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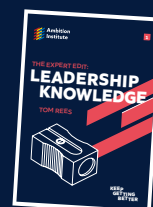
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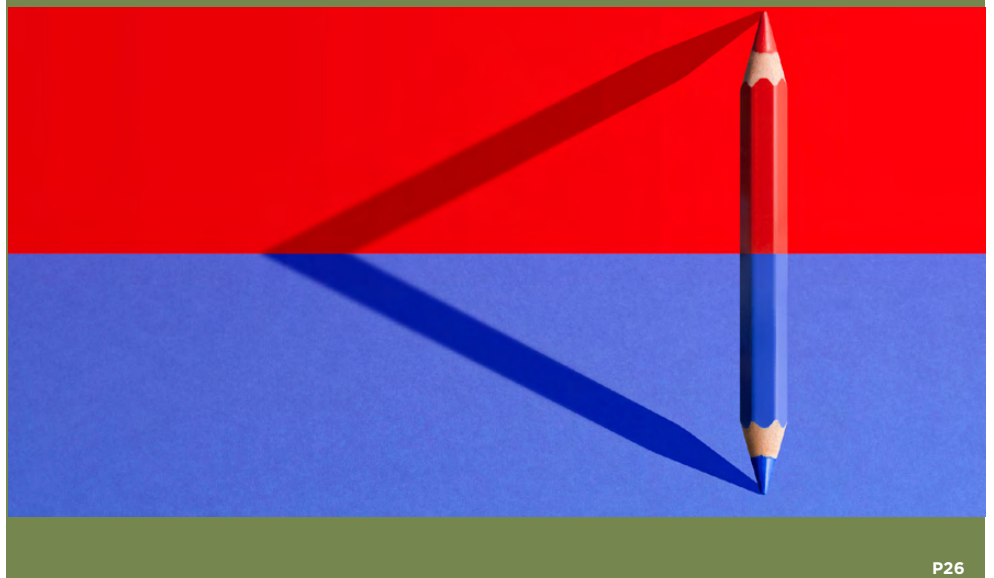
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Hinds: time to focus on teacher wellbeing

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Damian Hinds has commissioned his fifth advisory group since taking office – this time looking at boosting school teacher and leader wellbeing.

The education secretary will tell the annual conference of school leaders' union ASCL today the group will lead the government's efforts to look at "how teachers and school leaders can be better supported to deal with the pressures of the job".

It will be led by Paul Farmer (pictured), the chief executive of mental health charity Mind. Other members have yet to be named.

A recent survey by teaching union NASUWT found that 85 per cent of teachers have had trouble sleeping, 77 per cent have experienced anxiety and 30 per cent have turned to medication because of their job.

Hinds is expecting the new advisory group to work with the government to look at how to promote better wellbeing for teachers. Its members will take evidence from teachers and school leaders before making recommendations to the Department for Education, local authorities and academy trusts. The government is yet to give a date for when it will report back.

"Like any really important job, teaching comes with its own challenges and, whilst rewarding,



I don't need to tell you how stressful it can be," Hinds will tell heads.

"As a society there is a much greater level of understanding about mental health and wellbeing, and it is something many of you raise with me when I visit your schools. Whilst those conversations are focused on supporting your students, I'm clear that your wellbeing is also something we need to prioritise."

The wellbeing advisory group is at least the fifth of its kind set up by the education secretary since he was appointed in early January 2018.

Hinds announced a workload advisory group last May, an early learning apps advisory group in January, and two groups in February – one on music education and another on character.

Geoff Barton, ASCL's general secretary, welcomed the announcement, and warned that teachers and leaders have been "too ready in the past to regard the pressures which are part of teaching as something which goes with the

territory".

Paul Whiteman, the leader of the NAHT leaders' union, said leaders "often put their own wellbeing at risk in order to protect their teams from stress and to plug the gaps in their workforce".

"This is clearly not a sustainable way to proceed, so it would be better to reduce the sources of stress. Prevention is better than cure, as any wellbeing expert will tell you."

The advisory group will be formed of headteachers, principals, teaching and college unions, and professional bodies.

Farmer, who co-authored a 2017 review of mental health and employers for Downing Street, said: "The first and arguably most important step will be to start a conversation about mental health that empowers teachers, and make sure they have access to the right training and guidance to support themselves, their colleagues and their students."

The 2017-18 labour force survey found that teaching was one of three professions with the highest reports of stress and depression.

An interim Ofsted study published in November found seven in 10 school leaders work in their free time every day, and almost two-thirds of teachers think their job is not valued by society.

Ofsted's deep-dive into the issue is part of a specific focus on workload enacted by chief inspector Amanda Spielman.

EXCLUSIVE

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

'Stage not age' testing of GCSE pupils under consideration, says ASCL

An influential commission on the future of GCSEs is considering recommending an end to the comparable outcomes system and a move to "stage not age" testing of pupils.

Leadership union ASCL launched its "forgotten third" inquiry last October to examine the plight of those pupils who fail to achieve a grade 4 in their GCSE English and maths.

The commission, led by National Education Trust founder Roy Blatchford, will deliver an interim report to ASCL's annual conference this afternoon. It will question the government's policy of compulsory post-16

results for those who don't pass and whether to "retain an assessment and examination system that year in, year out creates a forgotten third".

But *Schools Week* understands the commission is considering going further in its full report in June, and recommending wholesale change to the current testing system for 16-year-olds, which uses the comparable outcomes system to ensure roughly the same number of pupils get each grade every year.

Geoff Barton, ASCL's general secretary, has warned of an "extraordinary culture that

we feel that in order to define our success we have to define it through the number of children who don't do it, the forgotten third we're calling them".

"In the old days, if you got a grade D, E or F, at least there was this sense that they were part of a continuum and their GCSE counted for something," he told *Schools Week* in a pre-conference interview.

"But as soon as you've got a grade 4 being deemed a 'standard pass' and grade 5 being deemed a 'good pass', what does that make a grade 3?"

News

Let grammars use expansion cash to help secondary moderns, says leading head



EXCLUSIVE

JESS STAUFENBERG
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A leading grammar head wants expansion cash redirected to encourage selective schools to give support to secondary moderns.

This call comes as another grammar school has announced plans to set up an academy trust alongside a secondary modern, a year after ministers first urged them to join with neighbouring schools.

The Boston High School, a girls' grammar in Lincolnshire, is in the early stages of discussion with the non-selective Thomas Cowley High School about forming the Lincolnshire Endeavour Trust.

Only a handful of trusts have such a set-up.

One such trust, formed this year, has said that the Department for Education should redirect the capital funding earmarked for grammar schools to help them support local secondary moderns instead.

Desmond Deehan, chief executive of the Odyssey Trust for Education, which opened with Townley Grammar School and the non-selective King Henry School in September, said it had been a financial strain to improve the latter without central funds.

As the former head at Townley, Deehan said it had taken "moral courage" to form an academy trust with the King Henry School – which was previously called the Erith School and graded "requires improvement" in 2016 – because of the lack of financial support from government.

"It's assumed you can do this within already constrained budgets. But there's an outlay in trying to improve recruitment at the start, and any savings from collaboration are several years down the line."

In May last year the government announced £50 million of capital funding for grammar schools to create new buildings in exchange for improving access for poorer pupils.

But Deehan said there was "a case for a more imaginative model, which can benefit more pupils by directing this funding towards trusts in which a grammar is supporting a secondary modern".

Capital funding does not necessarily solve the issue of "helping disadvantaged pupils get through the door" in grammars, whereas collaboration between local schools can provide more opportunities for pupils, he said.

The model is also "really easy to duplicate" across the country because "wherever you've got grammars you've got secondary moderns, so there's already a natural community there," he added.

Schools minister Nick Gibb told the Grammar School Heads' Association in June that grammars should take responsibility for failing schools in their area.

But the set-up is potentially controversial. As *Schools Week* revealed in September 2016, the government believed there was a "grammar school get-out clause".

The since-abandoned green paper, proposed by former education secretary Justine Greening, outlined proposals for multi-academy trusts to move their brightest pupils into a single "centre of excellence" school within their trust, stating the action is already "permissible" under the current system.

The admission led to unions considering legal action over the clause. However, the paper wasn't taken forward.

Schools Week believes that no trusts that have both selective and non-selective schools do move children under the clause.

Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said it was "vaguely insulting" to suggest that grammar schools should support secondary moderns.

But Andrew Fullbrook, headteacher at Boston High School, said there are "huge potential advantages" to forming a trust with "good"-graded Thomas Cowley High School.

He said these include "standards, outcomes, teaching, learning, recruitment, finances, site developments, accountability and most importantly, opportunities for our learners".

Meanwhile, Deehan has created a team of teachers to support staff in the secondary modern and to offer them training and A-level teaching at the grammar school.

Primaries miss out on free sanitary products

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The chancellor Philip Hammond has announced plans to fund free sanitary products for pupils in secondary schools and colleges – but those in primary schools will miss out.

During his Spring statement on Wednesday, Hammond said the funding would be made available from September.

A Treasury spokesperson told *Schools Week* the endeavour will be "fully funded", but is yet to be costed by the Department for Education.

Documents published by the Treasury state the DfE "will lead work to develop a national scheme in England to provide free sanitary products to girls in secondary schools".

No further details have been announced.

Hammond said the announcement followed "rising concern by headteachers that some girls are missing school attendance due to an inability to afford sanitary products".

Further details are expected to be announced at this year's spending review, which Hammond confirmed will take place before the Summer parliamentary recess begins in July – as long as a Brexit deal is reached.

Schools will have to wait until then to find out if they will get more general funding.

It is not clear whether the DfE will allocate additional money to schools to buy their own sanitary products, or provide the products directly.

Amika George, the 19-year-old anti-period-poverty campaigner credited with influencing the government's decision, urged ministers to extend the pledge to "all schools".

"Periods should never hold back a child from achieving their true potential, whatever their age," she said.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of the NAHT school leaders' union, added it "would be good to see free sanitary products further extended to year 6".

The Labour party has previously pledged to provide £10 million to tackle period poverty in schools. Last year, the Scottish government announced a £5.2 million scheme to offer free sanitary products to pupils in all schools.

Charity plans apprenticeships so schools can dip into £200m levy pot

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

A teacher development charity is in talks to deliver new apprenticeships for teachers and leaders, including chief executives, in a bid to open up over £200 million in untapped funding.

The Ambition Institute, launched this week after the merger of Ambition School Leadership and the Institute for Teaching, confirmed it is in discussions with the government about developing more "education-specific apprenticeship standards". The organisation also wants to become an apprenticeship provider.

Since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in 2017, schools are thought to have paid more than £225 million into a central training pot. Some academy trusts have access to levy pots of over £1 million each, it is understood.

But many schools have struggled to find ways to claw the funding back, partly because of a paucity of courses specific to the education sector.

Melanie Renowden, the Ambition Institute's interim chief executive, said her organisation is one of a number lobbying the government for new courses.

Schools Week understands leadership unions NAHT and ASCL, some leading academy trusts and the Chartered College of Teaching are also involved.

"Given schools that meet the criteria are paying into the apprenticeship levy, we think it's right that there should be education-

specific apprenticeship standards, and that's really limited at the moment," Renowden said.

Ambition is concerned that there aren't "discreet apprenticeship standards for the tiers of teaching".

"It's not recognising that MAT CEO or headteacher is different to teacher," she told *Schools Week*. "So if you're a MAT paying into the levy...then you're very limited in how you can deploy the levy.

"Given that we know that educator development is the thing that has the biggest impact on outcomes for children, being able to deploy that resource on developing educators at all stages in their career seems like a fantastic opportunity for schools."

There is at present only one teaching apprenticeship, which is at postgraduate level and aimed at new entrants to the profession only.

And although some apprenticeship routes for academy and school leaders do already exist, Ambition believes these are too "limited". It wishes instead to provide apprenticeships across all its training areas – which cover teaching, school leadership and system leadership, the latter including trust chief executives.

