

# SCHOOLS WEEK

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

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SCHOOLS WEEK

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News

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EXCLUSIVE

# Requests to wipe GCSE scores rocket – but few are granted

JESS STAUFENBERG  
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The government has refused nearly 7,000 requests from schools for their pupils' GCSE scores to be wiped from league tables after applications rocketed following the introduction of Progress 8.

Schools can apply for the results of seriously ill pupils or those in police custody or who are home-educated to be "disapplied" from performance data, on the grounds that teachers cannot reasonably be held responsible for their outcomes.

New data, obtained after a freedom of information request by *Schools Week*, shows the number of requests for year 11 pupils has ballooned from 7,641 in 2015-16 (1.4 per cent of pupils) to 12,221 last year (2.3 per cent).

However, the government has got tough on approving applications – just 44 per cent got the green light last year, compared with 74 per cent in 2016-17.

The data backs up claims from headteachers, reported by *Schools Week* in October, that more requests have been refused after updated guidance said schools must provide rigorous evidence.

One school had requests refused for two pupils who were in police custody on the day of their exams, and for another pupil who was sectioned under the mental health act.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the rise in applications was "not surprising" given the increasingly high accountability stakes schools

## HOW MANY APPLICATIONS FOR PUPIL REMOVALS WERE TURNED DOWN?

KEY STAGE 4	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
No of applications submitted	7,641	12,076	12,221
As % of all pupils	1.4%	2.3%	2.3%
No of applications approved	5,809	8,988	5,360
As % of all applications	76%	74%	44%

worked under.

"The DfE has taken the view that the system is being abused and has tightened up the application process as a result," he said.

"But most schools don't 'game' the system and we're concerned that perfectly reasonable applications are turned down."

The government has altered its guidance this year so schools must now provide evidence to support applications to disapply pupils with "frequent or long periods of non-attendance".

For example, they must provide supporting evidence of their efforts to get the pupil to attend.

Some heads said the system was being abused. One claimed a school tried to disapply up to a quarter of its year 11s.

However, the crackdown has led to concerns over inclusive schools being clobbered.

Kenton School academy, in Newcastle, had disapplication requests for 11 pupils rejected this September, despite two pupils being in police custody during their exams. Sarah Holmes-Carne, the principal, said the government's blanket refusals were giving schools like hers "less incentive to be inclusive".

The government admitted the surge in applications followed the introduction of Progress 8 performance measures – where

schools are "accountable for the performance of pupils across the attainment spectrum, not just at the level 3/4 or C/D border as they were previously".

A spokesperson added: "As a result schools are incentivised to consider the needs of pupils regardless of their predicted grades. Whilst some schools, appear to have responded by applying to have more

pupils removed from their performance data, this is only allowed in exceptional circumstances.

"This is reflected by the fact that despite there being a rise in applications, the proportion of successful applications for disapplication has gone down."

However the FOI data shows primary school applications have remained stable.

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# News: Ofsted

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## Foundation subjects sidelined in primaries

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Nearly half of primary schools scored poorly in Ofsted's latest curriculum study, although the watchdog has insisted it won't "downgrade vast numbers" when its new framework is introduced in September.

Research published on Tuesday showed that 15 of 33 primaries schools inspected scored either a 1 or 2 for their curriculum (based on a five-point scoring system, where 5 is the highest).

The inspectorate found a focus on English and maths had sidelined foundation subjects.

For instance, seven of the 33 primaries had a "complete absence" of curriculum design in humanities.

But Ofsted held its hands up over the findings, admitting the watchdog was "in part to blame" for "intensifying performance data rather than complementing it".

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, also insisted it was not "raising the bar".

"That means explicitly that we will not be 'downgrading' vast numbers of primary or secondary schools.

"Instead, we recognise that curriculum thinking has been deprioritised in the system for too long, including by Ofsted."

She reiterated a commitment to keep the overall proportions of schools achieving each grade "roughly the same between the old framework and the new framework".

Change was not expected overnight. "The new framework represents a process of evolution rather than revolution."

The study found primaries mostly fell down on humanities, arts and technology. But they scored well in English and maths.

However, as previous Ofsted research found, some primary schools practised SATs as early as Christmas in year 6, and focused on comprehension papers rather than encouraging children to read.

The latest study found almost all primaries used topics or themes as their way of teaching the foundation subjects. However, the schools that were "most invested" in curriculum design had a "clear focus on the subject knowledge" with topics designed around that.

Secondaries fared better with 16 of the 29 visited scoring either a 4 or 5 for their curriculum, with art subjects "particularly strong".

But a lack of subject specialists was impacting successful curriculum design in modern foreign languages, with history also "less well organised" in some schools.

## Ofsted study backs up pledge to change unfair grading of poor schools

JESS STAUFENBERG  
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Schools in the most deprived communities outscored their more affluent counterparts in Ofsted's new quality of curriculum study – suggesting the watchdog's new focus could turn the tables on schools in poor areas being unfairly graded.

However, sector leaders have shot down hopes, claiming the inspectorate won't have time to do such detailed curriculum assessments during proper inspections under its new framework next September.

Ofsted published the findings of its third phase of curriculum research on Tuesday, with 64 schools visited and scored across 25 indicators for the intent, implementation and impact of their curriculum.

The study found a higher proportion of schools in the most deprived communities (69 per cent) scored in the top three of five grades for their curriculum compared with those in the most affluent areas (62 per cent).

Ofsted also stated there was only a "weak" positive correlation between schools' current Ofsted grades and their curriculum score.

Chief inspector Amanda Spielman said this suggests the new inspection framework, which will be published in draft form for consultation in the new year, will "reward schools in challenging circumstances that are raising standards through strong curricula".

She added "under the current system it is harder to get a good or outstanding grade if your test scores are low" as a result of a "challenging or deprived intake".

But there are big questions over how the results of this study will translate in real inspections.

Inspectors won't have time to check the 25 indicators used in its recent research, Spielman has admitted, and so instead these have been boiled down and divided between the two key areas of "intent" and



"implementation".

"Intent" will cover rationale, ambition and concepts, and "implementation" will cover assessment, as well as subject knowledge, equitable delivery, planning the progression model, breadth and depth.

Stephen Tierney, chair of the Headteachers' Roundtable, said Ofsted needs to answer how exactly it will measure the "impact" of a curriculum, stating they will struggle not to use a school's progress data.

He warned there would be an "outcry" from schools with strong progress data who found themselves in one of Ofsted's bottom two judgments under the new framework.

"Imagine your school has got a great Progress 8 score and you find yourself in 'requires improvement' all of a sudden because of your curriculum – and another school with rubbish progress data has got a better judgment than you."

Instead, Ofsted should consider comparing schools' data with other, similar schools, rather than against a national average, or reweighting pupils' data in schools so it reflects the challenges of the demographic intake, he said.

Ofsted's own data shows schools in richer areas with more affluent pupil intakes are more than twice as likely as those in the most deprived areas to be graded 'outstanding'.

Tierney also said that if the old framework doesn't correlate clearly with curriculum, as Ofsted has suggested, then "what on earth should be happening to all those judgments that disadvantaged schools are stuck with?"

"It's a question Ofsted really need to answer. To be honest, it's beginning to look a bit of a shambles."

Ofsted said the research has "informed thinking" on its approach to curriculum for the new framework.

# Six things we learned from the government's data dump



Dozens of documents spilled out from various arms of government yesterday (Thursday) as Whitehall mandarins sought to 'take out the trash' before Christmas recess. *Schools Week's* reporters were on hand to ensure nothing was missed. Here's the round-up:

## 1 Early phonics achievers three times more likely to ace key stage 2 reading test

Pupils who pass the phonics reading screening check on their first attempt are almost three times more likely to meet the "expected standard" in reading at key stage 2.

New data shows 30 per cent who fail to reach the expected standard in phonics still go on to reach the expected standard, compared with 88 per cent of those who pass phonics first time.

The phonics check is carried out in year 1, but those who do not reach the government's expected standard take it again in year 2.



## 2 National Reference Test maths scores increased

The second annual NRT has shown improvement in maths, but no real change for English language.

Ofqual introduced the test last year to provide more information about the awarding of GCSEs.

According to Ofqual, the results – which are reported at grade 7, grade 5 and grade 4 – suggest teachers have become more familiar with the new maths GCSE requirements.

However, there is little change in the English language results, with fewer pupils achieving the standard grade 4 pass.

From next year Ofqual will consider evidence from the tests in May to decide whether to make an adjustment to the summer grades.



## 3 GCSE grade changes declined by 23 per cent

This year, 57,100 GCSE grades were changed at marking review, compared with 73,840 last year, which cut the proportion of grades that were changed from 1.4 per cent to 1.1 per cent.

Ofqual said this year's changes were "more consistent with the appropriate application of our rules regarding reviews of marking and reviews of moderation" introduced two years ago.

Although the number of changed A-level grades fell from 14,665 to 12,140, there was a slight increase in the proportion compared with last year, from 1 per cent in 2017 to 1.2 per cent.



## 4 School staff faced fewer exam malpractice penalties

The number of teachers facing penalties for exam malpractice fell this year, but the number of pupils rapped for taking in banned items such as mobile phones to exams rose by more than a fifth.

The number of penalties issued to staff for helping pupils cheat or for maladministration of exams fell by 40 per cent after rocketing figures the year before. However, they have yet to return to pre-2017 levels.

The number of penalties issued to schools or colleges also fell from 165 in 2017 to 93 this year.



## 5 Exam security breaches down, despite Twitter leaks

The number of security breaches related to GCSE and A-level exams fell by 40 per cent this year, despite a number of high-profile leaks on social media.

In its 2018 summer exam series report, Ofqual reported 68 security breaches in 2018, down from 114 in 2017. Fifty-nine per cent were as a result of schools or colleges opening, and sometimes handing out, the wrong paper.

It follows a number of high-profile cases in which questions or other details were shared on social media.

Ofqual also reported 90 errors in exam questions or materials, down from 101 last year.



## 6 The pupil nationality data collection missed more than one million pupils

The government failed to obtain nationality data for 17.8 per cent of pupils in this year's spring census. This equates to more than 1.4 million children.

It is also missing country of birth data for 16 per cent of children.

The gap follows an outcry over the controversial policy and a boycott by parents and schools.

A duty for schools to collect pupil nationality and country of birth data was introduced in 2016, but was eventually scrapped earlier this year following a number of legal challenges.





# Investigation: School finances

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## The schools that slip through the council financial net

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

Supporters say that the finances of local authority schools are better scrutinised than the balance sheets of academies. But a *Schools Week* investigation shows many council schools have not been audited for years

**T**housands of council schools have not had their finances independently scrutinised for more than five years - with three last audited by their local authority nearly 20 years ago.

*Schools Week* can also reveal that council schools have been breaking rules over tax checks, issuing contracts and unauthorised pay rises for staff.

And not all councils check that schools have implemented recommendations from their audits.

Our investigation reveals concerns over council oversight of schools spending, with more than 2,200 schools not audited by their local authority in more than five years.

The findings challenge claims by supporters of the local authority-maintained system that councils have better oversight of their schools

compared with the government's grasp on academies.

However, councils say they have more mechanisms than just internal audits to check on finances, with one union boss claiming schools don't feel "exposed", despite the lack of audits.

Schools can also pay for their own external audits.

Our investigation also reveals disparity over transparency of finance checks, with the government now considering how to make the "playing field of transparency" between academies and council schools "more level".

### Financial oversight

*Schools Week* obtained freedom of information requests from 86 local authorities relating to oversight and transparency of their school

finance checks. Just 26 confirmed they had audited all their schools within the past five years.

At least 44 councils have not audited some of their schools for five years - a total of at least 2,200.

In Essex, three schools were last audited in 1999. More than 100 of its 272 schools haven't been audited in more than ten years.

The council said internal audit was one of a "number of assurance mechanisms", including schools' own statutory self-assessments, monitoring by the council's schools finance team, and evaluations visits from the Essex Education Service, the council's privatised school support arm.

Forty-five schools in Central Bedfordshire have not been audited in five years, with three last visited in 2003. Ten of the 208

# Investigation: School finances

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Gloucestershire schools not inspected in more than five years were last visited in 2001, and four of the 120 in Liverpool were last visited more than 13 years ago.

A Local Government Association spokesperson said councils “always maintain good and close ongoing relationships with schools” that “in many cases go beyond the need for an audit”.

They said council schools had to submit draft budgets every year for approval, and a three-year budget forecast.

The cost of audits falling on school budgets also meant that any “cutbacks are symptomatic of the wider squeeze on school and council funding”.

Julia Harnden, a funding specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, said “the public should be reassured there are mechanisms in place to ensure financial oversight”.

She said schools also fell under external audits of local authority finances. “Our concern would be if schools felt exposed by having fewer local authority audits and would like the assurance of this process. We haven’t picked up concerns so far, but we will keep an eye on how this issue progresses.”

## Tax breaches, expenses and unauthorised pay rises

*Schools Week* asked for the findings from council audits in the past three years. Two councils, Camden and Redbridge, both in north London, refused to release the information, saying it would “prejudice” their ability to audit schools.

Hackney in east London wouldn’t provide basic findings because it said publicising details could make schools “vulnerable to those who would seek to exploit a weakness for criminal benefit”.

However, most councils did provide details of the recommendations made after audits – many of which were also released in

the public domain as part of reports to audit committees.

Only basic information is provided. For instance, a “no assurance” audit report of Waulud primary school in Luton, from January last year, found two contracts totalling more than £70,000 had been purchased with the same IT firm, despite one quote.

Five teachers were also given a pay rise without proper authorisation or documentation.

A “common findings” report based on audits in Cheshire East last year found key financial management responsibility and processes were not documented, which “may lead to fraud or waste”.

Whistleblowing policies were not kept up to date, with purchase orders not correctly approved, which could “increase the risk of inappropriate expenditure and misuse of public funds”.

In Sutton, south London, one school – not named – was found to have breached rules over not doing tax checks (IR35) on staff, or making inappropriate payments via main bank accounts rather than on payroll.

Staff were approving expenditure without getting required approval from the governing body; another case included funds that should “go through the main account” being paid into “unofficial fund account”.

These cases were all listed as “high” priority audit findings, but no further information was provided.

In Medway, Kent, a headteacher at one school had been authorising her own expenses, while staff at another school were using their own loyalty cards on school purchases, despite the school having similar loyalty cards.

In Cheshire East, a general findings document had concerns over recording pupil premium funding, with no spreadsheets retained for spending and invoices not clearly referenced.

