to the shops through the woodland for a baguette early in the morning was always a highlight.

What was the first record you bought?

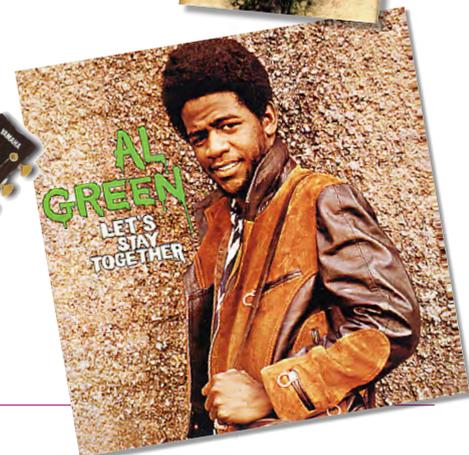
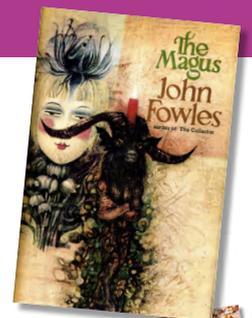
Al Green’s *Let’s Stay Together* was the first single. I bought it with a friend Rick Dawson, who I am still in touch with, because we couldn’t afford it on our own.

What’s your favourite cuisine?

I am so fortunate that my wife, Arlene, is the world’s greatest chef. If she is cooking, my entire family would say, “let’s eat in”.

What would your “luxury item” on a desert island be?

My Yamaha LJX16CP acoustic guitar.



Opinion



SAM TWISTLETON

Director, Sheffield Institute of Education

How can universities best support their local schools?

An ambitious attempt to improve teachers and teaching in South Yorkshire is focusing on a collaborative approach to recruitment, development and retention, says Sam Twisleton

With the government so caught up in Brexit that Labour is getting away with stealing the best schools policies from old Tory green papers, it seems like an opportune time to revisit another forgotten one.

In September 2016 the controversial consultation paper, *Schools that work for everyone*, hit the headlines. For those working in higher education the controversy didn't stop with the proposed expansion of grammar schools. The Department for Education mooted a broader role for higher education institutes in school improvement, and went so far as to suggest that all those charging increased tuition fees should either sponsor failing schools or open a new one.

I was involved in many discussions with universities who had done both of these things. It was clear that an improvement in the regional school system had not automatically followed; in some cases it had got worse.

But it is not unreasonable to expect civic universities that have always maintained a strong commitment to education in their region to put their money where their mouths are and help to address the improvements that are clearly needed.

In addition to their research expertise, universities can leverage what we could call their "convening power". We have seen this work, albeit on a small scale, with some of the opportunity areas. As a political

institutions, universities can stay out of the spats over who runs schools, making it easier for them to facilitate partnerships working across education providers, local authorities, the DfE, schools, colleges and employers.

The appetite – perhaps even responsibility – at Sheffield Hallam University to seize this agenda, but to do so in a way that was substantively different (and better) than the proposals



in the green paper, led to South Yorkshire Futures, a social mobility partnership that targets young people from disadvantaged areas of South Yorkshire through three areas of intervention: early years, primary/secondary, and further education/higher education/employment.

One year on from its launch, projects include CPD for the early years workforce, a regional vision for early years, a South Yorkshire children's university, a governor sourcing and support model, and a

“Universities need to put their money where their mouths are

regional skills framework.

Although we bring very specific areas of expertise to the table, it is our ability to cut through the politics and help people to collaborate in a place-based way that makes the difference. Early examples of projects are quite remarkable when viewed against a backdrop of what can feel like a very cut-throat, competitive, market-driven educational landscape. The "Partnerships for Attainment"

project is one such example.