However, the use of apprenticeship levy funding to train high-ranking employees has not been without controversy after the policy prompted a boom in the number of masters of business administration (MBA) courses.

The use of the funding for such courses is seen by some as state subsidy of training for top-earning employees.



Just last week, skills minister Anne Milton (pictured) raised similar concerns, telling *Schools Week's* sister paper *FE Week*: "What sticks in people's throats is people on 100 grand a year and the state subsidising their MBA, or whatever."

In its recruitment and retention strategy, released in January, the government pledged to make it possible for schools to spend their apprenticeship levy to develop staff in new "distinct roles", for example, in multi-academy trusts.

The new national professional qualifications will include cover assessment, behaviour management, subject and curriculum expertise, pedagogy and teacher developer.

A spokesperson for the Institute for Apprenticeships, which approves new apprenticeship standards, said: "We want to support schools to use their levy funding. We are working with the Ambition Institute and other organisations to see what can be achieved through existing standards and beyond that."

EXCLUSIVE

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'Graduate school' is a first-class description, insists charity

The Ambition Institute has defended labelling itself as a "graduate school" – with plans for the newly-merged organisation to obtain degree-awarding powers.

The new charity, formed through the merger of Ambition School Leadership and the Institute for Teaching, officially launched this week.

But the organisation's call to position itself as a "graduate school" has been criticised by some in the higher education sector.

A graduate school is a type of higher education institution that would normally have the power to award postgraduate-level

qualifications, such as master's degrees and doctorates.

Critics point out that such schools have to work to meet standards set by the independent Quality Assurance Agency, with a rigorous system of peer monitoring and external scrutiny.

Melanie Renowden, interim chief executive at the Ambition Institute, told *Schools Week* the organisation's three foundations are academic rigour, a connection to the classroom and a "social purpose" – which makes them "unique".

She continued: "And that's why we've chosen

the words 'graduate school', because it is different in the sector, and that's because we think combining those three things actually does represent something quite different.

"I don't think anybody else is combining those things. It's also the fact we're working with teachers at all levels as well, from early career teachers to MAT CEOs. I don't think anybody else is doing that."

Ambition provides programmes for school leaders in both primary and secondary schools across England, including national professional qualifications at every phase.

Investigation

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UTCs told to join academy trusts after Baker U-turn

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EXCLUSIVE

University technical colleges are being pressured to join multi-academy trusts after the programme's architect Lord Baker U-turned on previous warnings that they will be "watered down" if they do.

Schools Week can reveal that Baker and academies minister Lord Agnew wrote to principals and chairs of all UTCs last month, urging them to join a MAT.

It marks a dramatic shift from Baker, who said last year he didn't want UTCs "watered down, and that is the danger if they get into a MAT".

Critics have said the U-turn is a "desperate measure" to "salvage" the embattled programme.

UTC – technical providers which recruit pupils at age 14 – have been beset by problems since they launched in 2010. Many have struggled to recruit adequate pupil numbers, and a run of poor Ofsted grades has caused reputational damage.

The letter from Baker and Agnew reads: "In most cases, we believe that membership of a MAT is an important way to help UTCs succeed. This will help to ensure that a UTC has a strong educational offer, as well as aiding recruitment and financial stability.

"Taking a UTC into a MAT will enable the MAT to extend its offer and provide a wider range of choices to their pupils."

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the U-turn "smacks of desperate measures in an attempt to salvage a policy which was always bound to struggle" because of the "obvious incoherence" in the 14-19 age range.

Charles Parker also resigned yesterday as chief executive of the Baker Dearing trust, which supports UTCs.

He will be replaced in August by Simon Connell, currently development director of the trust.

More than £63 million has been spent on eight UTCs that have closed or announced closure since 2010.

There are currently 50 UTCs. Twenty are already part of a multi-academy trust, including all five that re-brokered earlier



Lord Kenneth Baker

this academic year.

However, there are concerns whether the UTC brand will survive. UTC Cambridge rebranded itself as the Cambridge Academy for Science and Technology when it joined Parkside Federation Academies (now known as Cambridge Academic Partnership) in 2017, because "so many people in our local community didn't know what UTC Cambridge stood for."

In May last year, Sir Charles Kao UTC changed its name to the BMAT STEM Academy when it joined the Burnt Mill Academy Trust, based in Harlow, Essex.

Two other UTCs that joined MATs have, or plan to, widened their provision to admit year 7 pupils.

UTCs that fall into trouble are also being ordered to join MATs.

In March last year, Bolton UTC was told it must join a "strong" multi-academy trust and improve its finances after a government investigation found financial mismanagement and poor governance.

Bolton UTC has not yet joined a MAT. However, accounts for last year, published this month, state: "The current opportunity to rebroker the UTC into a MAT is now a DfE requirement for UTCs, and we are in advanced discussions with a potential MAT."

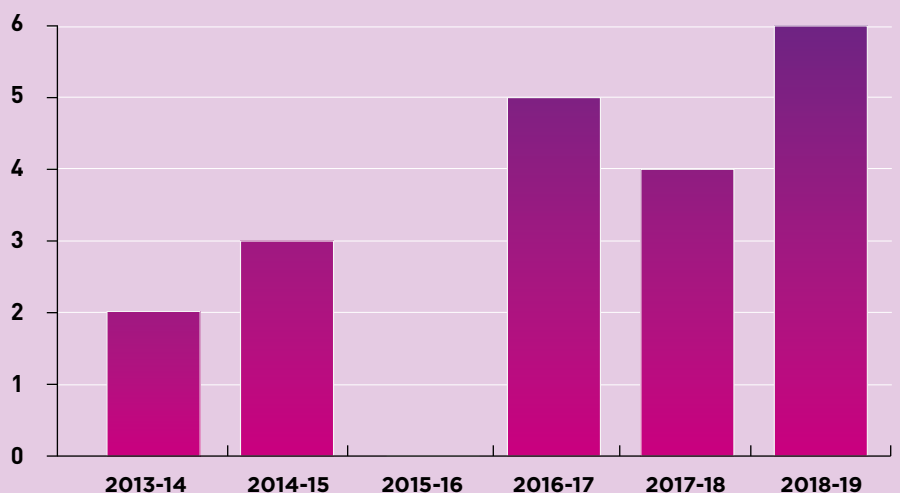
Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the "pressure now being applied on UTCs to join multi-academy trusts is clear evidence that this is a flawed and failed policy".

The Department for Education said it was "encouraging and supporting UTCs to join suitable MATs wherever possible, as this is beneficial to both parties".

Michael Pain, chief executive of Forum Strategy which represents MATs, said it was "paramount" for any trust considering taking on a UTC to undertake "extensive" due diligence.

"Taking on a UTC requires careful thought, consultation and strategic planning. This shouldn't be seen as an easy and immediate option for growing trusts."

UTCs JOINING MATS



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Trusts fail to make use of £500k DfE takeover funding

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Trusts given hundreds of thousands of pounds by the government to take over struggling schools have failed to expand, a *Schools Week* investigation has revealed.

New figures obtained under the freedom of information act show that the Department for Education has allocated more than £126 million in sponsor capacity funding since 2013.

Schools Week obtained specific details of the general sponsor capacity funding paid out in 2016-17. It reveals that of the almost £5 million handed out that year, six trusts paid a combined £195,334 have not taken on any new schools.

Furthermore, four trusts that received funding in 2015-16 are still yet to expand. Southmoor Academy Trust, Brighter Futures, the Keys Federation and Zest Academy Trust received £293,045 between them.

It follows an investigation by *Schools Week* in 2017 which revealed how trusts that had been handed millions between them in capacity funding to create "northern hubs" had failed to take on new schools.

The government is still dealing with the fallout of high-profile cases, such as Bright Tribe and Wakefield City Academies Trust, which collapsed having received almost £1.5 million between them.

Janet Downs, from the Local Schools Network, said: "We've already seen how money given to trusts to set up schools hasn't always been used – Bright Tribe and WCAT, for example.

"If these grants aren't spent as expected in a reasonable time, the DfE should claw the money back. Better still, don't award these grants in the first place, thereby risking trusts growing too quickly, or allocated money sitting unused."

However, school leaders and legal experts have pointed to difficulties faced by trusts that receive growth funding and then struggle to find schools to take on. They suggest that some fault lies with the DfE itself.

David Hermitt, chief executive of the Congleton Multi-Academy Trust, which received £20,000 in 2016-17, said his organisation had asked to take on two



EXCLUSIVE

schools but had been turned down.

"We became a sponsor in March 2016, with a view to either take on an underperforming school or launch a new free school," he told *Schools Week*. "The trust has a plan to increase the number of schools over the next five years.

"In regards to sponsorship, we have approached the DfE to sponsor two schools in recent years, but unfortunately the schools have been brokered to other academy trusts. We continue to work with the regional schools commissioner to identify suitable schools to be sponsored by our trust."

Antony Power, head of education at law firm Michelmores, also warned of potential difficulties if the DfE does decide to claw back funding.

"The problem is, if the money is to build sponsor capacity, and a sponsor takes on a couple of school improvement people and then can't get schools to join, that money is already spent."

Bright Tribe received almost £1 million in northern hub funding in 2015. Most of the money was spent on senior staff, but then a series of sponsorship deals went south, leaving ministers facing calls to claw the funding back.

Data released by the DfE also shows hundreds of thousands of pounds were lavished on doomed outsourcing firms Carillion and Interserve to set up multi-academy trusts. Since 2013, Interserve has received grants worth £125,000, while Carillion got £100,000. Both organisations have now gone into liquidation.

In another instance, Heathfield Academy Trust was handed £87,500 in 2016-17, only



David Hermitt

to join the STEP Academy Trust, which had itself received £50,000 in sponsor capacity funding in 2015-16.

Since 2013, the government has handed out £43 million in general sponsor capacity funding. That goes alongside £30 million from its regional academy growth fund, and a further £53 million was allocated in 2017-18 through the MAT development and improvement fund (MDIF).

The DfE refused to release details of the MDIF recipients, claiming they would be published "in due course".

TRUSTS FUNDED IN 2016-17 THAT DIDN'T EXPAND

TRUST	AMOUNT
Brook Learning Trust	£52,084
Cheshire Academies Trust	£10,000
Congleton Multi-Academy Trust	£20,000
The Learning Pathways Trust	£69,250
The Mirfield Free Grammar & Sixth Form	£40,000
The Russett Learning Trust	£4,000
TOTAL	£195,334

Source: Department for Education

Investigation

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Surge in pupil weapons possession sparks calls for support

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EXCLUSIVE

Leading schools sector voices are warning that staff need more help to keep classrooms safe, following a surge in the numbers of pupils being found carrying weapons in some regions.

Data obtained by *Schools Week* reveals a large increase in police call-outs to schools over the past five years after pupils as young as 10 were found with weapons. They included machetes, imitation guns and a six-inch taser.

It comes as a major Ofsted report published on Tuesday warned schools don't receive enough support to tackle rising knife crime.

Leading sector voices have now warned schools cannot tackle such issues alone, and are calling for a "multi-agency approach" to keep staff and pupils safe.

The Department for Education has pledged to publish its first school security guidance this spring. It is unclear whether this guidance has suffered some delay. A DfE spokesperson would only confirm that it will now be published "later this year".

While recent knife crime reports have focused on London, our investigation provides a snapshot that issues are more widespread.

Schools Week asked England's 39 police forces for figures on how many times they have been called to schools in connection with pupils carrying weapons.

Of the seven forces that were able to provide the complete data, just one did not experience a rise in reports since five years ago.

Three reported a year-on-year increase, while three forces saw a sharp rise in 2016-17, followed by slight decline again last year.

Call-outs to Devon and Cornwall schools more than tripled, from seven apiece in 2013-14, to 26 in 2017-18. That included child in possession a sword in school during 2017-18.

In Essex there were 25 calls to schools in 2013-14, but by 2016-17 this had more than tripled, to 81. It dropped to 55 last year.