Councils said that recommendations were normally followed up to check they were implemented.

But one council, Solihull, said

it was up to a school’s senior management to decide whether to accept internal audit recommendations, and how to implement them.

## How does this compare to academies?

Supporters of the local authority-maintained school system argue it has better oversight of schools than the government provides for academies.

However, our figures suggest that isn’t always the case.

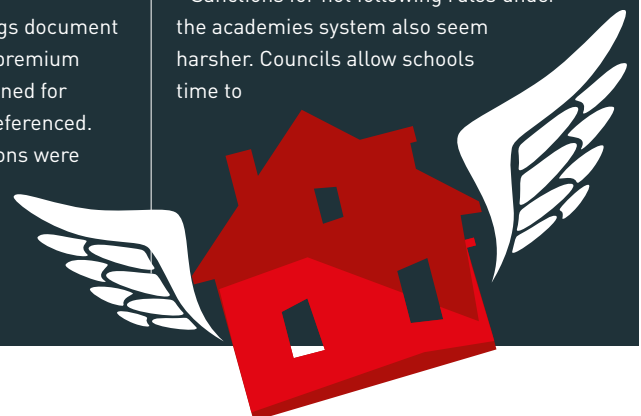
Every academy trust has two audits a year, one of which is by an independent audit firm. If accounts are submitted to the government late, trusts are named and shamed.

Local authority audits do relate to specific schools, while academy audits relate to academy trusts. However, the most recent sector report shows that most trusts (1,976) had just one school. Of the 987 multi-academy trusts, more than half (511) had two or three schools – meaning most schools are visited as part of the audits. *Schools Week* understands that in larger trusts – where finance functions are run centrally – only a sample of schools are visited.

Audit findings from individual academies aren’t routinely published, but detailed expenditure from the audits are published via annual accounts.

Similar spending for council schools is hard to track down as it is reported in council annual accounts – which cover much larger expenditure across the authority, so have much less detail.

Sanctions for not following rules under the academies system also seem harsher. Councils allow schools time to





# Investigation: School finances

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implement recommendations, while academy trusts can face their funding being pulled.

The government also has a better track record of publishing information and investigations in such cases.

Twenty-five of the councils said they did not publish any findings from audit reports in the public domain. Although most councils do, the information is normally basic and not always held in a single or easily accessible format.

Meanwhile, the government publishes a raft of notices relating to academy finances, including financial notices to improve, and finance and governance reviews.

The government publishes investigations into academy trusts in all but "the most exceptional circumstances", but *Schools Week* has extensively reported cases that suggest this isn't always the case.

At least 14 investigations were launched on the back of council audit reports, but not one council would provide a copy of the report or detailed information.

Lambeth Council also refused a request by *Schools Week* under the freedom of information act to provide a copy of its investigation into Sir Craig Tunstall, the former executive headteacher of the Gypsy Hill Federation. The council said this would breach the Data Protection Act and "could cause distress to the individuals".

National media had reported Sir Craig, regarded as England's best-paid primary headteacher on £330,000 a year, was suspended in relation to allegations of fraud. He is no longer employed at the federation of six schools.

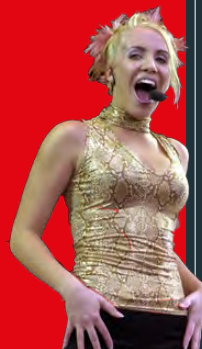
## Council schools hit by six-figure frauds

Details of council investigations seemingly only make it into the public domain when the cases become criminal investigations.

Last month, *The Times* reported that former headteacher Alan Davies had been ordered by the High Court to repay Brent council nearly

## WHAT ELSE WAS GOING ON IN 1999?

- Tony Blair was in his second year as prime minister
- Tragedy by Steps was at the top of the charts
- The Matrix and American Beauty were released in cinemas
- The London Eye was opened



£1.4 million in unlawful bonuses.

Davies had ran Copland Community School, in Wembley, north London, for 20 years until he was suspended in 2009. In 2013 he pleaded guilty to creating a false paper trail on bonuses and allowances, and was stripped of a knighthood.

The council said that in one year alone Davies was paid £400,000, three times the "going rate" for his job.

In October, Kirsty Holmes, a former school business manager at Battersea Park School, in Wandsworth, south London, was jailed for three-and-a-half years with her partner for stealing more than £220,000 from the school.

A release issued by the Met Police said that council financial audits from 2010-12 found 15 cheques, ranging from £7,500 to £32,000, had been paid out of the school's account with no corresponding invoices.

By March 2012 the couple had fled to Gambia, buying property and a fleet of taxis, according to the council, to set up a transport company. They were arrested after returning to UK in December 2014.

Chris Whiting, a director at the financial management firm Academy Advisory, said some of the issues uncovered in the academy sector existed in council schools, and either weren't picked up or not dealt with properly.

"In the academy sector, you have more freedom and with that is the ability to do more wrongdoing should you wish to do so. But there's more accountability and checking by independent people. Wrongdoing is much more likely to be found out."

## 'Levelling up' the transparency gap

Our investigation also reveals councils are stepping away from routine inspections.

While many councils audited schools on routine cycles – ranging from between every three to seven years – others are moving to only auditing when risks are flagged.

But the government wants to shake things up. Lord Agnew, the academies minister, told *Schools Week* the "playing field" of transparency between council and academy schools "should be more level".

He said the government was "considering how this might be best achieved without creating unnecessary burdens.

"It has always been the case that academy trusts have to be more transparent than maintained schools, and are subject to financial and governance-related scrutiny by the department and the Education and Skills Funding Agency."

Micon Metcalfe (pictured), the chief operating officer at a five-school multi-academy trust in south London, said more "comparable levels of transparency" were needed.

"We can't just say 'academies are inherently bad' and lack transparency when the maintained sector does not have the same level of transparency."

Agnew had previously told *Schools Week* he was working on an "accountability matrix" between council and academies to show the difference in approach.



# News

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## Union urges teachers to resist Catholic academies plan

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The National Education Union has urged teachers at Catholic schools to resist plans by bishops to academise, even though they are contractually required to follow their bishop's command.

A letter signed by the union's joint general secretaries Mary Bousted and Kevin Courtney, and a blog post, have set out "risks" involved in conversion, including claims of poorer working conditions and doubts over the future of academies.

About a quarter of Catholic schools (525) are academies, with bishops said to be considering converting more to "safeguard their future".

Model contracts on the Catholic Education Service's (CES) website say all teachers must "exercise the ministry of a teacher under the supervision of a diocesan bishop" in line with "canon law".

Mark Leahin, the director of Parents and Teachers for Excellence, said the National Education Union (NEU) was "basically asking teachers to disobey their bishops and so put their jobs at risk".

A spokesperson for the CES said because bishops have the power to decide whether to academise, all schools must fall in line with his wishes in the long term.

Bishops also have the power to choose and remove most governors. They therefore could replace any governor who opposed academisation, the spokesperson added.

However, academisation plans have been stalled in the past.

In March the Diocese of Westminster's plans to academise 200 schools stalled after 20 showed "no interest" in making the change. The diocese said it was "crucial that a mindset of total local autonomy is challenged".

The NEU's blog says that cuts in academies "have been deeper" because trusts have to pay redundancy, whereas this is covered in maintained schools.

It also said some staff had experienced poorer maternity leave in academies and warned of doubts over the future of academies under Labour.

The CES spokesperson added many dioceses "are implementing plans to move to full academisation [...] to safeguard the future of Catholic schools".



EXCLUSIVE

## Trust helping with budget advice posts in-year deficit

JESS STAUFENBERG  
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The only academy trust contracted to help in the roll-out of the government's £2.3 million drive to help schools balance their budgets posted an in-year deficit itself.

The Education Skills and Funding Agency named nine organisations to recruit and deploy schools resource management advisers (SRMAs) to provide impartial and expert business advice to help struggling schools to save money.

The Department for Education said in summer it wanted to recruit at least 160 cost-cutting consultants in the next three years following a trial in January.

Latest available accounts for the only academy trust awarded funding, Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust, show it spent £423,101 more than it received in 2016-17.

Meeting minutes from July say that one of its three schools in Gloucestershire, the Marling School, was "running an in-year deficit".

Another of the nine awarded organisations, North Yorkshire council, also had to use £3 million from its reserves to set a balanced budget for this financial year (2018-19).

Mike Cameron, a school governor, has said that the financial position of any organisation that won a contract to help facilitate "financial support and guidance to other schools" should be "bulletproof".

The contracts are for finding and managing experienced sector leaders to become SMRAs, although it is the Institute for School Business Leadership (ISBL) that will be in charge of accrediting them.

A spokesperson for the Cotswold trust said the in-year overspend did not recognise income received in previous years that was

carried forward.

"The trust's financial position is sound, with each school maintaining a small carry-forward surplus," the spokesperson said. A qualified parent volunteer, who audited the trust's accounts in 2016-17, has also been replaced by an independent auditor.

It was reported in January that North Yorkshire council had to dip into its reserves to make up a £3 million budget shortfall for the 2018-19 financial year.

The council had to find £19.5 million savings, but could only identify £16.5 million – forcing it into its reserves.

The council said it has had to make £140 million cuts since government austerity measures were introduced in 2010. It did not respond to a request for comment.

The other seven organisations to win contracts were the Institute of School Business Leadership (ISBL), Avec Partnership Ltd based in Darlington; Babcock Learning and Development Partnership LLP based in London; Education Performance Improvement Ltd based in Leicestershire; Herts for Learning in Hertfordshire; MLG Education Services Ltd based in Warwick and Schools' Choice based in Suffolk.

The government said its earlier trial of the scheme had helped schools and trusts to find £32 million in savings – an average of nearly £500,000 a visit. The DfE would not provide the evidence for these findings.

Lord Agnew, the academies minister, said advisers would be "valued partners" for schools. The induction process would include "techniques" of integrated curriculum and financial planning.

The DfE said the funding for advisers came from its school resource management budget.









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News

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# DfE abandons Easter pilot on food poverty

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The government will spend another £9 million testing solutions to holiday hunger across England, but has abandoned plans to run a pilot in the Easter and summer holidays next year.

According to tender documents seen by *Schools Week*, the Department for Education is seeking organisations to test the "co-ordination" of free holiday provision, including "healthy food and enriching activities", for disadvantaged children in nine local authorities during the 2019 summer holidays.

It follows a £2 million pilot this summer, a compromise by the government after MPs tried to force councils to provide free meals and activities for poor pupils in school holidays.

A DfE spokesperson told *Schools Week* the 2018 pilot "reached more than 18,000 children and helped us to find out how we can best support low-income families".

The government originally pledged "a targeted pilot programme in the 2019 Easter and summer holidays", but *Schools Week* understands that following feedback from this year's programme, ministers have decided to "focus resources" on the summer.

Lindsay Graham, a food poverty campaigner, said she was "pleased to see this next step", adding she was "not surprised" the Easter pilot had been abandoned.

"My guess is that is really down to timing," she said. "Preparation for summer provision alone needs a decent planning period."

"Perhaps once the pilots are up and running the DfE should consider extending them into autumn or Christmas breaks next year instead. This might give some insight into what more would be needed at different times of the year."

The news follows a number of attempts by politicians to force the government's hand on food poverty.

In September 2017, Frank Field, a Labour MP, put forward a draft bill that placed a duty on local authorities to make sure disadvantaged pupils were fed during school breaks.

In November last year, Emma Lewell-Buck, the shadow children's minister, introduced a draft law to force the government to collect data on food security.

Field's bill was withdrawn following the government's promise of research and pilot projects, while Lewell-Buck's is due its second reading on January 25.



EXCLUSIVE

# Cyber-attacks rise in schools

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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The number of data security incidents reported by the education sector rocketed by more than 43 per cent after the introduction of general data protection regulations.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has reported a rise in reports of disclosure issues - where sensitive information is inadvertently shared - and cyber-attacks between July and September this year.

Overall, the number of data security incidents reported in education rose from 355 in the second quarter of 2017-18 to 511 in the same period this year.

This is the first data to be released since the general data protection regulations (GDPR) came into force this May.

GDPR require schools to be clearer about the data they hold about their pupils and respond more quickly to requests for copies of personal data. They must also have a data protection officer in place.

The number of incidents involving the disclosure of data reported to the ICO rose to 353 in quarter two of this year, up from 239 during the same period last year and just 26 the year before.

Common disclosure issues include the loss or theft of paperwork or data, information accidentally sent by email to the wrong recipient and inadvertent verbal disclosure.

Mark Orchison, a consultant whose firm 9ine works with schools on data protection, said the increase (in disclosure reports) was likely to be because of GDPR and work by the ICO to raise awareness.

"Schools are now actually aware of what data breaches are and are reporting these to

demonstrate compliance with the law," he told *Schools Week*.

However, he is also concerned about a rise in cyber-attacks on schools. Reports of these attacks, which can include malware, phishing and ransomware, have risen by 69 per cent in the past year alone. Between July and September 2017, there were 26 such reports. In the same period this year, there were 44.

He warned that schools "don't have the internal expertise" on cyber security and that institutions "haven't got the skills to understand the risks or what to do when it happens".

"Schools are seen as an easy target," he said. "Sending false invoices, for example, is easy money."

Earlier this year, it was revealed that fraudsters impersonating headteachers managed to con schools across the country out of tens of thousands of pounds after their phone systems were hacked and calls diverted to pricey premium-rate numbers.

Between last September and this spring, 48 schools reported the scam. Of those, 12 lost £145,124 between them and one lost £19,150.

The government recently published new draft guidance for schools on security, which includes advice on cyber-attacks. It advises schools to create boundary firewalls and internet gateways to "prevent unauthorised access to or from private networks".

Schools are also being told to use secure configuration, access level controls and the latest malware and virus controls, and put effective policies in place to "educate staff and pupils about online security".

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, said it was "important that schools remain vigilant and prepare for potential risks".



## News

# Academy trust minutes reveal boardroom rift



PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

EXCLUSIVE

Board minutes from a doomed academy trust reveal a boardroom rift between trustees who accused one of their sponsors of not “believing” in them, with another partner not “visible”.

Salford Academy Trust (SAT) was founded by the Salford Trust – a partnership between Salford City College, Salford City Council and the University of Salford – in 2012, but announced in June it would close and rebroker all four of its schools.

At the time, Lisa Stone, Salford City Council’s lead member for children’s and young people’s services, said the trust had agreed that a “more established sponsor with demonstrated experience of school improvement” would be a better option for its schools, all of which were in Salford.