This is an ambitious attempt to improve the quality of teachers and teaching in South Yorkshire by focusing on a collaborative approach to recruitment, development and retention and has involved the six ITE providers (Sheffield Hallam University, University of Sheffield, Doncaster SCITT, Sheffield SCITT, National Modern Languages SCITT and Teach First). Working with their extensive partnership of schools, multi-academy trusts, teaching schools alliances and local authorities, they have taken a joined-up approach to how the region attracts the best people into the profession, gives them the best possible training, focuses some of this on the schools that need good teachers the most, and continues to support and develop them in their early career.

This has required people who are in direct competition with each other in a declining market to work together for the good of the region. There have been some difficult conversations, but there is a collective commitment to not allowing elephants in the room to go undiscussed. The early signs (including a highly successful first joint recruitment event) are that it is beginning to work and will be well worth the effort.

There are definitely aspects of SYF that would not work everywhere – there will always be regional specificities. However, it is an interesting model from which others can learn. Plus, if we as universities are doing it for ourselves, it might stop politicians from coming up with more ridiculous ideas.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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LEORA CRUDDAS

Chief executive,
Confederation of School Trusts

Peer review can't be a form of inspection – don't confuse them!

Make sure that you don't mix up peer review with inspection, but do ensure that both are effective, valid and reliable, says Leora Cruddas

I was interested to read "Three things the government must do to better support MATs", Michael Pain's recent article in *Schools Week* in which he talks about a reformed inspectorate and suggests peer review as the way to hold multi-academy trusts accountable.

It seems that there is growing confusion about the role of inspection versus peer review. The two are not interchangeable!

Inspection

Inspection is a key part of the accountability system of schools in England. As schools are publicly funded organisations, it is right that school leaders and governing boards give an account of their actions and decisions to an independent inspectorate to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people.

The inspectorate should be independent of the profession and the government. It should reach conclusions about the effectiveness of a school or group of schools, a responsibility that it exercises primarily on behalf of parents and children and young people.

The inspectorate's primary function should be to evaluate the outcomes and assess how school leaders account for these. It is not an improvement agency. It should not focus on development.

Peer review

Peer review is one of a range of quality assurance mechanisms that school leaders can use. It is the

mechanism by which the system improves itself. It is an improvement tool. And it should focus on development.

Peer review could be the process whereby a school or trust leader invites a trusted peer to look carefully at the thing they are most worried about. To the extent that peer review is an improvement tool, it should not be in the public domain – and never part of a public accountability framework.

How should multi-academy trusts be regulated?

The education secretary Damian Hinds recently announced that he would develop proposals for the assessment of multi-academy trusts.

My organisation, the Confederation of School Trusts, is developing specific proposals on how to do this.

As a principle, inspection is not the same as assessment. We do not believe that an additional layer of

“ Peer review should not be in the public domain

It is only when quality assurance is strong and schools (and trusts) begin to hold each other to account in valid and reliable ways that the system will be self-improving.

inspection is necessary. To answer the question of whether the assessment of multi-academy trusts is necessary, we need to go back to first principles: what is the problem



we are trying to solve?

First, we need to get ahead of problems. There are a small number of MATs with financial and governance problems, for example relating to related-party transactions or other irregularities. We must be on top of these. We must make sure public money is spent the way that parliament intends.

Second, we need to make sure that trusts are strong and sustainable organisations – particularly when they are asked to take on schools in more challenging circumstances. We need to make sure that they have the capacity to support the schools in their group.

The way forward

We cannot and must not confuse the roles of inspection and peer review. We must, however, ensure that both are effective, valid and reliable.

The inspectorate should be lean, efficient, effective and proportionate. It should give parents information about the quality of education in schools.

Peer review should be rigorous, impartial and focused on improvement. It should concentrate on areas in a school or trust that need improvement.

The test of peer review is ultimately the way in which it impacts positively on improving teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils. We already have strong, working models of peer review.

Put simply inspection "proves". Peer review "improves".

Let's not muddle the two.

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Understanding how we learn: A visual guide

By Yana Weinstein and Megan Sumeracki, with Oliver Caviglioli

Reviewed by Linda Ferris, teaching and learning lead, Castle School Education Trust

Published by Routledge

From the start the authors state that their main reason for this book is to “help open up the lines of communication between researchers, teachers and students”. Anyone would be hard-pressed to argue that they don’t achieve their aim.