Knives, axes, hammers and a razor are



POLICE FORCE	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Bedfordshire	N/A	16	19	15	14
Derbyshire	0	1	0	16	25
Devon & Cornwall	7	7	11	14	26
Essex	25	30	46	81	55
Hertfordshire	3	11	19	27	23
Lancashire	15	18	23	36	22
West Midlands	18	36	81	94	N/A

among the items found.

Bedfordshire was one of the few areas not to experience an increase. However, the weapons that were found there included a meat cleaver, two machetes, an imitation hand gun and an electric stun gun.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said the fact that weapons are being discovered and seized in schools is a "testimony" to the "vigilance" of staff.

"But they cannot hold back the tide beyond their gates on their own, and they clearly need more support in the form of increased investment in policing and support services in the community," he added.

Government advice in this area is currently limited to statutory guidance on searching, screening and confiscating items from pupils. The guidance, updated in January 2018, says only headteachers or members of security staff are authorised to search a pupil for weapons.

The DfE's consultation on new school security guidance closed last month. The draft guidance says school staff should "receive appropriate security training" and "know what to do to protect themselves and pupils from harm, safeguard the school estate and be able to determine when it is appropriate to contact the police/emergency services."

Suggested methods include implementing "effective behaviour management strategies" and providing facilities for anonymous reporting on crimes.

Amy Cook, head of content at school

information service The Key, said staff should be trained in "spotting risks to their vulnerable pupils that might later lead to violence" and to know how best to intervene.

In its report on knife crime, Ofsted warned this week that schools have "widely varied" approaches to involving police when pupils bring knives into school.

Some have a strong ethos against "criminalising children", while others "firmly" believe that it is an offence.

Ofsted said there was a "vast grey area" between these two views, with headteachers' decisions swayed by whether it was a child's first offence, were known to have a troubled background, and whether the incident reflected prior attainment.

Leaders also said police officers did not take a consistent approach to children when making a decision on bringing a charge.

But the watchdog found that some schools "may be doing children a disservice" by failing to follow statutory guidance on excluding pupils. It claimed the most "striking examples" were of teenage girls being excluded for carrying a knife for the purposes of self-harm.

Ofsted has now said that it is "not acceptable" for schools to exclude pupils without "considering the impact on, and the risks to, the child being excluded".

A spokesperson for the DfE said teachers' powers had been strengthened to allow them to take action if they suspect a pupil has brought a weapon into school.

An extra £100 million for police to tackle knife crime was announced this week.

Analysis: school places

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Rejected special school bids in areas facing biggest shortfalls

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

INVESTIGATES

The majority of local authorities that have been refused new specialist schools will run out of places three years from now, *Schools Week* analysis shows.

The Department for Education announced on Monday that 39 local authorities had been successful in their bids for new special needs or alternative provision schools, out of 65 to apply.

But our analysis shows that 54 per cent of the local authorities that were not successful are facing shortfalls in secondary pupil places by 2021.

That compares to just 39 per cent of those given the go-ahead.

Furthermore, the two councils facing the biggest shortfall in secondary places were among those refused.

One of those, Manchester City Council, had two bids for specialist schools rejected – despite needing more than 8,500 school places in three years from now.

DfE figures show that a population bulge moving into secondary schools will swell numbers by 15 per cent (427,000 pupils) between 2018 and 2027.

Education Datalab stated this could equate to roughly 15,000 more pupils with education, health and care plans.

Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, warned that vulnerable or excluded pupils will suffer from a lack of good specialist provision in these areas. "There will be long waiting lists, during which [time] children will not be getting an education."

Sponsors for the new schools, which will create 3,400 places, will be chosen "by this

winter", according to the DfE. However, they wouldn't say when the schools will open.

Schools Week used data collated by the Local Government Association to calculate which of the 65 local authorities face the biggest shortfall in secondary school places in the next three years.

Specific figures forecasting demand for SEND places aren't available, so we used the overall pupil number figures as a proxy.

Manchester is facing the biggest shortfall of any local authority, needing 8,670 more secondary places in 2021-22, or 129 per cent of available places.

Yet the government turned down the council's bid for a special school for pupils with profound, multiple and severe learning difficulties and autism, as well as an AP school.

Leicester, which needs 5,122 more places by 2021-22, or 127 per cent of available places, was also turned down for an autism school.

From now until 2025, the city needs 285 more specialist school places, following steep rises in pupils with EHCPs, said Leicester City Council.

The council is "disappointed" it didn't win a bid but is expanding its "designated school provision" programme for special educational needs pupils in mainstream schools instead, they added.

The next local authority with the biggest shortfall in places to be refused was Hackney in north London, which needs 1,297 new places by 2021-22. It was turned down for an AP free school.

Demand for places has forced Hackney to send pupils to other boroughs and private schools, which is "not consistent with our SEND strategy to promote in-borough provisions," said a spokesperson.

The council has contacted the DfE to



Julie McCulloch

"discuss why the bid was not successful", they added.

Census data shows the proportion of pupils in state special schools has increased from 1.3 per cent in 2014 to 1.4 per cent in 2018, or almost 18,000 more pupils. The proportion in pupil referral units and AP has risen from 0.4 per cent to 0.5 per cent, or almost 6,500 more pupils.

Malcolm Reeve, national leader at Whole School SEND, said special schools are "full" with "demand outstripping supply across the country".

However, he warned more specialist schools were not necessarily the answer to rising exclusions of SEND and other high-needs pupils, urging government instead to open more specialist provision in mainstream schools.

Julie McCulloch, director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders, added the mismatch between local need and the DfE's awarded contracts was "extremely concerning".

"We would welcome clarification from the DfE over its thinking on this important matter."

The DfE said applications for the schools were considered through a robust process and awarded based on selection criteria.

LOCAL AUTHORITY	TYPE OF SPECIAL SCHOOL REQUESTED	ADDITIONAL PLACES NEEDED 2021-22	FORECAST PUPIL NO. AS % OF SCHOOL PLACES 2021-22
Manchester	P&M and severe learning difficulties and autism Alternative provision	8,670	129%
Leicester	Autism	5,122	127%
Hackney	Alternative provision	1,297	109%
Greenwich	Autism and complex needs	1,238	107%
Gloucestershire	SEMH	1,617	104%
Birmingham	Autism	4,065	103%
Wokingham	SEMH and autism	318	103%
Southampton	Complex needs	336	103%
Cheshire East	Autism	306	101%
Cheshire East	Alternative provision	306	101%
Waltham Forest	Alternative provision	121	101%

ASCL conference

We must be more 'forensic' in funding requests, Barton warns

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Tales of teachers having to buy equipment for their schools are "unhelpful" and are eclipsing the more serious impact of education funding cuts, the leader of a headteachers' union has said.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, told *Schools Week* heads and teachers need to find a "different approach that gets beyond the echo chamber of education" if they are to stop being ignored by the Treasury in their quest for more funding.

The row over real-terms cuts to school budgets erupted again this week after skills minister Anne Milton jumped to the defence of education secretary Damian Hinds, claiming he didn't "snub" headteachers who were twice turned away when they tried to meet with him about funding.

Pointing to the chancellor's pledge of "little extras" for schools in last year's budget, Barton warned that some in the Treasury "don't believe there isn't enough money there", and said campaigners needed to change tack.

"I think sometimes what they might hear is stories of teachers having to buy equipment, and so on. That's not what I'm hearing," said Barton, who spoke to *Schools Week* ahead of ASCL's annual conference this weekend.

"It's a soundbite, but it's not a very helpful soundbite, because the reality is children not getting teaching assistants. It's much more significantly about social mobility than it is about whether we can afford certain bits of equipment."

Barton warned of a "combination of different messages", and said the argument needed to be "more forensic". ASCL, he says, is now trying to communicate "what it costs to educate a child in this country" and what the consequences will be if the correct amount is not spent.

Barton cited a recent conversation with "someone pretty high up" in the Department for Education, who questioned why England spends more than many of its neighbours. When told that schools in England are expected to do more (for example, to support all SEND children), the DfE person



then suggested that in some cases, such support may be a "luxury we cannot afford".

"Now, that's hugely concerning if there's a mentality suggesting that a child with moderate learning difficulties somehow oughtn't be entitled to the same as [those with more acute needs]."

It is now just over two years since Barton won a decisive victory in ASCL's first ever leadership election. It was the first time the union council's choice of leader had been challenged by a member of the organisation's grassroots.

Once a maverick head who clashed regularly with government and Ofsted, Barton is now the figurehead of what is arguably England's most pragmatic education union. Among his members are multi-academy trust chief executives, and ASCL has embraced the language of business that has swept through the schools community since 2010.

Now he wants professionals to start telling a more positive story about the job they do. His comments, as teachers and leaders prepare to begin what promises to be a particularly vocal union conference season, reflect how much has changed in the mind of a man who once wrote that he'd have to be "dragged kicking and screaming" into becoming the head of an academy.

"It's since stepping out of education that you kind of realise how good education is," he said.

"I think as trade unions, we haven't been good at telling people about the positive stuff, about what's going on, perhaps because that doesn't cut through, doesn't win the arguments in terms of funding or recruitment and retention and so on and so forth.

"But I'm determined that we do do that. We've got 650,000 more children in secondary and all the teachers we're going to need to teach them. We have to tell a better story."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given his membership base, Barton is reluctant to weigh into the row over academy executive pay. He says it would be "problematic" for his union to provide a "checklist" to tell trusts what to pay. However, he suggests some of the top salaries may be hard to justify.

"It wouldn't be up to me to say whether they are or they aren't [justified]. All we're saying is trustees have to be able to say what the process is by which they arrived at that [figure]. Where is the transparency?"

"But I think anybody would look at some of those very high figures and feel real concern about that."

Inspectors must declare all consultancy work after rule change

JESS STAUFENBERG

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Ofsted has tightened its conflicts of interest rules, with inspectors now forced to declare all of their previous and future consultancy work.

The inspectorate said it updated the guidance, published on Monday, to “clarify any ambiguity” around its expectations for inspectors.

Under the new rules, inspectors must declare all previous employment at a school or trust, with regard to themselves, family and friends, along with any past, current or future consultancy work.

Inspectors were previously required to declare this information, but only for the six years before and after employment. The requirement has now been extended to cover inspectors’ whole careers.

Martin Matthews, a national leader of governance, welcomed the move, adding that Ofsted was “aware that schools and trusts don’t just cut people off who used to be part of their support network”.

The new rules also clearly state that any work at “multi-academy trusts”, including voluntary roles, must be declared. In the old document, only “chains” or “groups” were referred to.

Other changes include inspectors having to declare a financial interest in any organisation



that “competes with a provider”, as well as a financial interest at the provider itself.

Potential conflicts must also be declared “immediately” or “in good time”, rather than simply “be declared” as in the old version.

Around 65 per cent of Ofsted’s 1,285 inspectors are serving practitioners.

Ofsted has previously faced criticism over the conflict of interests with inspectors, who are also school consultants or work at academy trusts.

But Steve Rollett, curriculum and inspections specialist at the Association of School and

College Leaders, said the updated guidance now recognises “a more complicated educational landscape”.

“Mentioning multi-academy trusts explicitly recognises that individuals and organisations are working in increasingly complex ways, and over larger geographical areas.

“Because of this, it’s fair to say the potential for perceptions of conflicts of interest to arise is greater now than it used to be. So it’s good Ofsted have updated this policy.”

But Matthews said new inspectors might need help identifying their former employer, as “numerous teachers” are unaware their employer was the local authority or trust, rather than the school.

The updated rules also continue to ban inspectors from using their former role or Ofsted branding to advise schools, “for example by carrying out mock Ofsted inspections”.

Ofsted said that any potential conflict of interest will be considered on a case-by-case basis and “if a clear conflict of interest is declared, then an Ofsted inspector would not be scheduled to inspect the school concerned”.

Meanwhile, inspectors who have secured future consultancy work with a school “should not inspect that school”, and it could also potentially be a conflict of interest for an inspector to accept consultancy work with a school they have previously inspected.