However, SAT board minutes obtained by Schools Week under the freedom of information act show conflict between the SAT board and the Salford Trust. Salford City College retains 75 per cent control over the trust, with the council and university retaining 12.5 per cent each.

In December 2016, one board member described one of the three partners as not “visible”, and said half of another “didn’t give the impression of believing in SAT”.

The Salford Trust appointed members to SAT’s board, but the board discussed having to look on Companies House to see who they were, amid worries its members were meeting less than once a year.

SAT struggled to hold on to its board members, with concerns raised in October

2017 that its membership could drop to three by Christmas, rather than the recommended eight. It had just two permanent members left on its audit committee, instead of eight.

SAT is not the only collaborative effort to have struggled. Marine Academy Plymouth, a multi-academy trust sponsored by Plymouth University, Cornwall College and the Plymouth local authority, was warned in March that its namesake school could be moved to another trust after it was placed in special measures in November last year.

Julie McCulloch, director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders, said having more than one sponsor “shouldn’t in itself be a problem for the smooth running of a trust”.

SAT still runs two secondary schools and two primary schools, catering to some of the most deprived children in Salford. All four are expected to transfer to the United Learning Trust at the start of next year.

The minutes show particular concern with one secondary school, Irlam and Cadishead College, which joined the trust in July last year with a hefty personal finance initiative (PFI) bill.

At a meeting attended by regional schools commissioner Vicky Beer in December 2017, board members said that although the PFI contract had been “picked up” during due diligence, the trust had received “limited information from the local authority and not much could be done”.

The accounts show the trust paid more than £280,000 a year on PFI repayments.

A spokesperson for Salford council and university said they were working with United Learning to rebroker the schools.

## Named: 50 trusts cut ‘excessive’ CEO pay

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

The government has named the 50 academy trusts that have cut executive pay following pressure from officials.

A list sent to *Schools Week* under the freedom of information act reveals the names of the trusts that have stopped paying salaries of either £100,000 to £150,000 or over £150,000.

However, it does not include any trusts that may have cut the pay of their bosses, although their salaries may still be above the £150,000 threshold.

The Department for Education has also indicated it expects more trusts to adjust their leaders’ pay.

Most of the listed 50 trusts are small. Twenty have just one academy, while 18 have between two and five schools. Five have between six and nine schools; seven have ten or more.

The largest is the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust, which has 15 schools and, as of last August, paid a salary of between £110,001 and £120,000 to its highest-paid employee. This is equivalent to a minimum of £7,333 a school and £20.79 a pupil.

Paradigm has also reduced pay. Last year *Schools Week* revealed it was one of a handful of trusts paying their bosses more than £200,000, despite having just a few schools.

Other notable trusts on the list include the University of Chester Academy Trust, which is giving up its 13 schools amid massive financial problems, and Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust, which was investigated in 2015 following finance and governance concerns. The Chester trust will be wound up.

Watford UTC, which was given a financial warning in May this year, is also on the list.

A series of written warnings were sent to trusts as part of a government clampdown on excessive executive pay.

Lord Agnew, the academies minister, told *Schools Week* last month that he had “declared war” on excessive academy pay, especially “mediocre trusts who are paying large sums of money”.

He defended the £440,000 annual salary of Sir Daniel Moynihan, the highest-paid academy boss in England, which he said was “reasonable” because of the size of the trust, its financial situation and outcomes for pupils.



# Top trust in isolation booth legal challenge

**JESS STAUFENBERG**

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A high-profile academy trust is facing a legal challenge over its use of isolation booths in what is believed to be the first such case in the country.

Lawyers are acting for a family who claim their son spent almost a third of the last academic year in an isolation booth at a school run by the Outwood Grange Academies Trust.

The challenge is over the legality of using the units, which OGAT calls "consequences rooms", for long periods, and that pupils receive no teaching while they are inside. Lawyers also claim there is a lack of central government monitoring of the issue.

The law firm Simpson Millar, which made the application in the High Court at the end of November, has said information provided by the trust shows pupils sent to the isolation rooms spent an average number of 15 days in there over the school year.

However a spokesperson for OGAT said the figure did not refer to the number of full days spent in isolation, but to the number of "C5s" issued to a pupil, which is a code for being sent to an isolation room. It did not necessarily amount to a day. They added the trust, which runs 31 schools across the north, "follows government guidance" and its practices are part of a supportive and inclusive behaviour strategy".



Martyn Oliver

It follows an investigation by *Schools Week* into isolation rooms in October which revealed two-thirds of the country's largest academy trusts use some form of isolation, and examined the lack of clarity in government guidance about best practice.

In September, the trust's behaviour policy said pupils could be sent to the consequences rooms for up to six hours a day without teaching, and were not allowed to "tap, chew, swing on their chairs, shout out, sigh, or any other unacceptable or disruptive behaviour".

They could be escorted to lunch but had to remain silent and could visit the toilet three times for no more than five minutes.

An OGAT spokesperson said the practices are "designed to ensure that we are providing a safe and constructive environment in which children can learn".

They added pupils must have ignored four warnings and failed two detentions to get

a half-day in an isolation room. Pupils are also never left alone and are supervised by trained staff at all times.

Dan Rosenberg, a partner at Simpson Millar, said he was concerned large numbers of pupils at the trust are experiencing a "blighted education". Should the case go ahead, and judges rule in the pupil's favour, then OGAT would have to change its behaviour policy.

The firm's application lays out five grounds for action against the trust. It alleges that OGAT's isolation booths policy does not have "procedural or substantive safeguards" to ensure it meets a legal requirement that all disciplinary penalties are reasonable.

Others include that the school unlawfully failed in its duty to provide the pupil with a full-time education, the behaviour policy failed to promote the pupil's welfare, and the trust has failed to have regard to the Equality Act – specifically over pupils with special educational needs being placed in isolation.

A DfE spokesperson said: "It is for to schools to decide what forms of behavioural policy they adopt, as long as they are lawful and used reasonably. If a school chooses to use isolation rooms, pupils' time in isolation should be no longer than necessary and the time used constructively."

The trust has until the end of this month to respond to the challenge. If it disputes the claims, the High Court will then rule on whether the case can proceed.

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

## Confirmed: no more cash for sixth form colleges

Funding rates for sixth forms will remain unchanged next year, the Education and Skills Funding Agency has confirmed, dashing hopes of a cash boost for schools and colleges.

A letter from Peter Mucklow, director of further education at the agency, published on Wednesday, said that the national base rates of £4,000 per full-time pupil aged 16 to 17, and £3,300 for 18-year-olds, are being "maintained for academic year 2019 to 2020, as are the part-time funding rates".

The announcement is not unexpected, but

nevertheless comes as a blow to the Sixth Form Colleges Association, which has been fighting for extra cash.

James Kewin, the SFCA's deputy chief executive, said confirmation that the funding will stay the same "for the seventh year in a row" was "disappointing but not surprising".

"Since 2013, costs have rocketed, the government has demanded more of schools and colleges and the needs of students have become increasingly complex," he said – leading to courses being cut, a

reduction in student support services and the disappearance of extra-curricular activities.

"Attempting to defend the indefensible by pointing to small pots of cash attached to technical education or maths is something that colleges and schools find deeply frustrating," he said.

The Raise the Rate campaign, launched in October and led by the SFCA, called on the government to eventually increase funding for all 16 to 19-year-olds to £4,760 in the next spending review.

# Hinds chides Ofsted on MAT inspection plans

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, has warned Ofsted its new academy trust "summary evaluations" must not create "undue burdens" on schools.

Amanda Spielman, the chief inspector, revealed earlier this month the watchdog was introducing a new evaluation regime for trusts.

In its annual report the watchdog said groups of schools in the same trust would be inspected across one or two terms, with feedback sessions with leaders once reports were published.

At present Ofsted carries out focused inspections of groups of schools over a single week to assess how well their sponsors are doing.

Ofsted still wants to fully inspect academy trusts, something the government is resisting. A letter from Hinds to Spielman, published yesterday, hints at further tensions.

Details of the evaluations, published

yesterday, show inspectors will meet trust leaders and trustees for up to a week after their schools have been inspected.

Inspectors can also visit individual academies that are not part of inspections – as long as the trust agrees – which will allow them to get a "rounded picture".

But Hinds said Ofsted needed to "be clear that these are in no sense a school inspection" and ensure "there is no suggestion that these schools have been assessed or inspected".

Trusts would not be notified of the summary evaluations until five days before.

Previously, trusts classed as a cause for concern had batch inspections of their schools, but high-performing trusts are now included.

The Ofsted guidance said inspectors should avoid "advocating any particular

structure or arrangement".

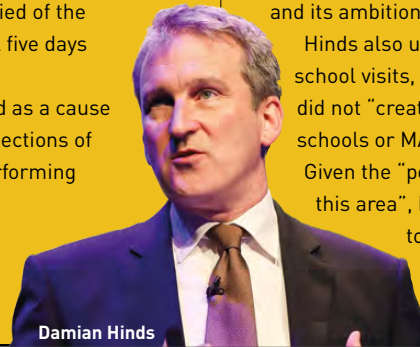
But they should "feel confident commenting on the effectiveness of the arrangements that are in place, based on evidence they gather".

Trusts have also been told there was no expectation they should prepare evidence specifically for inspectors.

Questions asked by inspectors would include the trust's impact – including practices that were uniform or more autonomous – how it monitored academies, how policies were made and its ambitions relating to the curriculum.

Hinds also urged Ofsted to make sure its school visits, as part of the evaluations, did not "create undue burdens on the schools or MAT".

Given the "potential for confusion in this area", he wanted the watchdog to consistently use the term "MAT summary inspections".



Damian Hinds

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

# More primaries are 'coasting', but they'll be left alone

More primary schools are considered "coasting" by the government, but they won't face forced intervention after ministers rowed back on "confusing" accountability rules.

This year, 640 primary schools, five per cent of those nationally, were deemed to be coasting based on their key stage 2 results, up from 524, or four per cent, in 2017.

However, the number of schools below the government's "floor standard" for key stage 2 dropped from 511, or four per cent of primary schools, last year, to 364, or three per cent this year.

Though the coasting and floor standards remain in place as a way for the government to measure school performance this year, failure to meet these standards will not prompt the same intervention as in previous years.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, announced in May that only an Ofsted 'inadequate' rating will trigger forced conversion or rebrokering of schools.

But despite this, heads this week condemned the league tables.



Paul Whiteman, leader of the National Association of Head Teachers union, said: "For their troubles, each year schools find themselves propelled to the top or condemned to the bottom of a league table based solely on a few short tests of young children in a small number of subjects. "This entirely wrong, so we shouldn't celebrate too loudly, or berate too strongly."

New key stage 2 data published yesterday (Thursday) also shows that pupils in multi-academy trusts make more progress than their peers in writing and maths but underperform when it comes to reading.

The data shows that pupils in academy trusts had an average progress score of 0.46 in writing and 0.2 in maths, compared with scores of 0.09 and 0.1 among all pupils in state-funded mainstream schools in those subjects.

However, the average progress score in reading among pupils educated in multi-academy trusts was 0, compared with 0.09 in all schools.

Disadvantaged pupils, meanwhile, made more progress in all three areas if they study in multi-academy trusts. The gap is especially large in writing, for which MAT-educated pupils had an average score of 0.15 in 2018, compared with -0.32 among all pupils.

Nick Gibb, the schools minister, has heralded the new analysis as proof of academies' success.

"Every child, regardless of their background, deserves a high-quality education and opportunity to fulfil their potential," he said.

"Headteachers are using the freedoms afforded by academy and free-school status to make this a reality, as illustrated by the progress disadvantaged pupils in multi-academy trusts are making in writing and maths."

# News: MATs

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## It's good to share, says trust group

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@PIPPA\_AK

Multi-academy trusts should be entrepreneurial and willing to take calculated risks to remain sustainable "in an age of austerity", according to a new report.

Forum Strategy, which represents a group of 80 MATs across the country, has said trusts should place a greater importance on chief operating officers, rather than finance offers, so they could focus on sharing resources and services between their schools and with other trusts.

The group's report, Sustainability through an age of austerity which was published today, said there was "great scope for individual MATs and the wider sector to realise greater efficiencies and to generate income and from a wide range of provision", but warned all "entrepreneurial" enterprises should be "driven by the needs of children".

Michael Pain, the group's chief executive, told *Schools Week*: "We are seeing some really importance services being cut back – mental health services, psychology services.

"Trusts and schools have to think about cutting back support roles instead of the frontline, but maybe you can make some of these support roles sustainable by developing them across the trust and offering them out to the wider sector at a more appropriate rate."

MATs should also "regularly audit the skills, talents and experiences of staff" and see how they could contribute to the wider MAT network through "talent directories". Staff members with particular expertise could be shared between schools.

The report said many trust chief executives "would benefit from the wider remit and operational delivery experience of a chief operating officer" in addition to or instead of a chief finance officer, to drive this entrepreneurial change, and that financial directors could report to operating officers.

The report said the government should consider a "seed funding initiative" to allow the development of cross-trust services, including catering, IT services and mental health support.

"Services designed by MATs for MATs could result in higher-quality provision for pupils, at lower costs than if provided by private profit-making providers, and with better accountability attached to the service," it said.



EXCLUSIVE

## School leaders launch staff absence insurance

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A group of school leaders has joined forces to offer an alternative staff absence insurance, with talks ongoing to roll the scheme out even further.

Education Mutual, a group of 20 school leaders based largely in the north east of England, wants to find a collaborative way for schools to pay lower insurance fees and retain some of the profits for themselves.

However, specialists are worried about the level of protection the scheme offers.

Staff absence insurance covers schools for the cost of supply teachers and often protects against longer-term absence, including jury service, serious illness and personal injury, but can also include stress and maternity cover.

The service, which launched in September, is run as a mutual, which means it is owned by its members. It does not plan to make a profit, with all money not paid out in claims returned to members through benefits such as lower fees or enhanced packages.

Nick Hurn, headteacher of Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead and chairman of Education Mutual, said: "If this is something where we can bring benefits to every school, it's worth putting our weight behind it.

"It's for schools, by schools. That's our tagline.

"I know it sounds like a utopian idea, but I'm hoping we are going to really grow and become a market leader. Then we'll be able to drive costs down and improve the service across the board."

The mutual employs an insurance company

to provide the service, including managing the quotes and claims, for which it receives 20 per cent of fees. The remaining 80 per cent is paid out in claims or returned to members in benefits.