It begins with a destruction of the “learning styles” myth, which isn’t new for those with their finger anywhere near the pulse, but it quickly develops into something far more fascinating as Weinstein and Sumeracki unpack much of the language and ideas behind what we mean when we talk about “research”. There is a clear explanation, for example, of the difference between neuroscience and cognitive psychology, and of concepts such as null hypotheses and lab trials.

The writers explore some of the reasons why teachers are often disinclined to engage in research, while breaking down the very barriers they discuss. Teachers and students should welcome this attempt to demystify the role that researchers play in supporting education.

One of the strengths is the way the writers practise what they preach. They discuss at length the advantages of using concrete examples when explaining abstract concepts, and their exemplification of key concepts, such as phonological loops or limited capacity resource models, is non-patronising, but wholly accessible. Captivating stories, such as that of HM, a patient who lost his long-term memory,

illustrate their arguments further and the brief digression into neuroscience is completely engaging, even for a layperson such as myself.

The second half moves beyond research findings and focuses on practical strategies. These build on the theoretical understanding discussed earlier on, giving the text a coherence and providing further evidence of the positive impact this research can have in the classroom. In some ways there’s nothing new here; if we imagine that most of the readers of this book are likely to be those who already engage in debate and reading in some form, then the strategies discussed are, thankfully, the same as those that have been written about numerous times.

However, the straightforward descriptions of the various trials that sit behind the findings add an extra dimension. These create a very persuasive argument and caution against the dangers of teachers and leaders parroting what “the research says” without fully understanding the evidence behind it.

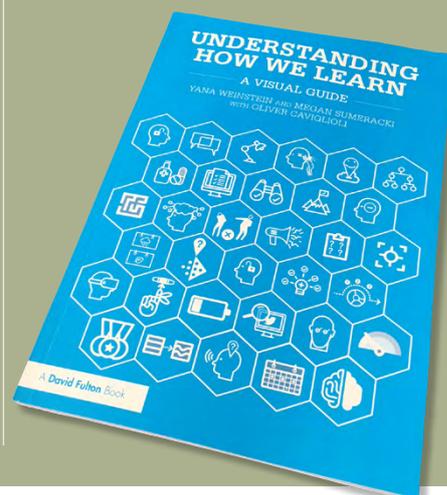
A final treat are the bitesize tips for students, teachers and parents. Depending on the context of your setting, I think the information would need filtering through teachers first, rather than handing straight to students and parents, but there is a wealth of information here to form the basis of student and parent support materials.

And finally to the illustrations. I have to admit to being rather biased going

into this review. I saw Oliver Caviglioli speak at ResearchEd in Birmingham and adored the clarity of both his talk and his illustrations. His unfussy style didn’t disappoint in this book and the visual summaries at the start of each chapter will be extremely helpful in re-examining it at a later date, which I surely will.

However, I must admit that I did struggle to simultaneously follow the illustrations while reading the text, particularly when they appeared mid-paragraph – it often made me think that I was missing something. For this reason, I think it’s probably useful to flick back over the illustrations when you finish each chapter.

And beyond slightly increasing my risk of papercuts, I loved it. An accessible, fascinating journey through research methods, findings and application. If every teacher across our multi-academy trust could apply these findings (and there’s nothing so complicated here that this couldn’t be done), the benefits to student learning could be enormous.



Research

Every month Stuart Kime trawls through his greatest research hits to offer practical implementation tips for using evidence in practice

How to make it easier to do the hard stuff

Stuart Kime, director of education, Evidence Based Education

It's mid-September, Sunday evening, Norwich. In search of a healthy, tasty post-train journey dinner, I head to Namaste, the place I consider to serve the best curry in the world. Closed. Hasty, hunger-induced and quasi-maniacal Google-mapping shows a well-reviewed eatery nearby: I am Cosmo-bound. Minutes later, the evening's nutrition is an all-you-can-eat buffet to slay them all. Resolve and temperance tested. Fail. Three courses later, I depart. Fullness. Sadness.