EXCLUSIVE

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA_AK

Exam board slams ‘legal’ threat to rename iGCSEs

An awarding organisation has insisted it will not allow the controversial iGCSEs to be renamed, after the chair of Ofqual said “legal routes” were being explored.

The international GCSEs no longer count in national league tables and are not regulated by Ofqual, but are still used by private schools – despite concerns that it is easier for pupils to achieve top grades by taking them.

At an appearance before the education committee on Tuesday, Ofqual’s chair Roger Taylor said the qualifications cause “confusion” because they use the same terminology as regulated GCSEs.

He said Ofqual and the Department for Education were looking at “legal routes around the use of the term GCSE” to address

the issue.

A spokesperson for Ofqual confirmed it had done “some early exploratory work on the terms which we have passed to the DfE”.

However, Cambridge Assessment International Education has strongly refuted this suggestion and insisted iGCSE is a registered trademark.

A spokesperson said the iGCSE “was created by Cambridge International 30 years ago and the name belongs to us”. She added that changing the name would “cause confusion in thousands of state and independent schools worldwide. The standard of iGCSE and GCSE is the same.”

However, minutes from an Ofqual board meeting in July 2018 said that students taking

iGCSEs in English language and literature “received slightly higher grades, once prior or concurrent attainment was controlled for” and that this is “likely to be due to differences in the grading standards of the two qualifications, rather than the characteristics of the students taking them”.

Taylor told MPs on Tuesday that it was a “disturbing issue”, with iGCSEs “not conducive to public trust in the examinations systems”.

A DfE spokesperson said the government recognised concerns about the qualifications and is “working with exam boards to understand those issues better, and to determine what, if any, action should be taken”.

News: Ofsted

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Ofsted's off-rolling focus may drive exclusions, leading heads warn

JOHN DICKENS

@JOHNDICKENSSW

EXCLUSIVE



Stephen Tierney, chair of HTRT

Confusion over Ofsted's off-rolling focus may push more schools to permanently exclude pupils, a leading group of headteachers has said.

The Headteachers' Roundtable think tank will publish its response to the Ofsted inspection framework consultation this weekend.

The group is particularly concerned with the "tone" of sections of the leadership section, something it is believed leadership unions have also raised with the watchdog.

The HTRT's response states: "Some of the terms used are unnecessarily pejorative and will almost certainly lead to inconsistent judgements."

One issue the HTRT has highlighted is the "unintended consequences" of the watchdog's crackdown on off-rolling.

The group states that permanently excluding a child so that they are educated in alternative provision is seen as "strong leadership with respect to behaviour" under the new framework.

However, Stephen Tierney, chair of HTRT, said that schools using managed moves – which he described as a "co-operative long-term

relationship with a provider of AP in the best interest of the child or wider school community" – could lead to questions about a "leader's integrity and accusations of off-rolling and gaming of accountability measures".

This, he said, could push schools into permanently excluding pupils – instead of trying to work with other schools to find a solution.

However Ofsted said that it has always maintained that permanent exclusion "should only ever be used as a last resort".

A spokesperson for the watchdog added there is a "clear difference" between off-rolling – which

"serves only the interests of the school" – and moving a pupil who is "failing in mainstream school to suitable alternative provision, where they have the best chance of future success".

The spokesperson added: "Our concern arises when such moves are not decided in the educational interests of the pupil.

"Sometimes pupils end up in unsuitable or unregistered provision, where no one has oversight of their education, and many end up dropping out of the system entirely."

The watchdog insisted that inspectors have the experience to identify the difference between off-rolling and the "carefully considered use" of managed moves.

The Discovery Academy in Stoke-on-Trent was found by Ofsted to be off-rolling after it moved year 11 pupils on to the roll of local alternative provision.

The school, which was rated "good", said it moved the pupils off-roll because they had been in alternative provision for years, under a policy agreed with Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

But after Ofsted's verdict, the council has scrapped its policy and has advised mainstream schools that pupils moved to AP should stay on their roll.

The Headteachers' Roundtable's 8-point plan for Ofsted

- 1 The support for certain curricula, within the inspection handbook, in particular the proposed implementation of the Ebacc, shows a lack of independence by the inspectorate and no evidential base. The Ebacc and new content heavy GCSE syllabi are limiting the range and balance of subjects studied and the completion of GCSE in two years; there is no recognition of this in the draft inspection framework or handbook.
- 2 Whilst the inspection handbook refers to a broad curriculum or broad range of subjects on nine separate occasions only once does it refer to a balanced curriculum. The support for the aesthetic aspect of the curriculum and the creative arts will be further undermined if this framework is implemented.
- 3 The juxtaposition between promotion of certain subject based curricula with the generic intent, implementation and impact is confused and unhelpful particularly when set against academy freedoms. The inspection handbook appears less applicable in an Early Years or Specialist School setting.
- 4 The proposed separation of inspection judgements about learners' personal development and learners' behaviour and attitudes; increased tariff for the Section 8 inspections, of good schools and non-exempt outstanding schools, and no notice inspections lack merit and a coherent rationale.
- 5 Proposals not to look at non-statutory internal progress and attainment data are understandable but not sensible. Work scrutiny has limitations that will lead to the same issues of unreliability that Ofsted is seeking to address through its current proposals.
- 6 The tone and content of the handbook is unacceptable, in part, particularly with respect to leadership; this raises concerns about its development, the lack of engagement with the wider profession during its writing and the likelihood of inconsistent and idiosyncratic implementation.
- 7 Safeguarding should be removed from the inspection framework and be externally audited as part of an on-going continuous improvement process.
- 8 Given the adverse impact of inspection on workload and recruitment & retention of staff, lack of efficacy for a number of "stuck schools" and absence of independent empirical evidence to support the four point grading system; full consideration should now be given to moving to a no grading inspection system with a narrative style report on a school's strengths and areas to develop.



HTRT wants your views on their draft response. Email HeadteachersRT@hotmail.co.uk

News

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Parkfield halts LGBT lessons - despite Ofsted backing

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER
@SCHOOLSWEEK

A primary school has agreed to stop its lessons on LGBT rights and homophobia until a resolution has been reached with protesting parents – just days after getting Ofsted’s backing.

In a report published this week, the inspectorate backed Parkfield Community School’s “No Outsiders” programme, which parents had claimed were not age-appropriate.

In a report published on Tuesday, Ofsted inspectors said they found “no evidence” that the education and equalities curriculum “focuses disproportionately on lesbian, gay and bisexual issues and that this work is not taught in an age-appropriate manner”.

However the Birmingham school announced yesterday (Thursday) that lessons will not take place until a resolution can be reached, and urged parents not to remove their children from school.

A large protest scheduled at the school yesterday has been cancelled as a result. The move followed “constructive discussions” between the school, parents and the area’s regional school commissioner, Andrew Warren.

A Parkfield spokesperson said the school was keen to “find a solution that will support the children in our school to continue their education in a harmonious environment.”

Schools Week revealed on Saturday that education secretary Damian Hinds had backed headteachers to decide the age at which to begin teaching on these issues.

The show of support is important for headteachers, with new relationships and sex education guidance coming into force next year.

The guidance states that the government “expects” schools to teach information about LGBT relationships, but the timing of such teaching is to be left up to headteachers – leaving them open to further parental pressure.

Parkfield was rated “outstanding” in 2016, and is therefore exempt from routine inspections. But inspectors arranged a monitoring visit after concerns were raised over the school’s leadership.

In his report, Peter Humphries, Senior Her Majesty’s Inspector, said the school is a “cohesive community” and that the majority of parents “understand how the school helps their children to play a positive role in modern British society by developing their appreciation of British values”.

“Staff from a wide range of cultures and beliefs work well together and actively model tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect.

“As a result, pupils are consistently courteous, considerate and respectful of others. The majority of pupils who spoke with the inspectors said that the school’s lessons and out-of-class activities help to ‘bring pupils together’ so that ‘no one is left out’.”

However, Ofsted said that a “very small, but vocal, minority of parents” were “not clear about the school’s vision, policies and practice. This group of parents feel that staff do not sufficiently listen to their concerns.”

Inspectors recommended the school “further develop” its engagement with parents so they all have a “clear understanding of the school’s policies and procedures, and the curriculum content and how it is taught”.

The Parkfield Parents Community Group said in a statement yesterday: “We welcome these developments and reiterate that the school needs to work with parents in a spirit of partnership and cooperation and not against them in educating their children.”

From 2020, relationships and health education will be compulsory in all schools, while sex education will be mandatory in all secondary schools.

Some faith groups have warned government the changes may force unhappy parents to home-educate their pupils instead.

Post-Grenfell support ‘patchy’, report finds

JESS STAUFENBERG
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Survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire have criticised schools as “inflexible” and inconsistent in their support for pupils affected by the tragedy – prompting a union leader to defend teaching staff.

In a report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) published on Wednesday, parents claimed that some schools had reported their children for bad behaviour following the fire without considering its traumatic effects.

Counselling offered in schools was patchy, while other schools were “unable to provide extra support for transferred pupils”, they added.

The report was based on anonymised testimony from survivors. Names of schools were also blanked out.

School leaders were praised for their “guts and bravery” in the immediate aftermath of the blaze in June 2017.

Seventy-two people died when flames engulfed the 24-storey Grenfell Tower block.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: “The fire at Grenfell Tower was an unprecedented tragedy which put a great deal of additional pressure on all public services, including schools.

“We are sure that schools will have done their very best to cope with these extraordinary and challenging circumstances.”

He added that the new findings “will help all of us to learn lessons”.

The report, called *Following Grenfell*, quoted one father who said his son’s school immediately got in touch about his worsening behaviour after the fire, before apologising when told the pupil had lost his uncle in the blaze.

Another respondent said a pupil “up all night” because of the fire still arrived at her exams the next day, but wasn’t allowed in because she had arrived in her pyjamas.

David Isaac, chair of the EHRC, said he hoped the report would help all public bodies to ensure the tragedy was never repeated.

The Department for Education has issued a call for evidence to update guidance on fire-safety design in schools, as part of a building regulations review prompted by Grenfell.

The DfE wants thoughts on whether combustible cladding should be banned from use in all new school buildings over 18 metres high.

News

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Poorer pupils 'catch up' by end of primary, but fall behind again at GCSE

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

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EXCLUSIVE

The attainment gap between the wealthiest and most disadvantaged pupils almost disappears by the end of primary school before reappearing at age 16, new data suggests.

Analysis by data site SchoolDash shows that pupils from poorer areas draw level with their more socially advantaged peers by the end of key stage 2, but that the gap widens again by GCSEs.

Using government data, SchoolDash compared last year's academic achievements of pupils from the most and least advantaged local authorities in England.

Although there is a clear correlation between average point score in early years and the level of deprivation in an area (with affluent Surrey scoring high on average points while Sandwell, Hull

and Knowsley showing low scores), this divergence is largely evened out by the end of primary school.

For example, in Surrey the average maths score for pupils at the end of key stage 2 is 105.3, compared to Hull (104.9), Knowsley (103.9) and Sandwell (103.6).

However, with the exception of London, a clear gap re-emerges in the percentage of pupils who achieve between grades 9 and 4 in GCSEs in English and in maths.

In Surrey, 73 per cent of pupils hit this target, while just 44 per cent achieved the same in Knowsley, 51 per cent in Sandwell and 58 per cent in Hull.

Timo Hannay, founder of SchoolDash, said the "geographical angle" to the poverty attainment gap is "under-appreciated... It begs a lot of questions about why we can close the gap at primary school but we aren't able to do it at secondary school."

In July, the Education

Policy Institute's annual report warned that disadvantaged pupils finish school 18 months behind their peers and that it would take over 100 years for them to catch up at the current rate of progress.

Natalie Perera (pictured), executive director and head of research at the EPI, said the GCSE attainment gap could be influenced by "factors outside of school, which could have a disproportionately negative effect of disadvantaged pupils".

She also warned that the lower presence of "highly qualified teachers" in poorer areas could have an impact.