The amount schools pay Education Mutual varies depending on their size and what kind of cover they have. Hurn said his 1,400-pupil school pays £25,000 a year for a scheme that includes health care cover for staff.

John Brady, chair of the education insurance provider Schools Advisory Service, said this fee was slightly below average for the sector, but warned the mutual could be unable to pay all its claims if it did not make enough money.

He highlighted Education Mutual was not registered with the Financial Conduct Authority, which could make it hard for schools to launch an official complaint or receive compensation if something went wrong.

However Hurn said a mutual does not require such governance.

Hurn also said members of Education Mutual would be protected from any shortfalls in the first two years by its stop-loss insurance, which is a policy designed to limit a company's losses to a specific amount.

The service has been welcomed in the wider sector. The Association of School and College Leaders, for instance, is considering promoting the service among its members.

Geoff Barton, ASCL general secretary, said: "It's a very good idea and shows how school leaders working together are bringing real benefits to the education system. That's in keeping with the spirit of a school-led system which utilises the expertise and knowledge within the profession."



# News: Free Schools

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Fact check: How many free schools have actually closed?

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
@FCDWHITTAKER

Neither ministers nor the opposition are giving the full picture when it comes to free school closures, analysis by Schools Week shows.

There have been conflicting claims in the past few weeks about the number that have closed since the programme began, but few claims are backed by official government statistics.

### The claims

On November 29, Mike Kane, the shadow schools minister, told the House of Commons that “more than 100 free schools that opened only in the past couple of years have now closed, wasting hundreds of millions of pounds in this failed programme”.

And on December 5, Nick Gibb, his opposite number, told a Westminster Hall debate that 41 schools had closed: 13 free schools, seven university technical colleges and 21 studio schools.

To add to the confusion, the New Schools Network, the government-funded charity that helps to set up free schools, insists that just 21 have closed, including eight “which have since reopened under new leadership”.

### What's the right figure?

According to official government data, 55 mainstream and alternative provision free schools, UTCs and studio schools have closed since the start of the free schools programme in 2010.

Of these, 40 have closed completely and 15 have been rebrokered to new sponsors, which technically counts as a closure, according to the government.

### Debunking the conflicting numbers

Labour's claim that more than 100 free schools have closed is similar to one made on Twitter by union figures. However, this is understood to include 44 proposed projects that never came to fruition.

When challenged on December 5 by Gibb, Kane pointed to the schools previously run by the Wakefield City Academies Trust, which shed all of its schools after a financial crisis.

However, the trust did not run any free schools.

Labour was asked to back up Kane's claims with statistics, but had not responded by the time Schools Week went to press.

Gibb's claim of 41 closures appears to come from an out-of-date list used by the Department for Education, which misses the names of 14 schools identified in official DfE records as having closed.

Schools Week understands the missing schools were not considered closed because they reopened under new sponsors. However, the department did include Tottenham UTC on its list, which was rebrokered last year and reopened as the London Academy of Excellence.

The DfE would not explain the discrepancy.

Meanwhile, the New Schools Network (NSN) list omits UTCs and studio schools, but does include rebrokered free schools.

A NSN spokesperson said: “We know that mistakes were made in the early years of the policy, and lessons have been learned from this.

“Despite the obstacles free schools have faced, they have proven themselves to be overwhelmingly successful from primary through to sixth form and, as a result, they are hugely popular with parents, teachers and the communities they serve.”



### FREE SCHOOL CLOSURES: THE DEFINITIVE LIST

SCHOOL NAME	TYPE
Dawes Lane Academy	AP free school
Bolton Wanderers Free School	Free school
Collective Spirit Free School	Free school
Discovery New School	Free school
Discovery School	Free school
Durham Free School	Free school
Floreat Brentford Primary School	Free school
Minerva Academy	Free school
Robert Owen Academy	Free school
Southwark Free School	Free school
St Anthony's Primary School	Free school
St Michael's Catholic Secondary School*	Free school
Stockport Technical School	Free school
Bradford Studio School	Studio school
Create Studio School	Studio school
Da Vinci Creative Enterprise	Studio school
Da Vinci Science and Engineering	Studio school
Devon Studio School	Studio school
Durham Studio School	Studio school
Future Tech Studio	Studio school
Hull Studio School	Studio school
Hyndburn Studio School	Studio school
Inspire Enterprise Academy	Studio school
Kajans Hospitality and Catering Studio School	Studio school
Manchester Creative Studio	Studio school
Midland Studio College Hinckley	Studio school
Midland Studio College Nuneaton	Studio school
New Campus Basildon Studio School**	Studio school
Plymouth Studio School	Studio school
Rye Studio School	Studio school
Stoke Studio College	Studio school
Tendring Enterprise Studio School	Studio school
The Studio School Luton	Studio school
Vision Studio School	Studio school
Black Country UTC	UTC
Central Bedfordshire UTC	UTC
Daventry UTC	UTC
Greater Manchester UTC	UTC
Hackney UTC	UTC
UTC Lancashire	UTC
Channeling Positivity	AP free school
CUL Academy Trust	AP free school
Atlantic Academy	Free school
Harpenden Free School	Free school
Hartsbrook E-Act Free School	Free school
Parkfield School	Free school
Royal Greenwich Trust School Academy	Free school
University Church Free School	Free school
Heathrow UTC	UTC
Medway UTC	UTC
Sir Charles Kao UTC	UTC
Tottenham UTC	UTC
UTC MediacityUK	UTC
UTC Plymouth	UTC
UTC Swindon	UTC

Source: Get Information About Schools/DfE | \* Closed as a result of a merger  
\*\* Rebrokeed, then closed

Key  
  Closed: Moved to new sponsor  
  Closed

# Schools Week Live: SSAT conference

CATH MURRAY | @CATHMURRAY\_

## Taking a break in the nurture room

Students at Aureus School in Oxfordshire who feel at risk of misbehaving are encouraged to “self-refer” to a nurture room to watch an aquarium or “sit and smell in the darkness”, says Julie Hunter, the school’s deputy headteacher.

“To nurture their minds, we need to support them, maybe by giving them that time in a space that might be more useful than being sat in a punishment room,” Hunter told school leaders at the SSAT conference in Birmingham last week.

Students who tend to have “hot spots” in their school day are allocated a “nurture card” that allows them to self-refer to the nurture room where they’ll “make a diagnosis, triage. Do they just need to sit in the nurture room, watching the aquarium, then they

can self-regulate and go back to class, or do they actually need more of a proactive approach and go into the sensory room and just sit and smell in the darkness, or sit under a weighted blanket for 15 minutes, then go back into class?

“Some teachers would say that’s a loss of academic learning. And I would say, ‘A brain in pain cannot access learning’ and actually, a student needs to be ready to learn.”

Hunter, who is trained in mental health first-aid, mindfulness and the science of happiness, has helped to develop a whole-school well-being programme for Aureus, which opened last September. It includes half an hour of mindful art, reading, science or movement for all pupils every morning.

This means that when the year 7 and 8 students “hit their first academic lesson at 9 o’clock, they



Students taking part in mindfulness activities

are recalibrated and ready for learning, no matter what their breakfast experience was, or their journey to school”.

The science team takes a neuroscience approach to its “menu of mindfulness activities”, teaching “the biology of why as a teenager you’re feeling anxious,” Hunter said. “It’s perfectly normal the way you’re feeling, but you need to understand the science behind what’s happening in your

brain, then how to control it.”

Rather than traditional silent reading, the English team prepares half an hour of “mindful reading”, using “a specially scripted values-based story” based on actual events that have happened in the past couple of weeks. This means that while the students are reading about fictional characters, “they are actually working through difficulties their peers have had in school”.

## Inspection is not a science, says Spielman

School inspection will never be a high-precision science, Amanda Spielman told delegates.

“It’s not like putting diamonds on micro-scales. All of you here know that inspection is too complicated and too multi-dimensional an activity to do that,” said Ofsted’s chief inspector.

The inspectorate has been running pilots to test the “inspectability” of components of its new framework, to check – as best it can – how well it is managing to measure the things it is attempting to measure.

“What we’ve been doing in the context of these pilots is to build in some testing of the inspectability of the constructs as they are set up in the framework, and we will carry on with that post-implementation, to make sure that what we’re attempting to inspect, we are doing as well as a human judgment process can do.”

Spielman was speaking in advance of the launch of phase 3 of Ofsted’s curriculum research, the findings of which will feed into the design of the new inspection framework.



The inspectorate ran a study last year looking at the consistency of inspector judgment, which Spielman described as just the start of her push to make sure that Ofsted “contributes to system-level improvement”.

In response to delegates’ concerns about the quality of inspectors, Spielman insisted that Ofsted has “put a lot of work into identifying inspectors who need more support and training”,

reassuring the audience that it was “important to us that everybody’s up to speed”.

While consultation on the new framework is due to start in the new year, the inspectorate has already been clear that it is shifting the focus of inspection from performance measures to a broad and balanced curriculum, and that both curriculum “intent” and “implementation” will be examined.

Spielman was keen to emphasise that “very different approaches to curriculum” can be equally effective, and “it’s absolutely not about there being only one way to do anything”.

In response to a question about schools that “game” performance tables, she said that while “the aim is not to send a giant shock through the system”, the new framework should help to identify schools that are “really focused on making sure that children have got the best possible quality of education rather than following whatever the current hot tip is for maximum performance table points”.

News

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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# Social mobility group turns its attention to schools

**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**

**@FCDWHITTAKER**

The rejuvenated Social Mobility Commission will investigate school funding issues and the teacher recruitment and retention crisis, says its new chair.

Dame Martina Milburn (pictured) also called for the government's flagship opportunity areas programme to be extended if it proved successful. She was speaking at a relaunch event at a central London college.

Twelve new commissioners were appointed earlier this year to fill vacancies left by the previous team who resigned en-masse last December in protest over government inaction.

Speaking to *Schools Week* following the launch, Milburn insisted ministers' approach to social mobility had "changed hugely" and said she was "very encouraged" by the support from Downing Street and



the Department for Education.

The revamped commission is yet to hold its first board meeting, but the new chair already has some priorities for its work on schools. She spoke of the need to attract more teachers and to learn more about the impact of school funding.

She also called for closer working between schools and further education.

Milburn, who heads the Prince's Trust charity, also threw down a gauntlet for the government over the future of its

"opportunity areas" programme in which 12 areas of low social mobility got an extra £72 million to boost things such as teacher supply and careers advice.

Although it was too early to say whether the project had been a success, she insisted its funding should continue beyond the planned three years if it proved to have made a difference.

"It would be a bit daft to set it all up and then let it go again. If it's been successful, let's extend it and let's go with what works."

Sammy Wright, the vice-principal of Sunderland's Southmoor Academy and the sole schools voice on the commission, said he would be pushing discussions about how the successes of the London Challenge could be replicated in the north east.

He said rather than "thinking about the individual end-point, the league tables, the positional competition between schools, we need to be thinking in a joined-up way where all of us are working towards those same ultimate goals".

**BAimEed**  
Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic  
EDUCATORS

You are warmly invited to the BAMEed Network second anniversary conference:

## Owning Your Professional Identity

**When:** January 19th 2019, 9am - 4pm

**Where:** University of East London, University of East London, Stratford Campus, Water Lane, London, E15 4LZ

**Who is it for?** Educators, teachers, senior leaders, from Early Years to Higher Education, and from formal and informal education settings

Join this thriving Black, Asian, Ethnic Minority (BAME) educators network for a stimulating and enriching day of keynote speakers, workshops and networking opportunities.

This year's theme 'Owning your professional identity' will feature practical workshops intended to raise awareness of the issues for BAME educators, to support your practice, and enhance your professional development and career progression.

Delegates are invited from all backgrounds, including people working in the education sector who do not identify as Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority. All those committed to anti-racist practice, equality, diversity and inclusion are welcome.

FOR MORE DETAILS AND TO BOOK YOUR PLACE, GO TO [HTTP://BIT.LY/BAMEEDCONF](http://bit.ly/BAMEEDCONF)



## News

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Tomsett to go back to Huntington

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

A leading headteacher found not guilty of unacceptable professional conduct over a sexual relationship with a former pupil will return to work next year.

John Tomsett, the headteacher of Huntington School in York, has been on leave for more than two months as a result of a Teacher Regulation Agency inquiry.

He admitted having a sexual relationship with an ex-pupil in the early 1990s, but denied unprofessional conduct. In October, a TRA panel found him not guilty, but said his actions may have brought the teaching profession into disrepute.

The Department for Education subsequently ruled that he would not be banned from teaching because such a prohibition would "clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force".

Almost a month has passed since the ruling, but York Council confirmed on Friday that Tomsett would begin a "phased return" to work on January 7.

The head said he was "delighted to be returning to the job I love at the school I love."

"I would like to thank the governing body for showing such faith in me and pay tribute to my deputies Matt Smith and Gail Naish who have led our phenomenal staff during my absence.

"I would also like to thank all those people who have shown me and my family such incredible support during the most challenging time imaginable. I would especially like to thank my wife and my two sons, who have been truly remarkable."

Tomsett faced allegations said to have taken place between 1990 and 1992, when he was employed as a teacher at Eastbourne Sixth Form College.

The TRA panel found that it "not proven" that Tomsett failed to maintain professional boundaries by conducting an inappropriate relationship with the former pupil, an allegation Tomsett denied, although some of his actions were "unwise, ill-judged and unprofessional".

A council spokesperson said: "We will continue to support the governors and Mr Tomsett as he settles into his return and look forward to welcoming him back to the school community."



## Be empathetic with vulnerable pupils, says DfE

JESS STAUFENBERG  
@STAUFENBERGJ

Teachers have been advised to "adapt how they speak" to vulnerable children – as new figures show how a "lasting negative impact" leaves them lagging behind their peers at GCSE.

Government guidance issued last week, *Improving the Educational Outcomes of Children in Need of Help and Protection*, urged teachers to communicate "empathetically" with pupils, particularly those who have experienced domestic abuse.

The guidance, part of a wider government review into children in need (looked-after, supported by social services, on child protection plans or young carers), also urged teachers to give children the space and time to talk.

Responses from 600 teachers and social care practitioners revealed most teachers already believed they followed such advice, but conversations with pupils "highlighted that this doesn't always happen".

The guidance says "effective behaviour support approaches often see behaviour as an expression of an unmet need", adding that "teachers should remain curious about the underlying causes".

The DfE also released research showing pupils known to social services lagged behind their less vulnerable peers at GCSE – even if they were no longer classed as children in need.