Anyone reading this will have tried – and failed – to achieve a goal. From new year's resolutions to healthy-eating targets, workload reduction to bold school-improvement initiatives, the human experiences of competing priorities, distraction, fear, temptation, fatigue, frustration and layered complexity often get in the way of getting where we want to go and doing what we want to do. But help is at hand in the shape of research by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham (with their work on goal theory) and Peter Gollwitzer (who has written extensively about "implementation intentions").

First, Latham and Locke suggest that there are specific aspects of goals that maximise the chances of them being achieved, so here are the first tips: sharpen the specificity of your goal, and understand the difficulty of it as well as the difficulty of achieving it (two different things). Elevate its perceived importance through public and personal commitment – this helps to increase the performance of your goal, but also to increase the chances of satisfaction (you can read more about these in Locke and Latham's 2002 paper in *American Psychologist*).

Understanding the "active ingredients" of successful goal-setting (something that often looks unlike the setting of target grades in school) is one way to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of decisions and actions: it helps us with the what of



achievement. But we can give ourselves an even better chance, by maximising the how. And that's where we bring in implementation intentions.

Gollwitzer's work on implementation intentions is very cool. Although there is some dispute about the effectiveness of a strategy anchored in the conscious, pre-planned choice of future behaviour in specific circumstances, I think the combination with Locke and Latham's goal theory is helpful. Here's how to do it.

With a well-honed, manageable and important goal, and both personal and public commitment to its performance, we can use Gollwitzer's mantra "Whenever situation x arises, I will initiate the goal-directed response y!" to avoid failure. If you're trying to eat a healthier

diet: "Whenever I feel hungry in the evening, I will eat an apple." If you're trying to improve the quality of your feedback in class: "Whenever I need to give feedback, I will focus on the task, the process and the student self-regulation." If you're a middle leader aiming to improve your

teachers' assessment practice: "Whenever I select an assessment to use in my subject or phase, I will look for evidence of its effectiveness and efficiency." And so on...

But let's not kid ourselves: change takes time and practice. Using this method consistently is a goal in itself (it's getting a bit meta here), so why not try this out: "Whenever I have a goal I want to achieve, I will use goal theory and implementation intentions to help me to succeed." Maybe that will be enough to start with.

Next time I'm headed for Norwich, I know what I'll be thinking: "Whenever I want to avoid eating unhealthy food when I'm on the road for work, I'll make sure that I double-check opening times!"

Gollwitzer, P M (1999). *Implementation intentions: strong effects of simple plans. American Psychologist, 54 (7), 493.*

Locke, E A and Latham, G P (2002). *Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. American Psychologist, 57 (9), 705.*

Reviews



Julia Skinner is a retired headteacher, who is now a trustee and founder of the 100 Word Challenge

@THEHEADSOFFICE

Why blogging matters

@5naureen



There is a dearth of opinion pieces by governors or about governance. It is such a key aspect of school organisation that I am on a mission to encourage more to blog. However, before that comes to fruition, Naureen Khalid has reposted her piece on why blogging is important for governors. She explains that the voice of governors and trustees needs to be heard – and blogging is one way to get it out there. Blogging can also be a resource of other opinions and ideas. Khalid has a talent for collating conferences too, so if you weren't able to get to that key meeting, check this blog for a review.

Welcome on board! (is it too late to get off?)

@vawells1



This is a "new year" blog for new as well as more established governors. It brings



into focus that schools do need to consider those volunteers who may be joining them and make sure they are supported as well as possible. The problems that schools have recruiting governors is highlighted – and the need to retain those that they already have. A useful checklist for newbies includes finding a buddy, making sure you can access the IT system and having the details of meetings. There are also suggestions that the first meeting of the year reflect on the purpose of governance. I love the new word "Volunesia (noun) – that moment when you forget you're volunteering to help change lives because it's changing yours".