However, Anastasia de Waal, deputy director of Civitas, said the findings could be caused by "artificial inflation" of grades at key stage 2 due to the emphasis in primary schools of getting pupils ready for the SATs exams, while less high achieving pupils can be "left behind" at GCSE level.

The DfE said the attainment gap has narrowed by 9.5 per cent since 2011. Over £80 million in extra cash is being targeted at the country's poorest areas too.



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Trusts 'below average' in first league tables for sixth formers

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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The majority of multi-academy trusts achieved "below-average" progress scores for their sixth-formers last year, new government data shows.

For the first time, the Department for Education has published MAT league tables for 16 to 18 provision, covering 50 academy trusts across England.

The tables rank the trusts based on a level 3 "value-added" score, which rates progress made during sixth form.

This week's data shows average progress at 26 of the 50 trusts (52 per cent) was "below average", while progress at one chain, the Swale Academies Trust, was "well below average".

However, the government pointed out that the low progress scores among MATs relative to other schools is "largely" because they run so many sponsored academies, previously failing schools that have lower progress scores than other institutions.

Twenty MATs achieved an average progress score, while just three – Aldridge Education, the Inspiration Trust and the Diocese of London – were above average.

Celebrated trusts including the Harris Federation and United Learning are among those rated below average. Other large trusts with a below average score include the Academies Enterprise Trust, David Ross

Education Trust, Leigh Academies Trust and E-Act.

The data also shows that pupils at the MATs included in the data made less progress than those in other state-funded mainstream schools.

In particular, non-disadvantaged pupils scored a much lower average progress score (close to -0.08) in the MATs, than they did in other schools (just over 0).

According to the government, the differences in progress between students in MATs and those in all mainstream institutions is "statistically significant".

Although larger MATs are more likely to be closer to the average, there is "more variation" in the progress scores of smaller trusts included in the data, leading the DfE to conclude there is "no clear relationship" between the size of a trust and its score.

There is also no clear relationship between the types of institution in a trust and their progress performance, because the trusts included in the study had "different types of academies in varying proportions".

The government has published MAT league tables based on key stage 4 exam results since 2016, but this is the first time a set of tables based on key stage 5 has been released. Trusts were only included if they had at least three schools on their books for a minimum of three years before the data was collected.

ABOVE AVERAGE TRUSTS:



- Aldridge Education
- Diocese of London
- Inspiration Trust

BELOW AVERAGE TRUSTS:



- Academies Enterprise Trust
- Aspirations Academies Trust
- CFBT Education Trust
- City of London Academies Trust
- Creative Education Trust
- David Meller
- David Ross Education Trust
- Delta Academies Trust
- E-ACT
- FPTA Academies
- Grace Foundation
- Greenwood Academies Trust
- Harris Federation
- Kemnal Academy Trust
- Leigh Academies Trust
- Loxford School Trust
- Matrix Academy Trust
- Northern Education Trust
- Northern Schools Trust
- Rosedale Hewens Academy Trust
- The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust
- The Education Fellowship Trust
- The Haberdashers' Livery Company
- The Priory Federation of Academies Trust
- Transforming Education in Norfolk
- United Learning

Why we're getting on our bikes...

Schools Week's editor John Dickens and publisher Shane Mann will be joining a team from South & City College Birmingham to cycle the 100-mile Vélo Birmingham & Midlands and raise funds for the charity Cure Leukaemia.

Nick Linford, editor of our sister title FE Week, will also be one of the riders joining them in May on the trip from Birmingham to Coventry, then back.

The college has chosen Cure Leukaemia as their nominated charity this year, as a number of

students and staff have been affected by the disease – including one manager, who died of it over a year ago.

The team also includes Dave Heeley, the first blind person to complete the seven-marathon challenge in 2008.

They are aiming to raise £50,000 for charity. To donate, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lsect-team>



L-R: Shane Mann, John Dickens and Nick Linford

EDITORIAL

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

Hinds on wellbeing: a laudable focus, a less laudable solution

Another week, another advisory panel. Today Damian Hinds has set one up to look into teacher wellbeing.

A laudable focus, but a less laudable solution.

As we report this week, this is the education secretary's fifth (at least) expert panel in his 19 months in office.

It may seem slightly unfair to level too much criticism over this at Hinds - he may have his hands tied amid the Brexit-dominated times we live in.

But it does feel like just another nothing announcement that skirts around the problem, rather than solving it.

Even if the panel - whose members are yet to be announced - come up with a load of good ideas, without additional funding to implement them, what impact will they have?

School leaders will tell you the answer is normally "not much".

And, as we reveal this week, life is getting a lot tougher for leaders. It's not just knife crime that is rising.

Our investigation shows school leaders are

increasingly having to call in police to deal with pupils bringing weapons - including tasers, axes and swords - into school.

It's also not just a London problem. The police callouts are rising across other areas of England.

One thing the government can do is publish helpful and timely guidance to help leaders navigate these troubling times.

So it's worrying to see the department would only confirm new guidance on school security - including how teachers can avoid harm - would be published "later this year".

It's slightly different from the government's original line that it would be published "in the Spring". It might be something and nothing, but, as we've seen with the Timpson review, the government doesn't have a good track record on meeting deadlines.

Schools need help solving these issues too, as Ofsted has rightly said this week. The calls for a joined-up approach from police, councils and schools are welcome, and maybe where Hinds should now focus his efforts?

SCHOOLS WEEK



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The academy trust that's run like an edtech start-up

XP multi-academy trust, Doncaster

CATH MURRAY
@CATHMURRAY_

XP and XP East sit like tiny pods on a giant lot in a Doncaster retail park. I've just been given a tour by a couple of year 8 students who've explained how they learn everything through half-termly "expeditions" (projects), don't wear uniform "because they don't want us to look all the same", and find it perfectly normal that someone should apologise publicly in front of the entire school if they've done something wrong.

"You feel more safe," says Alfie. "Bad things don't go unnoticed."

All 250 students participate in the weekly community meeting, where they can make "appreciations, apologies and stands". Stands are issues you want the community to address, which could be anything from racism to single-use plastics.

Public appreciations are used in many schools – popularised by the US-based Knowledge is Power Programme, which is in some ways the ideological antithesis to the Expeditionary Learning (EL) model on which XP is based. Apologies and stands just evolved, explains trust CEO Gwyn ap Harri, a former edtech start-up founder who believes the tech process of iteration and continuous improvement can easily be applied to school design.

Alfie and Courtney are in the same "crew"



Year 8 students Courtney and Alfie in the auditorium where community meetings are held.

– a team of 12 or 13 pupils that is basically a tutor group where they spend 45 minutes each morning. Crews form the bedrock of XP's pastoral system. "If there's something wrong, you can speak to your crew and your crew won't tell anyone," Courtney assures me.

Staff crew is a parallel concept. The initial start-up staff first met when they went on a camping trip together prior to their September 2014 opening.

Trust between pupils is built from day one of year 7, when they are packed off in their crews to employ the tried-and-tested techniques of map-reading and abseiling to build character and forge bonds. "One crew even slept on a boat!" Courtney tells me

with delight.

Alfie enthuses about their first "expedition", which was called What does our community owe to the miners? "We had lots of experts who came in, like former pit nurses who'd worked in the mine, and they'd tell us their own stories."

"Expedition" in this context is similar to project-based learning. Each one takes half a term; is driven by a guiding question, such as "Am I responsible for my own thoughts and deeds?" or "When is it right to make a stand?"; and ends with a "product", such as a book or an art exhibition, which must be "meaningful, beautiful work". In this case it was a book, which is now sold in their local Waterstones.

Other expeditions have celebrated the NHS in Doncaster and explored the issues facing asylum seekers in their community. Staff plan the content collaboratively, making sure the entire academic curriculum is mapped to the expeditions. Anything that doesn't fit in – quadratic equations or foreign languages, for example – is taught separately in traditional classes.

Both schools are strictly limited to 50 kids in a year, 25 in a class, and are run like tech start-ups, bootstrapping their way through the early years and being creative with the curriculum. "The model is affordable and fully costed. And it is replicable," says Ap Harri.



(L to R) Andy Sprakes [executive principal], Martin Said (head of XP) and Gwyn ap Harri (CEO)

The academy trust that's run like an edtech start-up



In the first week of year 7, XP students go on a camping trip to bond with their 'crew'



Learning is organised into half-termly 'expeditions', each of which has a guiding question (GQ)

Teachers teach cross-subject, making use of their interests as well as the subjects in which they are academically trained. Ap Harri teaches business and computing GCSE in the same classroom.

There are no departmental budgets, or even departments – but each expedition does have a budget to pay for materials, expert speakers and trips. The students I meet are preparing to go to see Romeo and Juliet in Blackpool as part of the Rebellion expedition.

But do they know at any given time whether they are learning English, history or geography? "It's a bit mingled, to be honest," Alfie tells me.

Ap Harri, a former computer science teacher, set up the XP free school (then a

second one, XP East) with Andy Sprakes, a headteacher of 15 years, after being impressed by a visit to High Tech High in San Diego – a school that follows the EL approach.

"It was more than just an interesting way of delivering the curriculum; it was a whole ethos, a whole school. It was based on design principles. And, yes, it blew me away," he recalls.

EL schools are small by design; learning is cross-curricular; and the aim is to

“You feel more safe. Bad things don’t go unnoticed”

inspire students to take ownership of their learning, prioritising self-discovery and service to the community.

What seems to be running through the XP schools like words in a stick of rock is citizenship education, although nobody uses that phrase. The walls are covered with posters they've created with the local NHS trust, maps of refugee pathways peppered with words from the asylum

seekers they've met, and quotes from community members who've made pledges that they've since followed up on.

Rather than create an educated elite who'll head off to London once they've got their degree, Sprakes wants to create engaged community members. "We're about, 'Well, if you say Doncaster is a dump, why? And what are we doing about it? What are we doing to make the place where we were born a better place? And what's your responsibility? Or is it somebody else's problem?"

"That's why we connect with the community so much. That's why we work with Age UK, environmental groups, the NHS, you name it. To create things that make Doncaster a better place."

Careers are embedded in everything they do, but they don't give two hoots about the Gatsby benchmarks. "That's where the country's going wrong!" says the head of XP East, Jamie Portman. "That's the pressure of the accountability system that we're under, which is 'How can we show others that we're doing careers?'"

"We get experts in from the local authority, from business; we've had published authors in. Imagine being a kid where frequently people come in and they see, 'Actually, you're just like me. You might

The academy trust that's run like an edtech start-up



look posh, but you started out just like me, so maybe I can go to university too."

I choose one class to sit in on at random, a GCSE history class where the teacher is introducing a new expedition. As she coaxes a recalcitrant teen into focusing on the task at hand, I can't help thinking how much less efficient the persuasion approach to behaviour is than, say, the SLANT approach, where students are trained to sit up straight and track the teacher with their eyes at all times.

Ap Harri says their approach is to create "deep and purposeful relationships" and he frames XP as the antidote to Outwood Grange and Delta – two local multi-academy trusts that have attracted media attention for their strict behaviour policies and high fixed-term exclusion rates. His claims that they are permanently excluding high levels of pupils with special needs aren't backed up by the data, however.

XP has, he admits, permanently excluded one child since they opened. "We shouldn't have had to but we didn't have the support from the local authority. That kid's now accessing the mental health pupil referral unit. We haven't since," he says.

"Because you don't have to!" says Sprakes, who's worked in challenging schools in ex-mining communities. "You've got to try to find an environment or a situation where that kid's needs will be met."

This doesn't mean they go soft on

behaviour, insists Ap Harri. "We're really hard on the kids. You ask the kids about the difficult conversations they have to have when they've got to put things right.

"It would be easier for me to say, 'Right, here's a set of rules. If you transgress any of those then you're out and you become somebody else's problem.' The difficult job is when you've done something wrong, how do you put that right now? And then how do you show that sincerity?"