Pupils classed as "in need" at some point between 2011 and 2017 scored an average Attainment 8 score of 29 last year, 19 points below the average score of their peers.

And only 40 per cent of children in need reached the expected standard in reading,

writing and maths at key stage 2, compared with 64 per cent of their peers.

The gap shows the "lasting negative impact" of being in need "beyond the point" of being classed as such, according to the research.

But Sally Kelly, vice-chair of the National Association of Virtual School Heads, said the advice lacked impact unless special funding for certain vulnerable pupils was extended.

Schools get pupil premium, plus funding from the local authority, to raise the attainment of pupils who are or were in care – but not for other children classed as "in need", such as young carers or those on child protection plans.

Kelly said this gap in funding – £2,300 for looked-after or previously looked-after children, compared with £1,320 for pupils eligible for free school meals – means some vulnerable pupils "do not come with extra money attached".

The new advice, which does not have funding attached to it, is aimed at helping schools to make "proportionate adjustments to promote better outcomes" for the pupils.

It also encourages teachers to get training in recognising the lasting impact of trauma on children's attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing.

The final part of the review, yet to be published, will "build more robust evidence of what interventions work to improve the educational outcomes of children in need", according to the DfE website.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, said the advice would help teachers to support vulnerable pupils whether through "making sure a child has a consistent and trusted member of staff or taking the time to speak to a child the morning after they have witnessed domestic abuse".



# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Let's not forget, oversight of council schools isn't perfect either

Academies are closely scrutinised by the media, and rightly so. They are one of the government's flagship education reforms, and were hailed by ministers as the solution to local education authorities said to be failing their schools.

In fact, few would disagree that the rushed implementation and rapid expansion of the academies programme has contributed in a big way to the lax oversight which has allowed today's scandals to manifest.

But our investigation this week reveals that some councils have a problem with oversight, too.

More than 2,200 local authority schools were last inspected by their council more than five years ago. Compare that to academies, which have two audits every year, and the playing field starts to look a little less than level.

While council schools can pay for their own external audits, this is nevertheless a worrying sign that local authorities don't have a great grip on spending in their schools.

They don't have a great record on transparency, either. Some councils weren't

willing to share basic findings from their audits of schools with us.

And most councils wouldn't even provide information - never mind a report - of investigations they launched after audit findings warranted further scrutiny.

Comparing this to the academy sector, Lord Agnew's claims of added transparency do seem to have some substance.

The government, for instance, pledges to publish investigations into academy trusts in all but the most exceptional circumstances.

OK, as Schools Week readers will know, they don't always adhere to this. But while we're the first to beat the government up for failures when they arise, it's only fair we acknowledge that, when compared to councils, the academies sector seems to be leading the way when it comes to being open to scrutiny of school spending, albeit slowly.

Lord Agnew is unhappy about the disparity, and is busily working away on a "matrix" to compare transparency across the two sectors. We'll be interested to read and report on his findings.

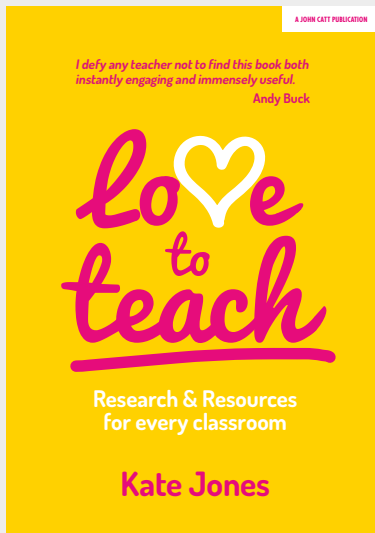
SCHOOLS WEEK



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## LOVE TO TEACH

Research and resources for every classroom

Kate Jones

Honest and practical, this exciting book combines the latest educational research with examples of what this can look like in the classroom. The resources are easily adaptable and ready to be implemented in any classroom and are grounded in Kate's own classroom practice.

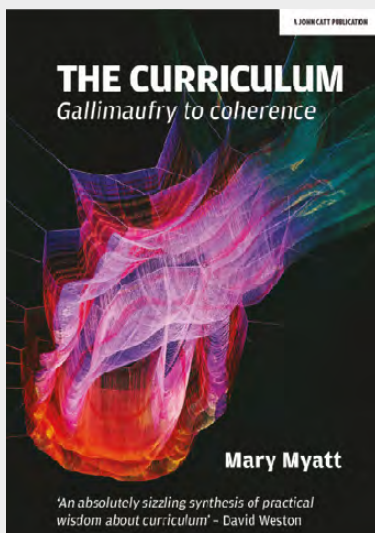
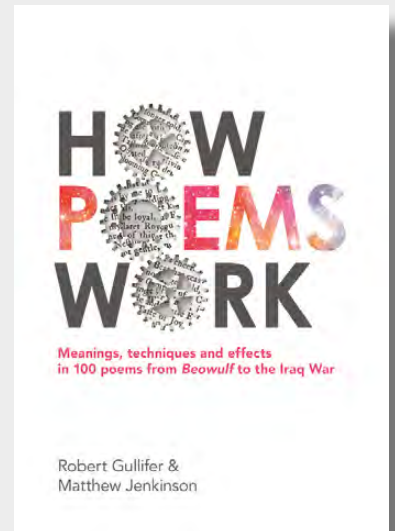
"Evidence-based, insightful, and practical" – Dr Pooja Agarwal

## HOW POEMS WORK

Meanings, techniques and effects in 100 poems from Beowulf to the Iraq War

In this annotated anthology, Robert Gullifer and Matthew Jenkinson demystify poetry while showing that there are many good reasons to pick poems apart. From Beowulf to the Iraq War, a millennium of poetry is presented to give readers a sense of how poems have evolved since we first started writing them down.

"An excellent tool for English teachers looking to enrich and improve curriculum content." – Chris Curtis



## THE CURRICULUM

Gallimaufry to coherence

By Mary Myatt

Increasingly, across the system, people are talking about knowledge and curriculum. In this important and timely book, Mary Myatt is at her brilliant best as she passionately argues that the solutions to overcoming achievement barriers lie in understanding the curriculum and in what children are meant to know.

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

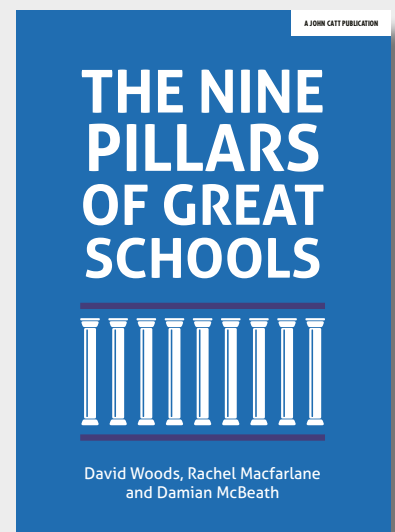
## THE NINE PILLARS OF GREAT SCHOOLS

David Woods, Rachel Macfarlane & Damien McBeath

This publication seeks to explore in depth the Nine Pillars of Greatness written by the course leaders of the Going for Great programme. It considers the range of characteristics that define great schooling, from a school's values and ethos, leadership and teaching to its curriculum, approach to professional development, learning community and ongoing self-evaluation.

'It's not hard to grow a great school. You just have to know what the basics are, do them right, and do them relentlessly. Nine Pillars of Great Schools, based on a wealth of evidence, shows you exactly how to do it'

Professor Guy Claxton





# 2018 Politics review



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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It's been a bit of a humdrum year in education policy, says Natalie Perera, neither a car crash nor a roaring success

Theresa May's inevitable reshuffle in January meant the fourth education secretary in as many years. Fresh from launching her much anticipated social mobility strategy, Justine Greening was barely given the chance to see the glossy print copy before she was replaced by the little-known Damian Hinds.

Hinds has kept a relatively low profile over the year but has, perhaps sensibly, limited his major announcements to reforming newly qualified teacher status, bringing some clarity to the blurred lines between Ofsted and the regional schools commissioners, and most recently, attempting to increase the value of technical education. So far, so good.

And there is certainly some merit in having less frenetic interference from government. It's meant that, by and large, schools can crack on with embedding new curriculums and assessments. But important issues remain.

Teacher recruitment and retention is, overwhelmingly, the Department for Education's biggest headache. Despite an increase in overall trainee numbers, recruitment to shortage subjects such as maths and physics continues to fall, lagging behind the government's targets. The DfE is rightly giving careful thought to how to fix this, but its teacher recruitment and retention strategy needs to launch soon and it needs to be game-changing.

While Hinds has worked quietly on his priorities, this has provided space



## NATALIE PERERA

Executive director,  
Education Policy Institute

### The DfE needs to be brave and raise the bar

and opportunity for others to fill the news void.

Notably, Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's chief inspector, has used her first full year in office to speak frankly and forthrightly about the challenges she thinks education faces. While the DfE awaits the outcome of Edward Timpson's review into exclusions

time meant the government was unable to make a simple, yet powerful rule change that would keep pupils on the roll of a mainstream school, even when referred to alternative provision. The fact there is cross-party consensus for this makes the legislative barrier all the more frustrating.

Another legislative barrier that will

“Teacher recruitment and retention is the biggest headache

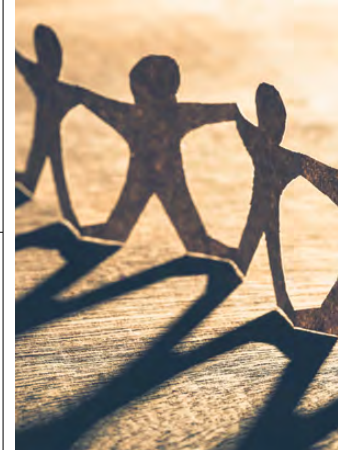
before deciding what, if anything, to do about rising exclusions and the number of children “off-rolled”, high-profile figures such as Spielman and Anne Longfield, the children's commissioner, have firmly jumped off the fence.

Both have highlighted the numbers of children (mainly disadvantaged and low-attaining) who seem to have been taken off school rolls between years 10 and 11. In the new year, the Education Policy Institute will publish a detailed report on this issue.

Meanwhile, the lack of parliamentary

frustrate some is the inability of the government to introduce a “hard” national funding formula. While 2018 was the first year of the new NFF (a testament to the Greening era), we're still no closer to knowing when the role of local authorities in setting school and academy budgets will be removed (almost) entirely. MAT leaders are, unsurprisingly, expressing their impatience.

Schools are still under financial pressure and the additional £1.3 billion in the budget this year was not enough



to prevent headteachers marching on Downing Street. Lord Agnew remained mostly under the public radar this year, until he waged a bottle of champagne that he could find “inefficiencies” in schools.

What struck me most about that provocative challenge, was the lack of definition of “inefficiency”. If next year's spending review is going to require a further tightening of belts, then ministers need to be braver about what they consider to be inefficient, beyond just back-office functions and procurement. Do they consider teaching assistants, pastoral care or small class sizes all to be inefficient?

Although there has been a growing disquiet amongst school teachers and leaders, overall, it's been neither a car crash nor a roaring success for education policy. Much more focus could have been given to improving the quality of early years provision and teacher retention schemes, particularly in the neediest areas, but (the small capital expansion to grammars aside), the department has at least met the low bar of doing no harm. Let's hope that it raises that bar in 2019.

# 2018 Secondary review



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## CAROLINE BARLOW

Headteacher, Heathfield Community College



## VIC GODDARD

Co-principal, Passmores Academy

### Looking back – with a little help from Donald Rumsfeld

**There's lots to talk about after a year in which education remains one of the few issues outside Brexit, but Vic Goddard and Caroline Barlow decide to stick to the big issues**

To paraphrase the famous quote from Donald Rumsfeld, the former US secretary of defence, there are known knowns, there are known unknowns, but there are also unknown unknowns – the things we don't know we don't know.

This sums up the divisions between large swathes of the secondary sector and those that have the control over education policy. We all "know" many things from working within schools for many years, but too often they seemingly remain "unknown" to those above us.

It would be a travesty not to start by talking about school funding as the biggest example of a "known unknown" this year. Despite headteachers leaving their schools to march to Downing Street, parent protest groups, the education select committee discussing it and MPs raising it as a parliamentary debate, the government line remains that education is funded sufficiently (or at record levels if you will!). It continues to put its fingers in its ears while repeating the false lyrics of a worn-out song that no one believes, least of all

the Office for National Statistics.

Another Rumsfeldian aspect has, of course, been Ofsted. It seems that there is a realisation of the challenges of the current framework for schools serving deprived areas, and at least some talk of positive recognition for those schools striving to raise whole communities.

The most obvious "known unknown" is the impact of continuing to grade schools. We all know that when a school is placed in a category it is harder to recruit the best teachers; in

can drive poor decisions. We know that schools graded outstanding can be left without checks for far too long, especially around safeguarding. This is not new knowledge, but yet it seems to have remained broadly unknown by those that make policy.

The "known unknown" is the impact the new Ofsted framework on judgments, leadership and workload. Little could live up to the optimistic rhetoric that is building around its potential without careful thought of

**“ The government is keeping its fingers in its ears over funding**

fact it is harder to recruit ANY teachers. We know that the fear of the cliff-edge accountability is difficult to control and

how it will play out in reality.

The issues around recruitment need urgent focus – we have known this



Donald Rumsfeld

for too long, although solutions remain unknown or unseen by those willing or able to address the causes. The now known is the issue of retention. If we can ensure that those entering the profession remain energised and enthused by their work and their ability to become experts in their craft, then we would go some way towards sustaining our best.

A positive move this year more than ever is the move to evidence-informed practice. It is hard to think of a more "Rumsfeld" aspect of 2018. The research is rarely new, but was unknown by far too many of us. A great deal of credit has to go to the likes of John Hattie, Rob Coe and, of course, Becky Allen, for being strong catalysts for this. Research evidence cannot become the next "off the shelf" remedy and there is an acceptance that context will always be a major driver of practice. However, knowing what has worked elsewhere can only be a major positive.

It is a real shame that the Department for Education is not taking notice of the mounds of data on grammar schools. The minimal impact they have on social justice and the damage to other nearby schools have very little unknown about them, but we still have had millions of pounds spent on expanding them!

We started this piece with a quote from a US politician that summed up the year and now we'll finish with another from a surprising source as a plea for next year: "Watch, listen and learn. You can't know it all yourself... anyone who thinks they do is destined for mediocrity." Donald Trump

# 2018 Primary review



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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If you think this year has been tough, just wait for the year ahead, says Allana Gay

The year opened with the backlash of Ofsted's Bold Beginnings still rumbling. The criticism from early years practitioners across the country was immense.