Letter to a departing chair

Secret Governor



This post, part of The Secret Governor series on Modern Governor, hit the spot for me. It is a salutatory reminder to all of us in education that "thank you" should be a key part of our language. The hurt that the writer saw in their colleague shines through and I hope that schools, and in particular boards, are reminded that governors, who make up the largest group

of volunteers, must not only be treated with respect, but shown how their contribution is valued.

Lead us not into stagnation

@neilayates



Governance is becoming more and more part of the focus on school improvement and this post is a rallying cry to make good use of the opportunity that being a governor presents. Comparing world leaders to the role of the chair, similarities are highlighted and not only in the area of remuneration (or lack of). The writer stresses the need for governors to be encouraged to be innovators and to share their light-bulb moments as it is only together that we have any clout.

It's Tuesday, it must be meatballs

@dogpaws



Fee Stagg's writing always makes me smile. Her sense of humour means that she can deliver some difficult messages in her role as a governor and clerk. In this post she reminds us that boards doing the same will get the same, which may not be best for the school. She compares jobs for the beginning of a new school year with habits, not all of them good! The ease with which boards can become complacent is likened to being spoon-fed and bored. As always in her post, she ends with a "how to do" list. Ignore them at your peril!

Julia Skinner will be looking out for the best blogs on school governance - so if you're a governor, clerk or trustee, please share with your networks, and get blogging!



Low-cost schools are an experiment worth backing,
James Croft

@gplunkett58

'Choice improves equity' is absolutely meaningless when applied to education as that choice will always be limited and localised, and therefore, by definition, inequitable. These ideologues infuriate me!

John Connor

Standardised teachers' pay is an "inhibitor"? Profit sharing? What planet is this guy on? Teach only English, maths and science to classes of 45 with a revolving cohort of NQTs which changes every year because they're cheaper? No child of mind would ever attend such a travesty.

Ofsted refuses the back down over NEU Twitter row

@PaulGarvey4

[Quotes the civil service code]
'You must not act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals or interests.'
Hmmm. I think we have had a transgression of the guidelines from @HarfordSean here.

@ValerieKayD

There are some excellent people [at Ofsted] who in another structure would be gold dust to improvement. However the inconsistencies and arrogance outweigh the benefits and the current "it's all different now" is just a smoke screen.

What if it's behaviour that makes new teachers leave?

Assembly Tube

My view is that many schools have teachers in the Senior Leadership Team who cannot control student behaviour themselves. They have minimal behaviour management skills in their own classes, and are unable to provide leadership in this area. If a teacher is struggling with behaviour management, the last thing they need is a line manager who is hopeless themselves at managing student behaviour.

REPLY OF THE WEEK **Janet Downs**

Shadow minister: We'll ban Ofsted banners

Perhaps all those converter academies whose banners claim 'Outstanding' but which haven't been inspected post-conversion should be required to display a banner saying 'Outstanding when we were a Local Authority school.'



THE REPLY OF THE WEEK WINS A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG. CONTACT US AT NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UK TO CLAIM

@HelenPins

It was almost behaviour for me last year. I've been teaching for eight years, but I moved to a different school at Christmas and it was hellish for the rest of the year. I had medication for anxiety and stress, which I'd never experienced before!

Hinds: Labour academies plan is 'reckless'

@terryfish

Reckless is how the government have 'reformed' the system! Curriculum, examination changes, expansion of grammar schools all against the evidence! Plus teacher recruitment and retention crisis. That's reckless!

@BANESTNAHT

Just wish he would engage with our local headteachers in open discussion – and they'll be able to education him about current mess, capacity and unnecessary structural change. We have system leadership before MATs, without lawyers and private consultants boosting their profits on pupil funding.

School pension contributions rise to 23.6% from 2019

@pdcornish76

Could actually cry at this!! Budgets are broken. Schools cannot copy with any more unfunded rising costs!

@KaySawbridge

Absolutely ridiculous – let's make classes of 40 students, not buy any resources, get rid of a few teachers, and then the pension contributions can be paid. Are you out to bankrupt schools Conservatives?