"The model is affordable and fully costed. And it is replicable"

XP were able to start from scratch and sell their vision to new parents. Could they have held to their values if they'd inherited an existing school – one with a history of low aspirations and under-performance?

"With primary schools, yes," says Ap Harri. "We've got one in our trust. We're hopefully going to be joined by a few more this year. One is a struggling primary school that we're turning around."

Ap Harri seems less enthused at the prospect of turning around a secondary.



"Why not just bulldoze it and build some more of these? Because it works."

The school's first Ofsted report, in 2017, was glowing, with outstanding in every category. Whether they will also produce good grades is yet to be seen – their first cohort of year 11s will sit their exams this summer.

Ap Harri knows the survival of his school depends on getting good results, but doesn't believe it should be his sole focus. "We see results as a consequence of what we do – rather than the reason, the purpose.

"If you come to school every day, work hard, be kind, produce beautiful work and become a better person, you'll achieve academically – that's our narrative for success."

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Giving pupils access to the best that has been thought and said will ensure every child has the same advantages as the educated elite, says Rachel de Souza

Five years ago, in the midst of turning around some of our high schools, I took some of our principals on a trip.

Using money from some consultancy work I'd done, we paid for a small group to fly out to America and drive across country to meet Dr E D Hirsch. His book, Cultural Literacy, had struck a chord with me. As teachers we were already doing lots for our pupils, but how could we really leverage the emancipatory power of our curriculum?

Today, Hirsch's ideas are widely known: a knowledge-rich approach that gives every child the same advantages as the educated elite – access to the best that has been thought and said, and not as a way of reinforcing old traditions, but as a springboard for them to generate and grow their own ideas in the future.

That group of principals, which has expanded as the Inspiration Trust has grown, sat down together and agreed we needed to take a fundamental look at our curriculum, shifting to a rich, subject-focused, more carefully sequenced approach. We think this is crucial to helping our most disadvantaged pupils succeed.

It was always important that this wasn't something being done to our schools, but that our principals, subject leaders and teachers were intimately involved in. So, right from the start, we were clear that while we needed a central education team to kickstart the work, they would spend significant time in classrooms.



DAME RACHEL DE SOUZA

Chief executive, Inspiration Trust

Knowledge is power – we must teach it to our children

Teachers have always thought deeply about their lessons, but not necessarily about how to secure knowledge year on year. Performance tables can encourage us to focus narrowly on technical literacy and numeracy, when what's needed is a wider approach that advances those essential aspects through the rich

doesn't work if it is just bits of paper. It has to be a living and breathing thing that feeds off teachers' passion for their subjects and encourages them to bring that fire into class to inspire pupils. Different subjects will benefit from different approaches.

The initial work led us to a successful bid to the strategic school

“ Curriculum change doesn't work if it is just bits of paper ”

vocabulary and knowledge of history or geography or science.

Professional development of our staff is core to embedding that approach – curriculum change

improvement fund (SSIF) in 2017 to develop a humanities curriculum, resources and training for a group of Norfolk primary schools – ours, plus those run by other trusts and the

local authority.

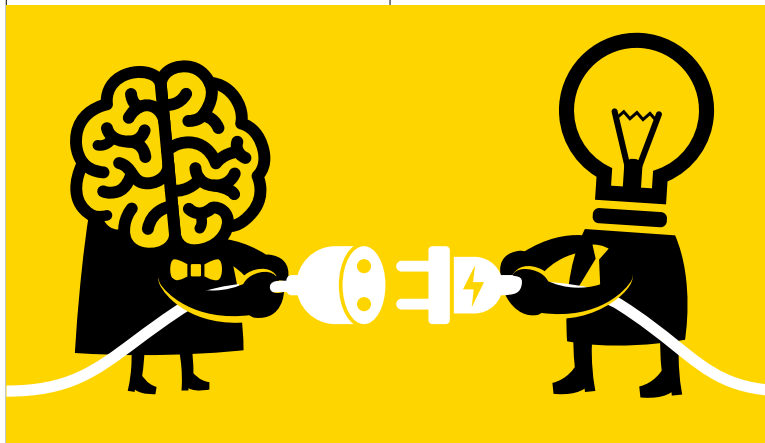
We have had fantastic feedback from teachers on those materials, which give a strong guiding framework for teachers without dictating the meat of every lesson – and our tracking data suggests a direct impact on pupil progress.

We have decided to give away the resources for free. Why? The trust has put in a lot of time and money, but we have also had the support from SSIF and terrific engagement from our partner schools. We think it's right that, once we have completed the project analysis and tweaked the materials to reflect teacher feedback, we make those resources available.

We're here to improve education for all children, not just those in our schools, and we're not interested in spinning off a publishing arm or a consultancy company. Other trusts are taking a different approach and we respect that. We have used great programmes from Ark and elsewhere: they take time and effort to develop.

For us, the real value in developing our knowledge-rich curriculum and professional development is building lively subject communities in our schools, and encouraging conversations about how and what we can teach. It's about developing our staff as professionals, extending their knowledge and helping them put that to use in the classroom.

That means happier, more confident teachers. And that has to be good for all our pupils.



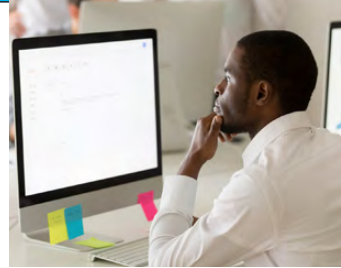
Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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HANNAH TYREMAN

Head of online learning and community,
Chartered College of Teaching



whether they hold answers for our particular context.

Building a community

A climate of trust between participants is a vital component for effective learning online. Use of social media by teachers suggests a desire to develop a powerful personal learning network beyond the confines of the school environment. When facilitated successfully, participants in an online

and debates can build confidence and equip them with the tools they need to challenge practices and processes within their own context. Learning online can make CPD more scalable, accessible, affordable and flexible. These benefits can't be ignored within the context of tight budgets and teachers on a variety of contracts and working patterns.

Learning from cognitive science

We are constantly discovering more about how technology can be used in effective ways to support learning – something the Chartered College explored in the latest edition of our research publication, *Impact*. The concepts of dual coding and cognitive load theory can be applied to our creation of slideshows, videos and presentation of new knowledge. We can construct and present reading materials in a way that supports comprehension, and we can learn from retrieval practice, spacing and interleaving to design our learning in a way that maximises retention.

Maintaining motivation

Learning at a distance can present challenges for motivation and engagement. A key consideration when designing online learning is whether the activities will lead to the kind of deep thinking that sparks changes to practice. If the design includes the best of what is effective in face-to-face development – such as cycles of deliberate practice, instructional coaching, video reflection and engagement with research – and the learning interactions are designed in such a way that enable reflection on phase, subject and school context, then maintaining this motivation seems more likely.

What does good online CPD look like?

Online professional development can be as good as face-to-face, as long as careful consideration has been given to its design and implementation, says Hannah Tyreman

equally as effective as face-to-face learning, but only when careful consideration has been given to its design and implementation. All too often, online learning is interpreted as creating a depository of information,

The Early Career Framework sets out a clear expectation for new teachers to benefit from the kind of structured professional development experienced by those working in other professions, including medicine and law. But how might this time be best spent, and how can schools make it work for them?

For some schools, the barriers to high-quality CPD may be a lack of in-house capacity or an unwillingness to over-burden those often called on. Shrinking budgets and a lack of time to plan, deliver and facilitate a programme of support to accompany the framework are also issues. It also needs to be tailored to the teacher's specialism and level of expertise, which is time-consuming. Additionally, research suggests that a number of traditional CPD approaches, such as training workshops, often fail to deliver timely, context-specific knowledge.

At the Chartered College of Teaching, we're interested in how technology might provide a solution. Research suggests online learning can be

which doesn't maximise its potential as a form of high-quality CPD.

So what actually makes effective online learning?

Time to think

Effective CPD often exposes us to new perspectives that can feel disconcerting. We can encounter something that makes us question our practice: 'Was I wrong all along?'. Conversely, we can dismiss a finding too quickly when bias clouds our judgment. Learning online can allow time to return to ideas we find problematic, after having taken time to think. Having time and space for reflection in between learning modules can allow us to engage with research findings and new perspectives in measured ways, in order to more effectively judge

community can feel encouraged to take risks, discuss successes, failures and challenges, and experiment in their classroom practice. While these might be important outcomes for any professional development, they are particularly important for early-career teachers.

Finding a voice

Online learning can take advantage of contexts and perspectives that transcend the politics within an individual school. This is especially true for a teacher in the early stages of their career who may be navigating the views of colleagues they rely on in school and may be reluctant to rock the boat. Being part of an online community that connects teachers through carefully constructed activities, discussions

“ Learning online can make CPD more scalable, accessible, affordable and flexible

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Powering Up Children: The Learning Power Approach to Primary Teaching

By Guy Claxton and Becky Carlzon

Published by Crown House Publishing

Reviewed by Charlie Wild

I fully expected to hate this book.

I knew it would be full of the kind of progressive ideas I had fallen for as a trainee teacher (plus I disliked the title and the cover art). I was especially irked by the authors' disingenuous claim that their ideas tread a "middle way" between traditionalism and progressivism. To be clear, they fall squarely into the latter camp. And yet, despite my misgivings, I have to admit that it made me pause for thought.

The authors describe their "Learning Power Approach" as an all-encompassing philosophy for education. It aims to "power up" children to be confident, curious, independent-minded humans ready to go out and explore the world. At its core is a model of the mind as containing various "learning muscles" – curiosity, attention, imagination, determination etc.

This seems to be a variation on the common progressive tendency to emphasise generic skills like creativity and collaboration. I remain unconvinced. There is good evidence to suggest these skills are "biologically primary", and therefore quite easy for the brain to learn. Indeed, as a species, human beings were creating and collaborating long before we ever started going to school.

I also think it's quite misleading to represent the mind like this. In my view, a model of the mind that encompasses the structures of working and long-term memory is both more accurate and more useful to teachers. I worry that the "learning muscles" concept

could result in teachers holding serious misconceptions about how the brain works.

Chapter one deals with creating a safe and interesting classroom space. The authors advise teachers to create a culture of order and routine, and to foster attitudes of mutual respect. So far, so uncontroversial. However, they also advocate strongly for project-based and discovery learning, claiming that real and authentic experiences are more engaging for children.

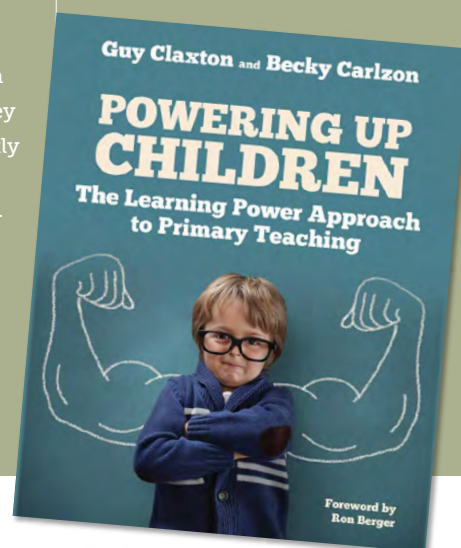
Sweller's cognitive load theory suggests that these kinds of lessons, when used for new learning, are likely to overload working memory. If you read carefully, the authors do acknowledge that problem-solving is best attempted when pupils already have strong prior knowledge, but blink and you'll miss the reference. This is a real concern. All too often, new teachers underestimate how much practice it takes to master content. Progressing too quickly on to problem-solving can leave children feeling confused and frustrated.

I also think this book encourages teachers to spend valuable time on peripheral things that don't have much impact on learning. In chapter two, they suggest creating exciting and constantly changing displays of pupils' work. In chapter four, they advise frequently re-arranging classroom furniture. I'm not saying there's no place for these; every child feels proud when they see their work on display. My concern is that these things shouldn't be a teacher's main focus. As a new teacher, I often

fretted about display. But since I've begun worrying less about what's on the walls, and more about what's in pupils' heads, I've become a better (and a less stressed) teacher.