In April this was joined by the Standards and Testing Agency announcement of reception baseline assessment plans, with the National Foundation for Educational Research working as the preferred provider and trials set to take place next year.

With the recent news of 22 appointees to Ofsted's new forum, early years pedagogy and practice, one can only wonder whether the cart has come before the horse for early years foundation stage. I predict storm clouds ahead.

Alongside the annual call for scrapping SATs at key stages 1 and 2, there has been more urgent attention paid to testing this year. The multiplication tests for year 4 have been trialled and have been touted as being to maths what phonics are to reading, and predictably – just as there was fierce debate over the relationship between phonetic understanding and reading – the response has been mixed.

The hurricane of all the issues would have to be the provision of finance in primary schools.

It started off as a depression. The new national funding formula forced schools into adjusting budgets and removing excess provision. However, schools had not budgeted for local authority cuts being passed on to



ALLANA GAY

Interim headteacher, Vita et Pax Preparatory School

## A chilly year in primary, but storm clouds are brewing

them. From breakfast to early help to mental health provision, primary schools are at the heart of the support community. Add to this the increase in expectation for SEND provision without the additional funding needed to provide it, a move that disproportionately affects primary schools who are expected to cater fully for the needs of SEND pupils while they are waiting to get a diagnosis.

paying the first 1 per cent of the rise, the department has guaranteed to provide the remaining 2.5 per cent for mainscale, 1 per cent for upper pay scale and 0.5 per cent for leadership... for two years.

Early this year, Amanda Spielman used her position as chief inspector to support a hijab ban for under-8s, stating that schools should set their

“ The resilience of primary leaders is about to be tested

The finance hurricane does not end there. Just before the summer holidays, the Department for Education announced the decision on the long-awaited teacher pay rise. With schools

own uniform rules and avoid those who “actively pervert the purpose of education”. She linked the desire for younger pupils to wear the hijab to the development of extremist ideology.



Needless to say, this did not sit well with the Muslim Council of Britain, nor with the many primary schools that work towards social cohesion and inclusion.

In June 2018, Spielman again made headlines after stating at the Festival of Education that “many local, working-class communities have felt the full brunt of economic dislocation in recent years, and perhaps, as a result, can lack the aspiration and drive seen in many migrant communities”. To primary schools that are excelling with their provision for local communities, white or otherwise, this was a slap in the face.

The year was rounded off with some positive news, however. Ofsted reported that primary schools have the right ideas when it comes to offering a balanced curriculum that serves their community. This is not yet translated into action everywhere: a lack of teachers able to teach across the subject specialisms as well as a lack of funding often limits curriculum delivery against the desired curriculum design.

So where will that leave primary next year? The same issues of finance, curriculum and testing look set to be at the fore. The absence of bursaries for primary teaching will begin to show an impact, as well as the lack of funding for SEND pupils. In short, the resilience of leaders in the primary sector is about to be tested greatly. Let's hope that they will once again be able to be resourceful in maintaining high standards in providing the foundation of education.



# 2018 SEND review



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## ADAM BODDISON

Chief executive, Nasen

### Special needs reforms have often been overshadowed

**The challenges for SEND have reached a critical point this year, but there are still reasons to be cheerful, says Adam Boddison**

I am often asked whether the 2014 SEND reforms were the right reforms. The truth is that while the ambition and underpinning principles are sound, implementation has been problematic, and the reforms have been overshadowed by more significant changes to the educational landscape such as funding, academisation and accountability.

#### Local area SEND inspections

These have been carried out jointly by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission since 2016. In November, it was announced that those local areas required to produce a written statement of action would be revisited.

The education secretary has said he may use his "powers of intervention" in cases where insufficient progress has been made, although it is not exactly clear what this could mean in practice.

Some local areas inspected more

recently say they are being treated more harshly. I would agree that expectations have increased, but it is not unreasonable to expect that local

areas that have had longer to embed the reforms should have achieved more

#### School leadership and governance

Education professionals don't set out to provide a poor experience to learners with SEND. However, there are tensions in the school system that pitch our ethical values against perceived success.

For example, schools can be penalised for being inclusive. Many schools subsidise the cost of meeting individual needs from the wider school budget, so inclusive schools are disproportionately impacted by funding pressures. Similarly,

the emphasis placed on academic outcomes means that inclusive schools are too often deemed as failing.

The SEND code of practice 2015 argues that every teacher is a teacher of SEND, but for this to happen, we need every leader to be a leader of SEND. In 2018, the focus for embedding the SEND reforms has tilted towards school leaders and governors and the argument that SEND should have the same status as pupil premium is gaining ground.

In November, the national SENCO workload survey showed that 74 per cent of SENCOs do not have enough

**“ Schools can be penalised for being inclusive**

time to ensure that the needs of pupils on SEN support are met. With 80 per cent of learners with SEND at the SEN support level, school leaders and governors should be ensuring their needs are a priority.

#### Continuum of provision

The very notion of inclusion has been under threat this year in some parts of education. Exclusions are too high; illegal off-rolling remains a challenge. Too often, alternative provision is used as a consequence of permanent exclusion rather than as a preventative measure. Edward Timpson's review of exclusions is due in January

#### External scrutiny

There has been significant scrutiny of SEND policy and provision this year. Record numbers of parents have been holding local authorities to account through tribunals and the education select committee has conducted an extensive inquiry into SEND. The National Audit Office's review of SEND spend is set to be published in the new year.

#### Looking ahead

The challenges have reached a critical point, but there are good reasons to be positive about 2019. First, the year will begin with an Ofsted consultation on its new inspection framework. There is an opportunity here to ensure that no school can be outstanding unless it is also inclusive, which would further incentivise school leaders and governors to prioritise SEND.

Second, the education secretary has made it clear that SEND is one of his top priorities. Next year he will have a chance to prove this by ensuring that the government's comprehensive spending review does more to ensure the ambition of the SEND reforms is realised.

Last, the government has committed to supporting a number of free national initiatives to support SEND in schools, such as Whole School SEND and the SEND Gateway. The coming year will be a critical point in determining whether the SEND reforms die or fly.

# 2018 Governance review



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



**NAUREEN KHALID**  
Trustee and chair of governors at two London academies, primary and secondary



schools commissioner, told the National Governance Association's London regional conference in April that it was not good practice for the lead executive in an academy trust to also be a trustee. NGA and many trustees agree, as this blurs the accountability line in MATs.

It should not come as a surprise that funding (or the lack thereof)

comprehensive spending review in 2019.

Governors should be thinking about the curriculum in the coming year. Amanda Spielman has discussed the importance of a challenging curriculum, stating that "exams should exist in service to the curriculum, rather than the other way around." She also said that "too few governing bodies look to understand curriculum quality or hold leaders to account for the curriculum, beyond looking at test outcomes".

Ofsted is planning to move focus away from headline data and reflect more on how schools are planning their curriculum and providing their pupils with a broad, balanced education. A formal consultation on its new draft framework will take place from January, with implementation planned from September.

All governors should be governors of SEND! As such, I was happy to see special needs discussed nationally this year and the SEND Governance Review Guide published. The education select committee announced inquiries into support for children and young people with SEND, and quizzed the education secretary about exclusion of children with SEND.

Last but not least, Sir David Carter stepped down in August. He often has talked about the crucial role of governance and thinks governors and trustees are the "unsung heroes of the education system". Thank you, Sir David.

## At least Sir David gave us a pat on the back

**It's been a busy year for the unsung heroes of the education system, says Naureen Khalid**

Accountability and transparency stand out as the two major governance themes this year.

In January, Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee, wrote to Lord Agnew, the academies minister, expressing concerns over a "lack of transparency and accountability" in the multi-academy trust (MAT) system, adding that parents, staff and pupils had been left "in the dark over who is running their schools".

Lord Agnew subsequently wrote to all trust chairs, reminding them of the requirement to ensure that trust governance contacts were up-to-date, as well as raising the thorny issue of chief executive pay.

This is something that trustees need to think carefully about. After MAT accounts were published in February, the National Association of Head Teachers called for a national framework for salaries to "avoid gaps opening up between the lowest and highest-paid people in any school".

Eileen Milner, the chief executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency, then wrote to the chairs of trusts that were paying two or more

salaries between £100,000 and £150,000, asking them to justify their decisions. The Academies Financial Handbook requires trust boards to ensure their approach to executive pay is transparent, proportionate and justifiable.

Amanda Spielman, the chief Inspector, continued her push to be able to inspect MATs. While the Department for Education has yet to grant any expansion of Ofsted's remit, the inspectorate has announced changes "within the limitations of our existing powers" that will allow them "to get a better handle on quality across a MAT".

Sir David Carter, the national

**“Governors should be thinking about the curriculum**

continued to make headlines. In September up to 2,000 headteachers marched to Westminster to deliver a letter to Philip Hammond, the chancellor, outlining how seven years of budget cuts had led to financial crisis in many schools.

The National Foundation for Educational Research published a report on the impact of changes to school funding, noting that schools were expected to face significant ongoing cost increases. Damian Hinds, the education secretary, acknowledged the cost pressures that schools were experiencing, but suggested there would be no additional funding ahead of the

# 2018 Business review



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



## STEPHEN MORALES

Chief executive, Institute of School Business Leadership



## Let's take control and be bold about what we want

**Brexit may have dominated the past year, but that shouldn't stop educators seizing the opportunity to develop their own narrative for a progressive education system, says Stephen Morales**

I was impressed by Damian Hinds the first time that I met him at a reception he hosted at Sanctuary Buildings just days after his appointment as education secretary. He was complimentary about his predecessor, Justine Greening, whom I believe many of us thought was a force for good. He was certainly in listening mode and appeared sympathetic about the key challenges facing the sector: teacher workload, recruitment, assessment, the confusion over the roles of regional school commissioners and Ofsted, and, of course, funding.

As the leader of the Institute of School Business Leadership, it should come as no surprise that I have been encouraged by the faith that Hinds and his ministerial team have put in our professional community to help schools not only survive, but thrive.

The introduction of school resource management advisers (SRMAs) to

help schools and trusts improve their financial health and ensure their future sustainability is importantly symbolic for the school business

have painted a very gloomy picture (one that I don't recognise as typical) and 2,000 headteachers marching on Downing Street suggests

**“ We must not hang on for dear life to the status quo ”**

leadership community. Despite some headlines suggesting that the SRMA initiative is lining the pockets of expensive consultants, in reality most advisers are practising school business leaders (SBLs) whose deployment fees will go back to their schools.

This initiative, led by the expert knowledge and experience of practising SBLs, has already saved schools an estimated £35 million.

The test for the education secretary as we approach 2019 will be: beyond the warm words and supportive rhetoric, what has actually changed for schools and their leaders?

Recent television documentaries

everything isn't rosy in the education garden.

As education leaders, we often criticise the government for over-prescription, constant change and piling on new initiatives. Perhaps with the government in near paralysis over Brexit, it is the right time for us to take the initiative and seize the opportunity to develop our own narrative for a progressive education system that we all believe in.

If we are to develop as a truly sector-led, self-improving system, we must begin to take control with a solution-based approach underpinned by evidence not

anecdote.

Whilst it is right and appropriate that we continue to challenge government policy, we should be careful that negativity and pessimism don't begin to define us and come at the expense of a more positive and progressive dialogue that encourages innovation and appropriate change. We must not hang on for dear life to the status quo, entrenched behaviours and outdated approaches to the running of our schools.

There is no doubt that 2018 has been a difficult year; cost pressures are taking a firm hold, there are more children with special educational needs and the current political uncertainty is fuelling division within our communities.

In November, 300 school business leaders attended ISBL's national conference. Despite the political and fiscal backdrop, all the delegates were optimistic and had a can-do attitude. They recognised the challenges, but demonstrated determination, resilience and resolve, despite the obstacles, barriers and difficult decisions.

As educators we must try to remain optimistic and enthusiastic if we wish to inspire the young people we serve. Let's try to do the best with the resources available to us, let's be brave enough to prioritise what's important and what's not, let's think creatively, let's not get bogged down by bureaucracy and compliance and let's be bold with a vision for our own education system.



# Books for Christmas!

Stuck for a present for a teacher? Try our 'nerdy books for Christmas' list.

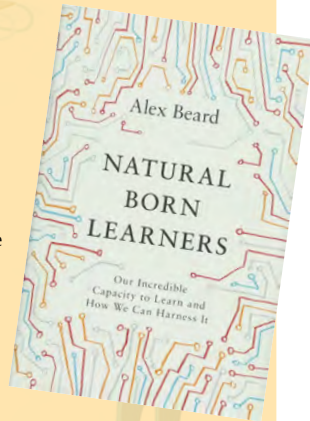
## For policy nerds

### Natural born learners

By Alex Beard  
Publisher: Orion

Natural Born Learners is not dissimilar, in scope or ambition, to Lucy Crehan's Cleverlands. But while Crehan travels the globe looking at school system design, Beard visits not just schools, but also cognitive scientists and tech companies, in his quest to discover what science can tell us about optimising learning.

The tone is one of unbridled optimism – mostly about the potential of science to revolutionise education – with plenty of real-world examples to mull over.



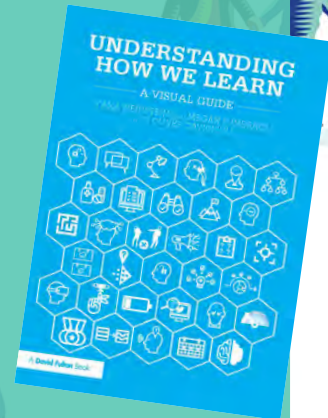
## For classroom teachers

### Understanding how we learn: A visual guide

By Yana Weinstein and Megan Sumeracki, with Oliver Caviglioli  
Publisher: Routledge

This beautifully illustrated book is an accessible, fascinating journey through research methods, findings and application, designed to facilitate communication between researchers, teachers and students.

It gives the impression that if every teacher in the country could apply these findings (and there's nothing so complicated that this couldn't be done), the benefits to student learning could be enormous.