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

SATURDAY

Pub?

SUNDAY

Tory politicians are used to being criticised at the Labour Party conference, but we're not sure Damian Hinds was expecting the roasting he got from his opposite number this year.

It looks as if Angela Rayner has been busy perfecting her impression of the education secretary. During a live Q&A with the Guardian she launched a scathing attack on the "boring" politician.

She said she loved going into the House of Commons chamber, where she gets "all geared up like a boxer going into their ring".

"One of my criticisms actually since Damian Hinds took over is that he's almost sort of like trying to match me or massage the chamber. So you go in there and, the government are really flat at the moment, they've got no energy at all.

"So you're sat in the chamber and there's no energy at all in the room, and as you can probably tell I'm quite an energetic person, so you go in there and I can feel the room and there's no passion, you know? Where's your oomph? You're in the driving seat.

"You've got an opportunity to make Britain a better place, and you're sat there like 'yes, well, here's what my notes say'. It's really boring."

MONDAY

Schools that display banners to promote their Ofsted grade appear to have irked the shadow schools minister Mike Kane.

The politician said a future Labour government would ban the "floppy banners", which are controversial because they often show old or bogus ratings, would be banned under Labour.

The former primary school teacher was responding to recent findings about the impact of deprivation on Ofsted ratings. Research by the watchdog released earlier this year showed that schools in the most affluent areas are more than twice as likely to be rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted as those in the most deprived.

"Only 4 per cent of schools in the poorest areas in our country achieve outstanding. So Ofsted are measuring class rather than the quality of the teaching and learning in our society.

"When we get into government, we're going to ban those floppy banners outside schools," Kane added.

TUESDAY

In just a few years, Rayner has gone from relative obscurity in her party to one of Labour's biggest celebs, and she certainly didn't shy away from the stage at the organisation's annual knees-up.

The shadow education secretary not



only took to the decks to DJ at a CWU event at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool, but once again teamed up with shadow health secretary Jon Ashworth for a shouty rendition of Proclaimers hit I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles) at the legendary Mirror Party later in the evening.

Over to you, at next week's Conservative party conference Damian Hinds...

THURSDAY

Speaking of Hinds, the man has an eclectic range of reading materials in the waiting room outside his office in Sanctuary Buildings. Three guesses which was at the top of the pile when Week in Westminster swung by the other day?



That's right, the Catholic Herald.

It's hardly surprising. Hinds was brought up a staunch Catholic and attended a Roman Catholic school. In January, following his appointment, the Herald described him as "the Catholic being tipped as a future prime minister" in a gushing profile.



THE
SHARED
LEARNING
TRUST

DIRECTOR OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Shared Learning Trust is a successful multi-academy trust in Bedfordshire. We currently comprise of four academies and have plans to grow our educational family.

We are seeking to appoint a Director of Primary Education to join our trust. You will work closely with the Chief Executive to support the trusts primary academies in providing outstanding leadership to take forward the vision and values of the Trust. You will ensure that excellence and high standards are attained across all areas, whilst providing a safe, healthy and inclusive learning environment.

KEY DUTIES:

- Produce a strategic and operational plan for the primary schools to outline development for the next five years.
- Ensure all primary academies secure at least good in their next Ofsted inspection, with features that are outstanding.
- Provide strategic leadership that ensures teaching, learning and student performance and achievements are great.
- Support the Trust in its aim of growing the number of primary academies it currently supports and manages.
- Support the primary academies to ensure they are financially secure.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE WILL HAVE:

- A real love of teaching and knowledgeable about what high quality teaching and learning looks like; experience of leading the improvement of teaching and learning
- Proven track record in leading and managing staff; including building successful teams, delegating effectively and implementing and managing change
- Evidence of recent/relevant training and development and/or further study e.g. NPQH, Executive Headteacher Programmes
- Be able to communicate effectively and persuasively - you should be motivating and engaging, able to win 'hearts and minds'
- Knowledge and understanding of wider educational developments including current national policies and educational issues