So why, despite all this, am I still giving this book three stars? It's because the authors' core message needs to be heard: education has the power either to motivate or to discourage. It can hook children on learning for life, or put them off forever. Of course, we all want our lessons to inspire and engage children. But in attempting this, teachers' attitudes and dispositions count for something. It pains me that, in some quarters, those who reject progressivism have returned to precisely the same dire strategies that gave rise to it in the first place, like mindlessly copying notes from the whiteboard.

As long as there are children who are turned off education by our methods, the trad/prog debate will rumble on. As long as those children exist, books like this will (and, rightly, should) have their place.



Research

Every month Laura McInerney shares some insights from polls of people working in schools, conducted via the Teacher Tapp app.

If there was an election tomorrow, who would teachers vote for?

Laura McInerney, Co-founder, Teacher Tapp

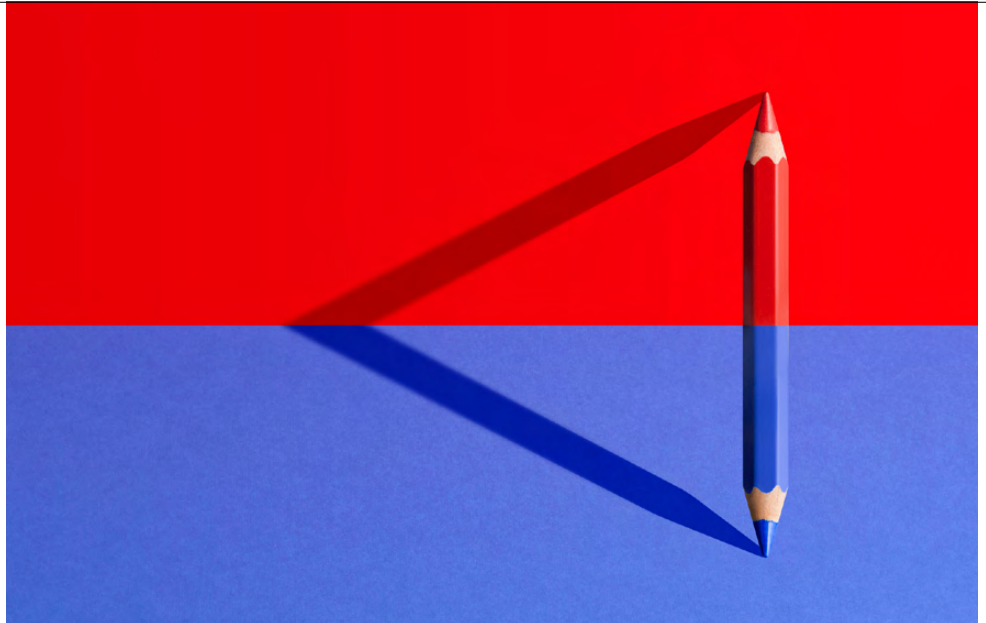
In a world of political turmoil, teacher votes matter. For a start, there are half a million people in the profession. That's almost one in 60 of the working population. Parents are also a hefty group. More than 8 million voters currently have children in a UK school. What teachers think about politics, and how this is communicated to parents, can therefore have a significant impact on who holds the key to No 10.

So, how do teachers vote? Since 1997, the profession has traditionally voted Labour, along with many other public service workers. Our Teacher Tapp panel – which now numbers over 3,500 – followed this same pattern at the last election. In 2017, around 60% of them said they cast a vote for the Labour party, while only 12% voted Conservative, [<http://teachertapp.co.uk/2019/02/teachers-vote-general-election-intentions-predict/>], which might account for why so many Tory teachers have said they feel uneasy talking about politics in the staffroom.

Teacher support for Labour is not inevitable, however. When we polled last November, only 47% of teachers said they would vote Labour if a snap election was called. Admittedly, things were even worse for the Conservative party, which garnered just 9% of the vote.

One reason for the dip was that a substantial number of teachers changed to "I don't know yet" – a category that isn't available when asking people how they voted at the last election. However, even if we assume that every person in that group voted the same as they did previously, it still wouldn't get Labour back up to its original position.

And things are now looking worse for the party. Last month,



when a number of MPs broke away from the traditional political parties to form the Independent Group (or TIG, for short), we polled teachers to find out how attractive they found the new group. Despite TIG having no leader, no policies and no unifying philosophy, they came out as the group teachers were most likely to vote for if a snap election were called. To reiterate: a group that people know almost nothing about received the highest number of teacher votes (21%). Labour was, admittedly, only a smidgeon behind, at 20%, and the Conservatives, down to 5%, were decimated. But, still, how are we living in a world where an entirely untested group is somehow preferred by teachers?

In part, the trend appears to be age-related. Labour remains broadly popular among under-30s and over-60s. But there is a real distaste for politics among the current 30-55 age group, which makes up a huge amount of the teaching population.

There's also a problem with the educational agendas of both parties. The Conservatives no longer seem to have a

unifying philosophy. Damian Hinds, the education secretary, is like a kid at the fair. His energy bounces from one thing to another – mental health, edtech, knitting (!), workload, uh-oh some sex stuff – but none of it seems to be amounting to anything. If an election were called tomorrow, it's not even clear if grammar schools would be in the manifesto, and that's about the only educational thing that Theresa May has shown any interest in. When the linchpin policy isn't even obvious, the party is screwed.

Over on the Labour side, the National Education Service remains as amorphous a concept as ever. The will-they, won't-they keep academies debate shows no signs of being resolved. And Jeremy Corbyn is still insistent on sinking billions into free tuition fees even though early years and school funding are more important.

Given all this, it's no surprise that teachers are losing patience. If TIG can get a march on the other parties, and come up with some sensible policies, their slight lead may become a much bigger one. And with 500,000 teacher votes up for grab, it may be a very important one.



Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is **Robin Conway**, who is director of research and innovation at John Mason School

@JMSREFLECT

On the right track

@GreeboRunner

In this piece, Zoe Esner explores how the push for a knowledge-rich curriculum has developed her teaching. Esner shares a journey that will be familiar to many of us. First, there is the process of questioning how “unique” her discipline area (English, in this case) really is, and whether the accepted belief that the higher skills could be divorced from knowledge was really working for her students. Her reading led to Kirschner’s two key questions for any teacher (“What is it we want students to know? What do we want them to do with it?”). Like any reflective practitioner she has taken this back to her own planning, and shifted her approach accordingly. Crucially, Esner has not lowered her ambitions for her students: she still wants them to draw inferences, write creatively and analyse texts. But, with knowledge at the heart of her planning, she has found that “the quality of what the students now produce is by far some of the best I have seen”.

Examinations: the gilded age

@apf102

Alex Ford’s analysis of Ofsted’s findings on “Marking consistency metrics” (November 2018) makes compelling, if somewhat

TOP BLOGS of the week

worrying, reading. For anyone without the time or statistical knowledge to digest the original, Ford’s blog gives a clear explanation of how unreliable marking is in some subjects and uses this to question, not unreasonably, the validity of the outcomes. For those teaching maths the news is positive, with the GCSE giving “a good example of how marking should operate when it is really effective and rigorous”. However, those teaching in a significant number of subjects should have more concerns. Ford does a masterly job of explaining the issues, and goes on to explain why the issue of “agreement rates” is an important one; for schools, teachers and, crucially, students. The blog does not end with practical actions or suggestions for implementing the “fundamental change” Ford calls for, but it certainly makes the case for opening a discussion, and soon. It is one in which subject teachers will want to be closely involved, and Ford’s piece makes a great introduction to the issues.

What is academic language?

@DiLeed

It is inevitable that the attainment gap created by competent learners failing to express their ideas in the appropriate academic language mostly hurts the disadvantaged. In this blog, Diane Leedham attempts to “map the territory” by sharing some of the key concepts needed to help students learn this style of communication. She warns against “simple rules and

sweeping proscriptions”, and considers nominalisation, vocabulary development, polysemy (a new concept for me) and fluency. Complicated techniques are well explained and the importance of learning to communicate in academic language clearly emphasised. Considering the worrying conclusions of Alex Ford’s blog on examinations, this is a must-read for teachers in many subjects. Leedham’s piece is the first in a promised series and I am very much looking forward to subsequent instalments.

Metacognition just good teaching?

@DrB_SciTeacher

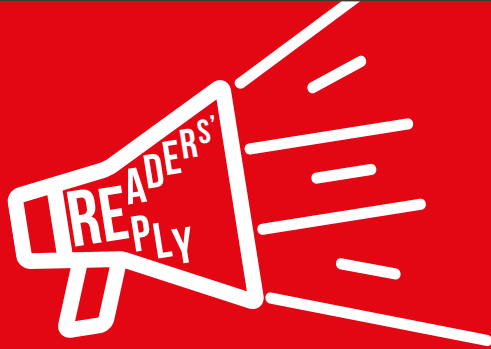
Since the EEF produced its “Metacognition and self-regulated learning” report in 2018, it’s everywhere. James Bullous has looked at the model carefully, action-planning how to trial it with students. The blog draws links with established tools and techniques such as @adamboxer1’s SLOP (Shed Loads of Practice) sheets. These connections help to demystify metacognition and reinforce Bullous’s message that excellent practice already exists. Despite the questioning nature of the title, Bullous does not seek to tear down metacognition, but offers an important and reassuring insight: “Most great practitioners are naturally very metacognitive and so, by producing this guidance, the EEF models perfectly making the implicit, explicit.”

Social mobility

@GrumpyTeacher17

If you’re in the mood for something a little different, The Grumpy Teacher’s blogs are always passionate, articulate and engaging. The Grumpy Teacher is unafraid to take unpopular stances, and shares ideas that are always thought-provoking. This blog challenges the concept of education as a tool for creating social mobility (with sideswipes at the government and the baby boomer generation). Aside from the fact that it is always good to see educational shibboleths held up to scrutiny, the blog makes a powerful case for the preservation of “the intellectual heritage of mankind” even without direct economic benefits.

CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +



Why ITE providers should deliver the early-career framework

Jake Capper

I strongly agree with James Noble-Rogers on this. I was at a DfE recruitment and retention event last week where we were asked to come up with some ideas on how the early-career framework may be best delivered. For me, the answer is simple – there are in the region of 900 teaching schools nationally, with most being linked to an HEI which provides individual teacher education. Make it part of their KPIs to deliver, Quality Assessment through peer HEI/Ofsted, and you have the perfect vehicle. You also have the right people and right support mechanisms in place.

Layers of procurement and differing costs will create yet more barriers to what was set out to be a supportive and positive step forward!

DfE pledges 'career-related learning' in all primaries

Janet Lloyd

So important that the powers that be behind this initiative and the "big companies" work alongside all of us and learn from us all. Needs to be quality provision, and then this will be more than a quick-win initiative. This initiative has potential and sustainability as long as primary languages is developed and delivered by practitioners and experts in the field, with people from industry working and learning alongside.

Janet Downs

It's more money for high-quality careers education and guidance in secondary schools that is needed. Much cheaper to promise "career-related learning" in primaries, especially when 96 per cent already offer it.

More schools could be forced to cut teaching hours, union warns

A Sceptic

I am not for one moment saying that schools are not underfunded – no doubt about it.

But here's the thing... every time a school is in the news saying they are going to have to close on Friday afternoons because they can't afford to stay open, I go and look them up on compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/ And so far, every

REPLY OF THE WEEK **Mark Watson**

Investigation: The highs (and occasional lows) of academy CEO pay

This is a genuinely excellent review and analysis of the issue, and goes beyond the usual hysteria and attention-seeking headlines. There is undoubtedly a problem with some trusts. To my mind, the majority of these are the trusts with very few schools that are paying salaries commensurate with trusts of 40-odd schools. But what is really helpful is the comparison of MAT CEO pay with that of local authority heads and other public sector areas. The figures given for the various LA heads (Craig Tunstall really gets £184k while suspended?) show this is not only an issue for academies.