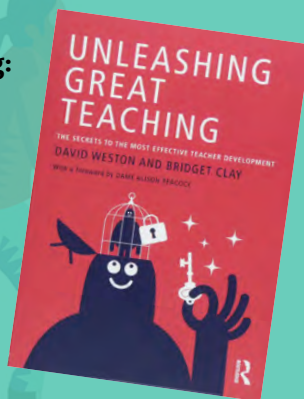
## For anyone nurturing teachers

### Unleashing great teaching: The secrets to the most effective teacher development

By David Weston and Bridget Clay  
Publisher: Routledge

Unleashing Great Teaching is an optimistic book on professional development that suggests that with access to the right resources, expertise and school leadership, the profession has bags of potential to move itself forward.

It's full of "do and don't" checklists for all levels, and helpful case studies of what excellent professional development looks like (and doesn't look like!).



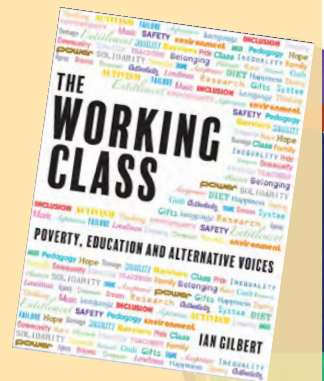
## For social justice warriors

### The working class: Poverty, education and alternative voices

By Ian Gilbert  
Publisher: Crown House

A collection of essays from different authors, The Working Class offers a new way of thinking, challenging educational stereotypes linked to "disadvantage" – such as the idea that being from a deprived background automatically labels you as a drain on society.

Together, they form a powerful moral argument for why teachers should go above and beyond for children from challenging backgrounds.



# Books for Christmas!

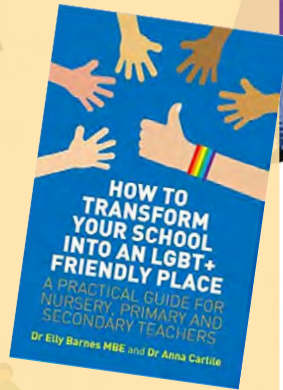
## For school leaders

### How to transform your school into an LGBT+ friendly place

By Dr Elly Barnes and Dr Anna Carlile  
Publisher: Jessica Kingsley

Elly Barnes, a former teacher and now chief executive of Educate & Celebrate – an LGBT+ education charity praised by the Department for Education and Ofsted – has collaborated with Anna Carlile, a university lecturer, to write a practical toolkit for schools.

It's an accessible read that explores and explains the relevant policies, curriculum content and LGBT+ networks that are available.



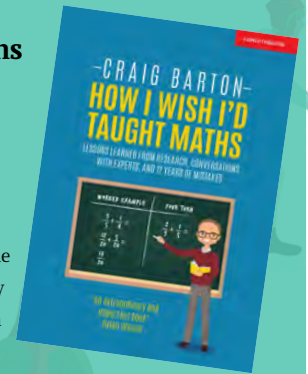
## For maths teachers

### How I Wish I'd Taught Maths

By Craig Barton  
Publisher: John Catt

A thorough guide to maths teaching that one would expect from the creator of the hugely popular Mr Barton's Maths podcasts. And in true Mr Barton style, if you only take away three things:

1. This book is essential reading for maths teachers at any career stage.
2. This book is broken down into very practical and useable sections.
3. This book is so readable that it continues to answer your own questions as they inevitably arise.



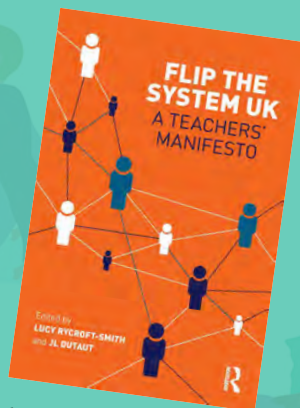
## For the rebels (and rebel leaders!)

### Flip the System UK: A Teacher's Manifesto

Edited by Jean-Louis Dutaut and Lucy Rycroft-Smith  
Publisher: Routledge

An exciting book that brings together a wide range of people all calling for teachers to take control of education.

While this book will inform and empower classroom teachers, it might be school leaders and policymakers who most need to read it – as they are probably best placed to do what it calls for!



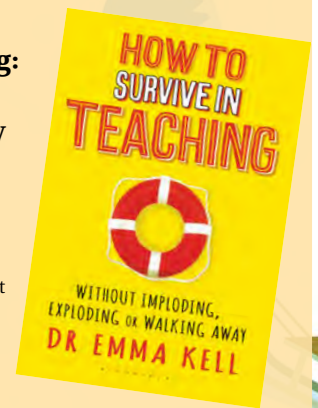
## For teachers thinking of giving up

### How to Survive in Teaching: Without imploding, exploding or walking away

By Dr Emma Kell  
Publisher: Bloomsbury

Written by a long-time teacher and current middle leader, *How to Survive in Teaching* describes itself as “a celebration and a call to action”.

Its premise is that while the profession may be in crisis, there are some practical steps teachers, leaders and policymakers can take to stem the tide of staff imploding, exploding and leaving the profession in their droves. A heartening message!





# Research

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

## How to improve your lesson planning

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

I was recently asked for evidence on ways to help teachers improve their lesson planning. My immediate reaction was a blank, but I was reassured to find that this was not just due to my own ignorance: in maths at least, “very few studies have explored how teachers can be deliberately supported to construct high-quality mathematics lesson plans (Ding and Carlson, 2013)”. I wondered what guidance I could find on helping teachers identify what they hoped students would learn and how they would achieve it.

I began by taking a step back and reviewing a paper that offers fascinating insight about effective planning. Carol Livingston and Hilda Borko studied a handful of novice and expert teachers, reviewing their planning, observing lessons and asking teachers to reflect on how they went. They found experts had a plan, but they didn’t sit down to write one: instead, they drew on their existing knowledge of powerful explanations and examples, chewing over approaches with their current class at odd moments.

Novices, by contrast, planned in time-consuming, inefficient ways, as they slowly made sense of what they were trying to teach. Experts’ plans were not too detailed or too tightly timed: they responded to students’ questions and suggestions as they arose, using their knowledge and experience. Novices’ incomplete knowledge prevented them from adapting their plans during lessons.

Livingston and Borko suggest novices can be helped to plan better by developing their knowledge of what they are teaching and skill in “pedagogical reasoning”: they invite mentors to explain their routines, model their thinking and provide feedback on novices’ plans.

[Livingston, C., Borko, H. \(1989\). Expert-Novice Differences in Teaching: A Cognitive Analysis.](#)



[and Implications for Teacher Education. Journal of Teacher Education 37.36-42.](#)

Ding and Carlson (2013) put some of these ideas to the test. They taught teachers principles of cognitive science, then tried to help them put those principles into practice. They found that, initially, teachers could not see how to incorporate principles into their planning. They received “timely and targeted” feedback across three lesson plans, helped them to incorporate the desired measures (such as deep questions) and understand the cognitive science principles better: they ended up with “high-quality revised plans”. Nonetheless, they found that the quality of teachers’ plans dipped again once the course was over: ongoing support is important. Ding and Carlson conclude that “instead of asking teachers to practise writing many lesson plans, teacher educators and professional developers may first focus on one plan and ask teachers to make revisions.”

[Ding, M. and Carlson, M. \(2013\). Elementary teachers' learning to construct high-quality mathematics lesson plans: A Use of the IES Recommendations. The Elementary School Journal, 113\(3\), pp.359-385.](#)

Two other perspectives:

- The Independent Workload Review Group work on planning noted that it was the planning of a sequence of lessons that matters – more than individual lesson plans; planning will be easier if teachers have fully-resourced schemes of work, specific planning time, and high-quality resources, such as textbooks.

[Independent Teacher Workload Review Group \(2016\) Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking: Report of the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group. Department for Education.](#)

- We might help teachers to make lessons structures that they use often routine: such as activities to plan an essay, read a text closely, or practise a conversation in a foreign language. Such structures “create a container within which a novice might rehearse the relational and improvisational work that teaching requires” – reducing the need for planning. This paper shows how they can work in teacher education.

[McDonald, M., Kazemi, E. and Kavanagh, S. \(2013\). Core Practices and Pedagogies of Teacher Education. Journal of Teacher Education, 64\(5\), pp.378-386.](#)





# Reviews



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

@DEBRAKIDD

**My Top 10 Picturebooks 2018 (actually 13)**

@smithsmm

Anyone teaching children to love and appreciate books should follow Simon Smith, whether they are primary or secondary practitioners. His blog posts and tweets are an encyclopedia of children's literature for reading in and out of class and in this one he shares his favourite picturebooks. Don't be fooled into thinking that picturebooks are for infants – Smith shows how sophisticated texts can be used to develop vocabulary and inference, imagination and knowledge to build inquiry and deep thinking. Taking images and texts from the books, he explores how they might link to wider themes and ideas and how they can enhance learning and life.

**Support #BanTheBooths campaign**

@simonkidwell

#BantheBooths, like "Ban the Bomb", is not a subtle hashtag/catchphrase, but it's certainly getting a lot of attention. The campaign aims to end the practice of using isolation booths in schools as a mode of punishment, often for

## TOP BLOGS of the week



minor infractions. The slogan has generated a lot of debate and posturing, but beyond the binaries, there is some thoughtful exploration of the differences of removing children from class for support and learning, for punishment or to create a hinterland between inclusion and permanent exclusion. In this post, Simon Kidwell, a headteacher, thoughtfully and intelligently explores the issues around striking that delicate balance of meeting one child's needs while attending to the rights of the others, offering a balanced and well-argued case for not resorting to exclusion by isolation as a means of control. Whatever your instinctive response to the hashtag, take the time to read this point of view to better understand where the campaign is coming from.

**Teaching for Recall, Fluency and Understanding: Blog round-up for easy access.**

@teacherhead

Tom Sherrington offers a useful round-up of blog posts and literature about recall. He uses a great visual on mapping coherence across a timeline to show

students how different subjects can link. For anyone looking to find useful information for getting the basics established, this is a great place to start.

**In pursuit of a secure base? Education commentary in times of socio-political uncertainty**

@Dr\_Pam\_Jarvis

Writing on the blog pages of BERA (the British Educational Research Association) Pam Jarvis explores the connections between economic uncertainty and state control and how this manifests itself in education policy. She explores how Twitter responds to such times and how "a range of dogmatic, unevidenced opinion pieces on psycho-educational topics" takes over from measured and complex research that can't offer simplistic solutions. This is a controversial piece, but timely and thought-provoking. A piece for our time and a reason to step back and think about how we can better manage our responses to children and to wider societal stress.

**All hail! In the inclusive classroom, the mini whiteboard is queen**

@Jules Daulby

In this little gem Jules Daulby takes the humble mini-whiteboard (probably languishing in the backs of cupboards from our Assessment for Learning days) and explores why and how they can be used to support the learning and relationships of SEND children. While the focus is on special needs, the examples are useful for all learners and help to reinforce some key principles of learning – modelling, scaffolding and dual coding among them. Providing helpful images and examples, Daulby shows how the simplest of ideas can have greatest effect.



**We need more great academy sponsors to step up, warns Sir David Carter**

**Jerry Baker**

The multi-academy trust model is not the only model and I would suggest the jury is still out as to the effectiveness of it overall. A figure of 60 per cent success is quoted as a historical and significant shift – well, our NAHT Aspire programme averages 69 per cent at a fraction of the cost and without the need for the school to become an academy. In fact it was the DfE that sponsored the pilot in 2013 to work with double RI schools. When the evaluation was published in 2016 it proved to be a viable and credible alternative that unfortunately did not fit the political message of the time: to academise everything. The school system is struggling for capacity and an open mind to how that capacity is provided is needed. Not every school and its community want to be an academy and a choice of support for schools and their governing bodies should continue to be an option for them.

**League tables to score schools on how many pupils take up higher apprenticeships**

**Patrick Tucker**

I have never read so much nonsense, the snobbery is not about school-leavers straight into higher-level apprenticeships. Developing schools/parents lack of understanding is key. I am working with a few law firms who are developing a progression route from paralegal (L3) through to the L7 solicitor apprenticeship. These L3 school-leavers would not be on the league table. Therefore, the league tables are already faulted as it's not a true reflection on skills or employers' needs or even snobbery.

**What do Ofsted really think on exclusions?**

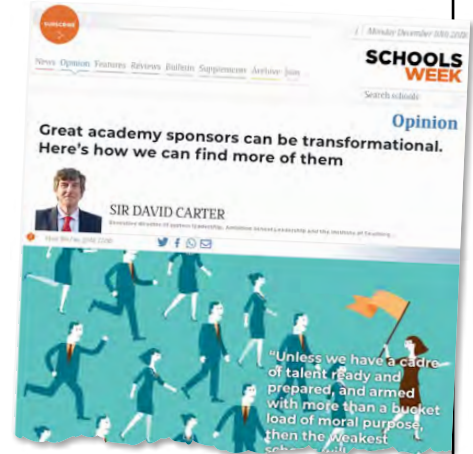
**@DaveBSheppard**

It would help if we had a clear statement about mobility too, and that Ofsted and the DfE stopped using the undefined and inaccurate term "off-rolling". This term has no meaning in law and is used to cover a wide range of processes, many of which are lawful and proper.

**REPLY OF THE WEEK** @mdrakes1

**We need more great academy sponsors to step up, warns Sir David Carter**

There still isn't enough recognition for schools who are doing this work when they are then inspected. Supporting schools, leading a teaching school alliance and sending out SLEs can impact on your own school + 8 -. Couldn't a specific ref point be included in the grade 1 box?



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

**'This is about social mobility': trust boss defends exclusions record**

**Michael**

Martyn Oliver is absolutely right! Challenging schools need very clear behaviour expectations to improve, "suspension" is an important tool in OGAT's large and high-quality toolbox. Inclusion and social mobility are simply woolly soundbites unless students are successful. Organisations with a successful track record are genuinely transforming lives and OGAT is one of them. There are two groups that need to be included: those whose behaviour and attitudes need to be changed, but also the large majority who have their schools, lessons and activities regularly disrupted. Anyone who thinks that low exclusions automatically indicates either good behaviour and/or a commitment to inclusion and social mobility is in cloud-cuckoo land. Having the will and courage to do what needs to be done comes from values and commitment.

**Pat**

OGAT is right to rebrand it a suspension as too many parents/ non-school people think exclusion is permanent. I've worked for two Outwoods in my region and have to say their systems really do calm what were chaotic schools. But it's a very much a system-led academy trust, works for most pupils, but not all. It is obsessed with results, it's all the SLTs talk about.

# WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

### MONDAY

Talking about Brexit.

### TUESDAY

Still talking about Brexit.

### WEDNESDAY

The prime minister found herself in a spot of bother this week. Something to do with Brexit, we hear.