JOB SPECIFICS:

- **Start Date:** As soon as possible
- **Salary:** £77,613 (L28, Leadership spine)
- **Job Role:** Full time position

For further information please visit <https://www.mynewterm.com/trust/The-Shared-Learning-Trust/135337>

If you have any questions about the role, please contact **Kevin Martin, Human Resources Director** on **01582 211 226** or email academyrecruitment@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk



Head of Curriculum (Design and Delivery) £50,000 - £55,000 dependent on experience

Our mission is to transform communities, reduce crime and increase the public's confidence in policing, by recruiting and developing outstanding and diverse individuals to be leaders on the policing frontline.

Participants start their 2-year programme at the Academy, an intensive 6-week training course teaching them how to be exceptional neighbourhood police officers. We now have an exciting new role as the Head of Curriculum to redesign our existing training.

The right person will:

- Create and deliver a dynamic and innovative curriculum, building upon the current training
- Create the right learning environment that will survive the intensive six-week course
- Be confident in delivering lessons and working with a range of operational officers and colleagues to coach them in their delivery
- Have a real commitment to Police Now's mission and the drive to deliver the curriculum across two academies for the first time in 2019.

To apply, please visit: <https://bit.ly/200GSDp>

Closing date: 12th October (may be closed earlier if we offer the right candidate)



PRINCIPAL

CMAT wish to recruit an outstanding and visionary Principal to join the SLT and to drive further improvement and growth of Nene Park Academy from January 2019.

NPA is a thriving, oversubscribed, school with a dedicated and talented staff.

The Principal is responsible for evaluating the academy's performance to identify the priorities for continuous improvement, raising standards ensuring equality of opportunity for all; ensuring that resources are efficiently and effectively used to achieve the school's aims and objectives and for day-to-day management, organisation and administration.

To apply for the role, please use the following link: <https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/principal-peterborough-1113121>

For further information, please contact Mark Woods, CEO, mwoods@cmatrust.net

NPA and CMAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. All staff will be subject to an enhanced check with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

TEACHER ADVISOR BIG PICTURE DONCASTER

**BIG
PICTURE
LEARNING** UK

Job Role: Teacher Advisor, Big Picture Doncaster
Organisation Type: Secondary, Alternative Provision
Start date: January 2019
Salary: £25,000 - £35,000+
Applications by: Midnight Sunday 14th October 2018
(interviews in Doncaster 18th October)

The Teacher Advisor Role

We are seeking to appoint up to three Teacher Advisors who are inspired by the opportunity offered by the UK's first Big Picture Learning school. We are seeking someone who is passionate about the potential of all young people to succeed regardless of prior learning histories/personal circumstances.

Teacher Advisors are more than teachers, although they need to be highly capable designers of learning (and thoroughly grounded in curriculum, assessment and safeguarding requirements of the English school system). Teacher Advisors will form deep relationships with young people and their families, supporting personal learning plans, acting as coach and advocate.

Each Teacher Advisor will be a true learner who enjoys the challenges of new approaches to pedagogy and education, seeking professional and personal

growth as a part of a community committed to the success of all students, whilst taking joy in immersive new experiences and contexts.

The School

Opening in January 2019 with a small intake of learners (increasing to 60 in year 2), Big Picture Doncaster will be the first school in the UK founded on the Big Picture Learning school design. The school, which is independently funded, is actively supported by local partners, including Doncaster Council.

Big Picture

Big Picture Learning has supported thousands of students in the US and Australia to succeed against the odds. Providing a different approach to schooling and learning, family partnerships, community-based internships and personalized learning are features of the design. More information: <https://www.innovationunit.org/projects/big-picture-learning-in-doncaster/>.

Details and full job description:

<https://www.innovationunit.org/thoughts/big-picture-learning-is-hiring/>.