And serious credit for acknowledging the levels of pay in teaching unions.



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

school I've looked at gets at least £1,000 per pupil per year more than my local school (which is open a full five days a week). Something doesn't add up here. Either these schools that are reducing hours are doing so for political means. Or they're failing to adjust to the budget realities that plenty of other schools have had to live with for years.

How can it be that schools in Birmingham and Sunderland can't cope on £5,200+ per pupil per year, when many schools in other parts of the country are coping on significantly less?

Meet the masters of the curriculum

Prof Rachel Lofthouse, @DrRLothouse

Some have access to more money from DfE to develop a product. They can then sell that product to the others who didn't have that money. Curriculum as commodity.

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

SUNDAY

You can always tell the measure of a man by whether he shines his own shoes. So we were delighted when Luke Tryl, new director of the New Schools Network, posted a picture of his freshly-polished footwear ahead of his first day on the job.

Hopefully his performance in the job will be more polished than that of his predecessor, Toby Young...

MONDAY

The DfE continues to twiddle its thumbs on the important issue of restraint practices in schools – amid reports of pupils returning home with bruises and carpet burns.

During education questions in Parliament, children's minister Nadhim Zahawi said his department is "taking a root and branch review with the Department of Health on restraint and will be reporting back".

Now the DfE has admitted to WiW that what he *actually* meant was that they are still waiting for the outcome of an old consultation on restraint and restrictive intervention guidance launched in November 2017.

The consultation closed in Jan 2018 – more than a year ago – but the DfE still can't provide a timeframe for the outcome.

Meanwhile, the ubiquitous Ian Bauckham, who has led more reviews for the DfE than we can keep track of, seemed to be uncharacteristically flustered when technology failed him at an event this week.

Bauckham was at the official launch of "LASER" – Language Analysis in Schools: Education and Research – and the irony of the name of the product was not lost when Bauckham's powerpoint presentation slowed to a snail's pace, before eventually blanking out completely, prompting calls for the audience to donate their laptops.

The academy chief, whose composure is famously unflappable, muttered that he would one day look back on this age of useless technology and "wonder how we ever managed with it".

Eventually, everyone just went for a coffee break.

That evening, the latest tech was also wheeled out at the launch of the Ambition Institute in London, in front of an audience of the great and the good (we counted at least four current or former schools commissioners).

Inspiration Trust leader and renowned trad Dame Rachel de Souza surprised the crowd when in a poll of gathered leaders she sat on the fence on whether leadership training programmes should be specific to education or general. De Souza goes prog – you heard it here first.

She then went on to describe academics as "the worst leaders", saying: "If they can't implement it, what's the point?"

Who could that be aimed at, we wonder?

Another highlight was the gleeful laugh of national schools commissioner Dominic Herrington when a panellist suggested that education policy should be taken out of the hands of ministers.

TUESDAY

Busy with Brexit

WEDNESDAY

The children's minister ended up with more than a little egg on his face when he appeared to call for one of his own colleagues to be sacked.

In an interview, Zahawi said ministers who defied orders to vote with the government on Brexit should be sacked.

Too bad that Anne Milton, the minister for skills at the DfE and one of his own colleagues, went on to abstain. We bet Thursday at the office was awks.

THURSDAY

The DfE's permanent secretary Jonathan Slater has been known to dance around the questions when appearing before MPs in parliament.

Now we know how he sidesteps so well – turns out Slater is a big Strictly Come Dancing fan.

He excitedly tweeted a picture of himself with AJ Pritchard at the Princes Trust Awards today, who Slater described as "one of my favourite Strictly dancers".



**AIM**
ACADEMIES TRUST
TRANSFORMING TRADITION

Are you dedicated to transforming life chances of young people?

Will you help to create the next generation of leaders?

Do you want to join AIM Academies Trust as part of the 'Founding Transformation Team' of a new North London secondary academy?

AIM Academies Trust (AIMAT) are delighted to have been appointed by the DfE as the new sponsor of an academy in North London to take it on a journey of transformation. AIMAT will open this new academy in September 2019.

The vision is simple at AIMAT: all young people will become 'Leaders for Tomorrow'. Leaders who determine their own destiny, leaders of their communities and leaders of their chosen career.

- Determining their own destiny means AIMAT young people are in control of their futures. They have a strong moral compass and clear direction in pursuing their life goals.
- Leading in their communities means AIMAT young people selflessly serve their families, their local, national and global communities.
- Leading in their chosen career means AIMAT young people are prepared to enter a profession with prospects and to flourish and thrive within it.

AIMAT has a simple and robust transformation strategy planned for this new academy. Firstly, to rapidly improve behaviour and attendance. Secondly, to rapidly improve the quality of the curriculum and finally to ensure the quality of teaching is consistently exemplary in every classroom. AIMAT will open with an experienced and skilful 'Founding Transformation Team' who will be part of supporting the academy in becoming the world class institution that we know it can be.

AIMAT hopes to demonstrate a sharp rise in the outcomes for all young people in this new academy over the coming months and years. We are looking forward to working closely with parents and the local community in order to achieve this. AIMAT are excited by the challenge ahead.

"There is a rare opportunity to be part of the Founding 'AIMAT Transformation Team'. AIMAT will open this new academy with a centrally recruited 'Transformation Team' to lead the significant changes needed within this new academy. We are assembling a truly exceptional team of teachers and leaders who are driven by a shared moral purpose."

We do not underestimate the magnitude, nor the importance, of the job at hand. It will require huge amounts of perseverance and a constant drive for innovative excellence. However, these roles will also be incredibly rewarding and will offer exciting progression for the future.

If you share our core belief in a growth mindset, have a relentless focus on high standards and operate with the utmost professional integrity and humility, then we would love to hear from you. Equally, if you know other colleagues for whom this challenge would resonate, and who have a proven track record of excellence, then feel free to put them in touch with us (and let us know that you have referred them).

We have vacancies available at all levels from Deputy Principal to Trainee teachers and are recruiting now. If you are interested in any of these opportunities then please apply via the application form on our website www.aimacademies.org. We would be delighted to have an informal conversation prior to application and/or arrange a visit of our flagship school, London Academy, where many of the team currently work. To arrange this please get in touch via email at info@aimacademies.org or call to speak to **Paddy Mcgrath, CEO AIMAT on 07920189106**.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL X 2

LEAD PRACTITIONER: ENGLISH

LEAD PRACTITIONER: MATHS

LEAD PRACTITIONER: SCIENCE

www.aimacademies.org



Executive Principal for Excelsior All Through (3 – 19) Academy Newcastle upon Tyne

Required for September 2019

Competitive salary, potential performance bonuses and relocation allowance

This is an exciting, challenging and rewarding opportunity for an experienced and successful Head Teacher.

Experience of working in a culturally diverse school or academy is not essential, nor is experience of working in an all through setting. Trustees are looking for a successful and inspirational leader who has the vision, skills and commitment to lead Excelsior into the future. Trustees invite applications from experienced and successful principals of secondary or all through schools to build on Excelsior's success and lead it as part of LST, to greater achievements.

Excelsior Academy is state of the art, purpose built all through academy, which opened in September 2008 as Newcastle's first academy. Located near good transport routes including the A1, Newcastle Airport, Newcastle city centre and within easy reach of picturesque Northumberland and the north east coast.

Initially an 11-19 provision, Excelsior expanded in September 2013 to become all through admitting pupils in Reception and Year 1, and then further expanded to include Nursery provision from January 2015.

Further information about this exciting, challenging and rewarding post is available on Excelsior's website:
www.excelsioracademy.laidlawschoolstrust.com

Prospective applicants are welcome to contact either Jane Spence CEO of LST on (0191) 6622400 jane.spence@laidlawschoolstrust.com or Philomena Marshall, the founder Executive Principal on 07595120784 Phil.Marshall@excelsiornewcastle.org.uk for an informal discussion prior to making an application.

To apply for this post:

Please review the job description and person specification when completing the application form and provide alongside your application, an accompanying statement to explain how you have transformed provision and raised standards in your current school.

Closing date: 12 noon Monday 25th March 2019

Interviews: w/c 1st April 2019

Applications and an accompanying statement should be returned to:
hadmin@laidlawschoolstrust.com



Trust Head of Improvement – Primary and Secondary

Salary: Leadership Spine: L18-30 (£60,755-£81,515 FTE) Negotiable upon appointment

Contract: Permanent

SAST is a strong and ambitious Trust of both primary and secondary schools with a national Teaching School seeking to ensure an excellent and sustainable 0-19 education for children within our community across West & North Dorset and South Somerset.

We are looking to appoint an inspirational leader with a proven track record of improving educational provision and outcomes to join the Trust. In September 2019 the Trust will consist of 3400 children and over 550 staff working in 10 primary schools and 3 secondary schools. Working in collaboration with the school Headteachers and Trust leaders you will provide exceptional improvement support across the Trust to raise standards even further.

Ideally we would like to recruit someone with both primary and secondary expertise but the post will be configurable in different ways including two separate posts for separate primary and secondary on a part-time basis.

You are warmly encouraged to get in touch to discuss the position and alternative options. Our CEO, Steve Hillier is available to have an informal discussion about the role. Please contact his assistant **Bella Byrne** on **01935 811066** or at Bella.Byrne@sast.org.uk. You are also most welcome to visit the Trust or some of its schools.

For a recruitment pack and online application form, please visit the trust website: www.sast.org.uk

Start Date: 1 September 2019 (Earlier if available)

Closing Date: 9.00 am on Monday 25 March 2019

Interviews: Tuesday 2 April 2019.

SAST has an absolute commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced criminal record check via the DBS. The Trust values the diversity of our workforce and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community.



Headteacher

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A new dawn, a new day, a bold beginning.

Leading the children of Stamshaw Junior School on a journey of discovery with infinite possibilities.

The School is joining the University of Chichester Academy Trust. With your leadership, drive and commitment, and our support, the School will be re-launched delivering an exciting and dynamic education experience for its pupils and the community it serves.

Do you believe you are that leader with the passion, inspiration and vision to make a real difference to Stamshaw Junior School?

We hope your answer is yes, and you find the Headteacher information pack inspires you to learn more. We are keen to invite you to the School to meet with our interim headteacher and a Trust leader, to discuss how we could work together to make a lasting difference to the children in this school and to the community it serves.

To arrange a visit to Stamshaw Junior School, please contact in the first instance **Jacqui Farrell**, Administrator on (01243) 793421 or email unicathr@chi.ac.uk

Further information can be found at <http://www.unicat.org.uk/find-job>

www.unicat.org.uk
[@chiuniAcademies](mailto:chiuniAcademies)

Closing date: 25 March 2019 9.00am
Interview date: 28 - 29 March 2019



Blatchington Mill School

Involvement, Achievement & Care

TWO DEPUTY HEAD TEACHERS REQUIRED FOR SEPT 19

We are looking to appoint:

- 1. Deputy Head – Behaviour & Attendance**
- 2. Deputy Head – Quality of Education**

If you are a highly effective leader, with an exceptional understanding of pedagogy and are committed to raising standards, then please apply to join our forward thinking team.

For further details and an application pack please visit the school website:

www.blatchingtonmill.org.uk/vacancies-list

Closing date: Wednesday, 3rd April 2019 (12 noon)



PRINCIPAL
£59,265 to £68,667 per year

The Inspire Learning Partnership is seeking to appoint a Principal at Kanes Hill Primary School. The Trust is looking for an exceptional candidate to develop this outstanding, inclusive school and champion its collaborative work with the Inspire Learning Partnership and the local community. This is an exciting opportunity for a senior leader who has the passion and expertise to lead Kanes Hill Primary School to reach its true potential.

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed and will take place on **Tuesday 19th March 2019 and Thursday 28th March 2019**

Please contact the Executive Principal's PA at principalrecruitment@ilpartnership.org if you wish to come along on either of the days.

Closing Date: Monday 1st April 2019 at noon

Interview Dates: Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th April 2019

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