But never fear, Damian Hinds came to her rescue, with not one, not two, not three, but four tweets backing his boss. "Let's all get behind @Theresa\_May to complete the job on brexit and keep on delivering on jobs & growth and tackling injustices," he gushed at 8.21am after news broke of the impending crunch vote.

"Let's keep moving forward with @theresa\_may," he added at 9.46am, sharing some "good stats" from the Treasury.

At 11.14am, he tweeted that "Now, more than ever, we need the resolute determination of @theresa\_may as we complete Brexit, grow our global trade, and protect jobs & livelihoods".

And at 9.32pm, following the vote, Hinds said: "Now that colleagues have rightly backed @theresa\_may to get on with delivering Brexit, we must move forward together."

In case anyone was in any doubt, Damian Hinds is backing Theresa May.

### THURSDAY

Given the volume of data and guidance pumped out by various arms of government this week, it's not surprising that a few things didn't go according to plan.



First Ofqual had to reissue its report on this summer's exam series after including an incorrect graph.

The original document said the number of malpractice allegations from whistleblowers had doubled, when in fact it had halved. Oops!

Later it was the Department for Education's turn to apologise after they got their dates muddled in a

press release about new primary school outcomes data.

Their original press release included a claim from Nick Gibb that "these statistics show that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers has closed by 13% since 2010".

In fact, it was supposed to say that the gap has closed by that amount since 2011.

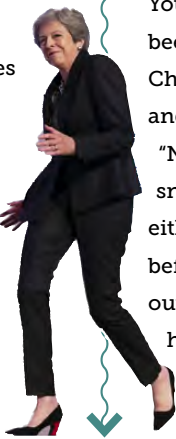
Still, at least a press release is easier to correct than the parliamentary record, which regularly features outlandish and misleading claims from ministers of the crown.

Then again, if you think the DfE has had a bad year, spare a thought for long-suffering public servant Toby Young, who has written another article about how much everyone hates him.

For those who have somehow forgotten, free-school fan Young was forced to make a fast exit from his roles at both the Office for Students and New Schools Network after journalists inconveniently found offensive tweets, including about the size of women's breasts and one in which he refers to a gay celebrity as "queer as a coot".

In an article for the Spectator this week, Young spoke of his displeasure at having been disinvited from his usual raft of Christmas carol concerts, nativity plays and parties.

"Not a single invitation," wailed snowflake Tobes. "No Christmas cards either," he complained in disbelief, before blaming it all on the "Twitter outrage mob" rather than, you know, his well-documented ability to Lose Friends and Alienate People™.







## SQA SEEKING QUALIFIED TEACHERS TO ACT AS TEST ADMINISTRATORS

SQA is looking to recruit Test Administrators to manage the administration process within schools during the Key Stage 1 Technical Pre-test. SQA has been commissioned by the Standards and Testing Agency to conduct a Technical Pre-test from 23 April – 3 May 2019. The work is on an occasional basis and involves visiting schools to administer tests that are of a particularly confidential nature.

The rates of pay vary dependent upon the nature and scale of the work. Fees and expenses will be paid for all work undertaken as well as full training provided.

The main duties of a Test Administrator are:

- Ensure that all aspects of the test administration is carried out meticulously and to the set instructions

- Communicate with various SQA/Schools/STA within agreed timescales set out by SQA
- Receive test materials and ensure secure storage and management of them
- Visit participating schools to administer the tests in accordance with SQA standards

Applicants must have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and key stage 1 and/or 2 experience. If you would like to be considered for this role, please visit our website [www.sqa.org.uk/testadministrator](http://www.sqa.org.uk/testadministrator). Application closing date is Sunday 20 January 2019.

If you have any queries regarding this role, please email [adminbank@sqa.org.uk](mailto:adminbank@sqa.org.uk) or telephone 0345 278 8080.



### HEADTEACHER Witham, Essex

**Salary:** L16-L22 (£57,934 - £67,008 per annum)  
**Start Date:** April 2019  
**Closing Date:** 11th January 2019 at noon  
**Interviews:** 29th January 2019

Howbridge C of E Junior School is a three-form entry junior school with strong links to the Parish of St Nicolas, Witham and part of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust. We are a caring school, built on Christian Values, where every child is a happy, confident and successful learner.

We are looking for an inspirational and committed leader with the vision, confidence and skills to lead our school forward into its next exciting stage of development. We embrace the future with optimism and with a passion to deliver the very best education for every child.

For more information and to apply, please visit;  
<http://www.vineschoolstrust.co.uk/vacancies>.

Visits to the school are encouraged and welcomed. Please contact **Elizabeth Williams** on **01245 294496** to arrange a visit.



### HEADTEACHER, Great Clacton, Essex

**Salary:** L15-L21 (£56,434 - £65,384 per annum)  
**Start Date:** April 2019  
**Closing Date:** 11th January 2019 at noon  
**Interviews:** 28th January 2019

Great Clacton C of E Junior School is a two-form entry junior school with strong links to the local Churches of St John's and St Mark's, Clacton and part of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust. A caring school, built on Christian Values, where every child is encouraged to Learn, Believe and Achieve.

We are looking for an inspirational and committed leader with the vision, confidence and skills to lead us into the next exciting stage of development, as we embrace the future with a passion to deliver the very best education for every child.

For more information and to apply, please visit;  
<http://www.vineschoolstrust.co.uk/vacancies>.

Visits to the school are encouraged and welcomed. Please contact **Elizabeth Williams** on **01245 294496** to arrange a visit.



## Bradon Forest School

*Challenge and aspire to achieve beyond expectations.*



The Trustees of the Athelstan Trust wish to appoint an excellent teacher and school leader to the post of Headteacher at Bradon Forest School.

The Athelstan Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust formed in 2015 consisting of three secondary Schools (Malmesbury School, Bradon Forest School and The Dean Academy) in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.

Bradon Forest is a successful and popular 11-16 school with approximately 1,000 students on roll in the rural village of Purton, surrounded by stunning Wiltshire countryside with easy access to the M4. Bradon Forest School was inspected in April 2016 and judged Good in all areas. All the schools share a deep commitment to delivering an excellent comprehensive education to all the students in the Trust.

At Bradon Forest, we continue to update and develop our attractive site following the construction of our new state of the

art sports hall in 2016, adding a new food and textiles block in the spring of 2018. Our mix of modern and traditional learning environments gives our school a unique, individual feel that is welcomed by students and parents alike. We provide a friendly, caring, creative and purposeful environment. Students are encouraged to take every opportunity given to them both academically and in extra-curricular activities. We strive to develop confident young adults who show both respect and resilience and who have high aspirations for their futures.

This is a very exciting time to be joining the Trust where we all work together to raise standards in all our schools. This post offers a talented and ambitious school leader a wonderful opportunity to work in a supportive Trust that is committed to high quality Professional Development for its staff. We are in the early stages of developing a new joint sixth form with Malmesbury School.



## The Athelstan Trust

**We wish to appoint a Headteacher from September 2019**

**Closing Date:** 12 noon on Monday 7th January 2019 – Interviews on 17th and 18th January 2019.

Interested applicants are invited to send a letter of application, no more than two sides of A4, outlining how your skills and experience make you a suitable candidate for this post. An application pack is available on the school's website. Please send your completed application form and letter to Jo Cummings at the email address below.

Further information:

<https://www.bradonforest.org.uk>

Jo Cummings Athelstan Trust - Company Secretary [admin@theathelstantrust.org](mailto:admin@theathelstantrust.org)  
Bradon Forest School, The Peak, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 4AT.

# Customer Success Manager



### Why

Access to a website does not change children's lives. Helping teachers deeply embed a great learning system into the everyday habits of school life can. Join us at HegartyMaths to help our teachers and schools improve students' life chances.

### Role

All of our 1,000+ partner schools have been trained by the founders so that implementation of HegartyMaths and service to our schools are central to our approach. We now want to build a team of Customer Success Managers to take this vital function forward and ensure our service and onboarding is exceptional and that HegartyMaths is always making a significant positive difference.

This is an office-based role in our Harrow (London) office. You will be responsible for

1. Delivering engaging online webinar training sessions for each new school so they get the best start possible;

2. Pro-actively engaging with our existing schools to ensure they are looked after, using our platform well and have the support they need;
3. Providing first-line customer support to our schools;
4. Creating on-boarding resources to ensure teachers have the tools to help themselves.

### Characteristics

We are not looking for Glengarry Glen Ross ("ABC") style sales professionals. We want candidates to offer a more consultative and training-based approach. Key characteristics include:

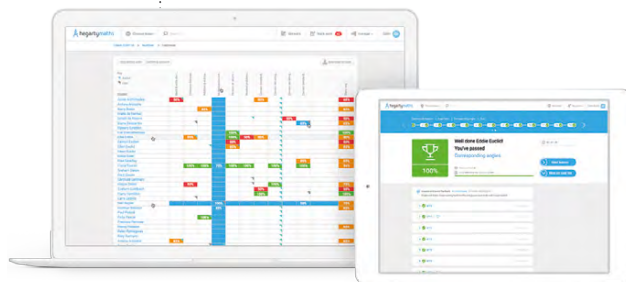
1. Experience teaching maths and working in schools;
2. Empathy with maths teachers;
3. Taking pride in delivering fantastic service;
4. Being a great listener;
5. Having a personable and friendly demeanour.

### Benefits

1. Salary will be competitive and can vary dependent on experience and skill set;
2. 27 days of annual leave plus 8 public holidays.

### How to apply

1. Please send a cover letter and CV to [jobs@hegartymaths.com](mailto:jobs@hegartymaths.com).
2. Interviews will be conducted early in the new year and we are looking to employ soon after interview.





## HEAD OF PROGRAMME, ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

### THE ORGANISATION

Established in 2004, the Centre for Social Justice is an independent think tank that studies the root causes of Britain's acute social problems, and aims to address them through recommending to government practical, workable policy interventions. The CSJ's vision is to give people in the UK who are experiencing the worst multiple disadvantage and issues of injustice, every possible opportunity to reach their full potential.

The majority of the CSJ's policy work is organised around five pathways to poverty, first identified in our ground-breaking 2007 report, Breakthrough Britain. These are: family breakdown; educational failure; economic dependency and worklessness; addiction to drugs and alcohol; severe personal debt. In March 2013, the CSJ report It Happens Here, shone a light on the horrific reality of human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK. This report led to the passing of the Modern Slavery Act, which gained Royal Assent in March 2015.

### THE ROLE

The Centre for Social Justice is looking for a bright, driven individual to lead a brand-new team of school exclusion/alternative education policy specialists.

The successful candidate will build on the findings and recommendations of our recent report "Providing the Alternative", which exposed several deeply concerning realities regarding the nature of exclusions and the support that exists beyond.

The purpose of the role is to spearhead a major research/policy drive in this area, with a view to informing systemic change in our education system - both to eliminate avoidable exclusions and improve the quality of alternative provision.

### THE PERSON

- Ability to analyse, understand and synthesise qualitative/quantitative information, and to present these findings in a concise and engaging way (essential).
- Excellent team-building/managerial skills (essential).
- Excellent drafting skills, including the ability to tailor to different audiences (essential).
- A sharp communicator (essential).

- Excellent project management skills (essential).
- Background in one or more of the following: research, policy or education (essential).
- A commitment to the CSJ's vision, mission and values (essential).
- Experience of engaging with policy experts (desirable).
- Experience of managing pupils with complex needs (desirable).

### MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Head of Education, responsibilities for this post will include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

- Leading a high-profile policy programme to stop avoidable school exclusions and improve alternative provision in England.
- Managing and developing a team of three exclusions/alternative education policy specialists to meet programme goals.
- These goals relate to several initiatives aimed at further understanding the drivers of school exclusion, the geographical spread and quality of alternative provision, and the nature of successful early intervention.
- Drawing on existing and new evidence to refine and develop public policy solutions.
- Supporting organisational initiatives to embed exclusions/AP in the mainstream policy lexicon, build support from MPs for our proposals, and sustain public interest in this policy area.
- Managing working relationships with external partners and other key stakeholders.

Other duties that may arise from time to time.

### TO APPLY

Please send your CV and cover letter to:

[recruitment@centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@centreforsocialjustice.org.uk)

[www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk](http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk) | @csjthinktank

*"On behalf of everyone in our country, let me be the first to thank you for all you are doing to tackle the social challenges we face... your innovation and commitment is helping to make Britain a country that truly does work for everyone."*

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP, Prime Minister, March 2018

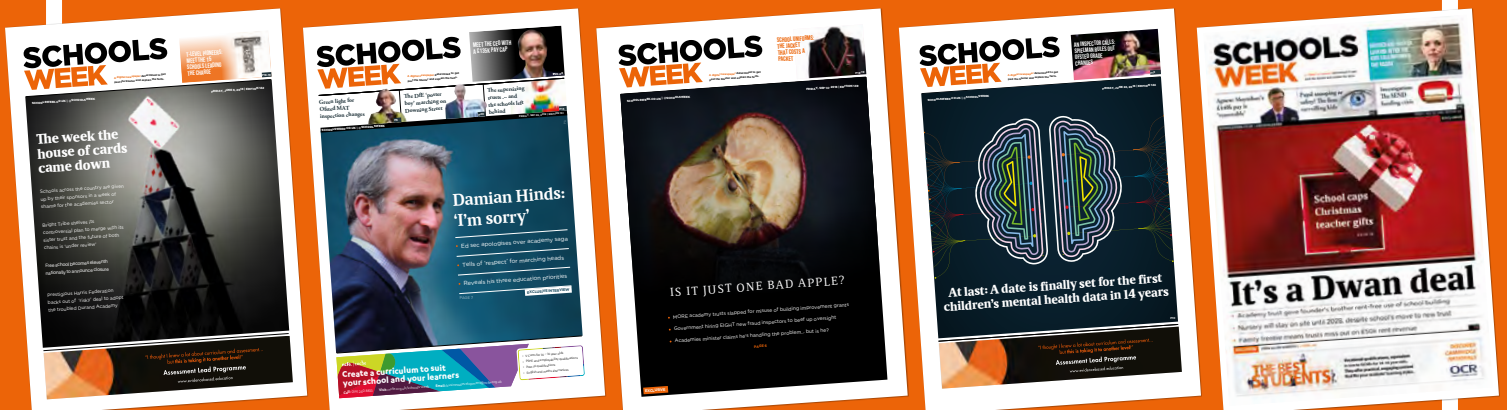


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