Please submit applications to **Claire Adsley** (Claire.adsley@smartpasupport.com) by **midnight on 18th October 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
- A competitive annual leave entitlement - 25 days plus bank holidays
- 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/

Headteacher

(Head of School), Brindishe Manor Primary School, from January or April 2019

Salary: Group 3 within the Leadership point 18-24 plus a discretionary allowance



Brindishe Manor is a two form entry primary school within our Brindishe Federation of three ofsted-rated outstanding schools located in Lewisham SE London.

A maintained Local Authority school which is strong, diverse, forward looking and vibrant with 480 children who learn in a responsible & considerate way. This is one of the most popular local schools for children aged 3-11 years.

Working with our newly appointed Executive Head, our tri-school Governing Body and a supportive SLT you will lead 70+ talented & highly-skilled staff. You will work alongside the Headteachers of Brindishe Lee and Brindishe Green bringing the best possible opportunities to all of the children in our federation. We take pride in offering opportunities to develop leadership skills always look forwards in our thinking.

To find out more go to our schools' website
www.brindishemanor.lewisham.sch.uk

Deadline for applying is: midday on Monday 15th October 2018
Interviews are likely to be : week beginning Monday 29th October 2018



Hounslow School
- A Science College

TEACHER OF DRAMA

FT or PT 0.8/4 days

Fixed term Maternity Cover until August 2019

Required December 2018 or January 2019

We are seeking to recruit a suitably qualified enthusiastic and hardworking Drama teacher to join our committed and successful team. Experience and ability to teach Drama at KS3 and KS4 is essential also with the ability to teach some English (not essential).

CD: 12.00noon 2 October 2018

TEACHER OF ENGLISH

FT or PT

Required ASAP or January 2019

Fixed term until August 2019

We are looking for a suitably qualified enthusiastic and hardworking teacher to join our outstanding English Department. Experience and ability to teach KS3 and KS4 English is essential. Our P8 figure for English Language ranked us in the top 10 state schools in Hampshire.

CD: 12.00noon 16 October 2018

For further information and to apply please visit the Recruitment Page on our website www.hounslow.hants.sch.uk



Director roles commencing in January 2019 at Sydney's benchmark Montessori school.

Inner Sydney Montessori School, established in 1981 and well located in Inner Sydney, is recognised as one of the leading Montessori schools in Australia, yet maintains an enviable small school reputation as a friendly and dynamic Pre-Primary and Primary School with students at the centre of everything we do.

ISMS Principal, Zoe Ezzard welcomes contact from potential applicants to discuss why you should join this growing team. We would love to hear from you!

We are looking for passionate educators with an embedded understanding and appreciation of the Montessori philosophy. You will have a reputable 6-12 Montessori Diploma and hold a relevant teaching qualification. You will also be required to attain NSW Education Standards Authority accreditation.

You will have a Working with Children Check number and a First- Aid qualification.

You will demonstrate:

- A passion for Montessori education and a strong desire to work within a collaborative, authentic Montessori environment;
- The ability to promote a positive and supportive ethos for pupils where all are valued, encouraged and challenged to achieve the best they can;
- Excellent interpersonal skills.

Respect, collaboration and supportive relationships are at the heart of our School culture resulting in an environment where staff feel valued, supported and inspired. We work collaboratively to create nurturing classrooms where each child develops a healthy self-concept, positive values, strong skills, a deep academic understanding and a curiosity and appreciation of nature and the world around them. Our child focused Pre-Primary and Primary School is at enrollment capacity with around 300 students between the ages of 3-12.

In addition, around 100 students are enrolled per term in our esteemed Infant Community Program for 0-3 year olds.

We are very proud of our School & encourage you to learn more about us at www.isms.nsw.edu.au and follow us at [facebook.com/InnerSydneyMontessori](https://www.facebook.com/InnerSydneyMontessori)

Meet with Principal, Zoe Ezzard in London this September!

How to Apply

Please forward applications by including a cover letter and CV to principal@isms.nsw.edu.au

ISMS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. The position is subject to satisfactory references, police clearances, a Working with Children Check and comply with the requirements of NESAs.

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Week

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AND FE WEEK

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