

# SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Profile: 'The big thing now is assistant-led leadership'



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Why isolation DOES work



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Bad news: hardly any new teachers + retention drops



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Inadequate? Don't worry, have the school down the road



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## HAS OFSTED UNLEASHED A 'BOOK SCRUTINY MONSTER'?



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## DfE facing legal action over 'insulting' £100 offer for teacher training gaffe

- Nearly 700 candidates wrongly told they had failed QTS tests by government
- Would-be teachers this week offered 'disgraceful' £100 compensation for error
- Ministers face court battle over loss of earnings claims as victims speak out

EXCLUSIVE PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS | @PIPPA\_AK

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## Editor's top picks



**How Lord Agnew wants academies to show they are behaving**

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## Knife crime: why a T-shirt slogan isn't enough



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# We failed you by mistake, oops - have £100

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

EXCLUSIVE

The Department for Education is facing legal action after offering an “insulting” £100 to compensate would-be teachers it incorrectly failed on skills tests needed to progress to teacher training.

New figures seen by *Schools Week* reveal nearly 700 candidates were wrongly told they had failed the QTS tests in numeracy and literacy.

An error in the mark scheme that has been in place for at least ten years was only discovered last year.

The Department for Education has identified and contacted the candidates affected, years after they were wrongly told they failed the tests, offering them £100 in compensation for the gaffe. One recipient called it “insulting”.

Some would-be teachers, who have since taken up lesser-paid jobs, now plan to sue the government over losses of potential earnings.

Caroline Barton Byrd said her son was told this week that he had actually passed. He had felt like a “failure” after the test and was now studying an unrelated course at university.

She said he would have been a “fantastic” primary teacher, and the compensation barely covered the £80 train fare he paid from Kent to Stratford to take the test in the first place.

“It’s a disgrace. It’s insulting. Because of their error, my son and other young people have had the whole course of their life changed.

“Is this really an apology? When my son and others have had their dreams pulled out from underneath them, through no fault of their own?”

Figures published this week show 696 candidates failed the test between 2014 and 2017 when they should have passed, although 528 of these passed at a later date.

In 2017 alone, 200 candidates were mistakenly told they had failed the test,

To: Undisclosed recipients;  
Subject: Teacher Training Skills Tests

We know this must be frustrating news. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused. To apologise, the Department for Education would like to issue you a compensation payment of £100.

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designed by the Standards and Testing Agency. The marking scheme “incorrectly scored the answer to a multiple-choice question”.

Neil Hassell, the headteacher of Hemel Hempstead School, said a former pupil wanted to return as a teacher, but was told three years ago he failed the tests.

He works at the school as cover supervisor, but is now seeking legal advice from his union after being “devastated” to receive an email from the DfE on Tuesday.

Hassell said: “He’s a really skilled, important member of my staff who has had his dream shattered, and would be a fantastic teacher. For the DfE to acknowledge that with nothing more than an offer of £100 and an email, I just don’t think it’s acceptable.

“What message does that send to the profession, when we’re in the middle of a teacher recruitment crisis?”

An email sent to affected candidates from PSI, the company that delivers the tests, read: “We know this must be frustrating news. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused.”

Danielle Lewis-James, a senior associate at law firm Slater and Gordon, told *Schools Week* the would-be teachers could demand more compensation as the error could be a breach of duty of care.

If someone was forced into a lower-paid job as a result, they could claim for the difference in salary – if they could show the loss was the direct result of the error and would not have happened otherwise.

“They’re not going to dig too much into how much they owe anybody. They’re just going to look at it superficially. Half are likely to accept it, and then they’ve saved a ton of money,” she said.

“I would write back to the DfE and say ‘I don’t accept your offer and the reason I don’t accept it is because I’ve suffered loss from your breach’ and tell them how much the loss is.”

A spokesperson for the DfE said the error was identified during “a routine review of marking schemes” last year.

“It was immediately taken out of use and the department has contacted a number of people who have been adversely affected as a result.”

In February last year, the government removed the lock-out policy that prevented anyone who failed the tests three times in a row from taking it again for 24 months.

This came after *Schools Week* reported almost 5,000 prospective teachers failed three times in 2015-16, shutting them out of the profession for at least two years.



# Workforce census findings

## Your trusty Schools Week data round-up

The 2018 School Workforce Census was published yesterday – and it's more bad news for the teacher recruitment crisis.

*Schools Week* has the key findings

### 1 Teacher numbers are up slightly, but are outstripped by the rise in pupils

The number of teachers (453,400 full-time equivalents) has increased 0.3 per cent on 2017.

However, this rise was driven by primary teachers (up 0.5 per cent) as the number of secondary teachers actually dropped by 0.3 per cent.

The number of entrants is back to being more than the number of leavers (just about), which is better than last year's census that showed more teachers left the profession than joined.

But it is worrying that the number of pupils rose by 0.8 per cent to 8,735,098 in 2018, which means the number of extra pupils outstripped the small rise in teachers. (Figures for 2019 show the number of pupils has continued to rise.)



### 2 Retention is getting worse – 1 in 3 teachers now leave after 5 years

While the number of new teachers isn't keeping up with demand, the retention rate is also falling.

Of the teachers who qualified in 2017, 84.7 per cent are still in service one year after qualifying. That's down from the previous one-year retention rate of 85.1 per cent.

The five-year retention rate has also dropped to 67.7 per cent for those who qualified in 2013, compared with 68.5 per cent in the previous year.



### 3 There's more flexible working, but it's hitting teacher numbers

While 18,500 teachers increased their working hours, a greater number (25,300 or 5 per cent) cut down.

But beware: "Between 2017 and 2018, such changes in working pattern produce a decrease equivalent to approximately 3,000 FTE qualified teachers."

There are two sides to this. One argument is that if more teachers take up flexible working then we'll have fewer teachers available. The other states that if you increase flexible working then you will gain teachers because more of those who have left will come back.

We don't think this stat proves either, but it's interesting nonetheless.



### 4 Pupil teacher ratios are increasing in secondaries

The ratio of teachers to pupils has remained stable or increased slightly for all school types except primary academies (where it fell from 21.2 in 2017 to 21 in 2018).

In secondaries, the ratio is now 16.3, up from 16 in 2017. The ratio has been rising year-on-year since 2012 (when it was just 14.9!).

Separate figures, also published yesterday, show that the average size of classes in secondary schools has risen for the fourth consecutive year, from 21.2 in 2018 to 21.7 this year.



### 5 Academy leaders get paid more, classroom teachers less

Headteachers earn more in academies – an average of £92,600 in secondary academies, compared with £90,800 in council-maintained secondaries.

But classroom teachers in secondary academies earn less – £37,400 in academies, compared with £38,800 in maintained schools.

The average annual salary for all teachers in state-funded schools was £39,500, an increase of £810 compared with 2017 (about a 2 per cent increase).

Average salaries are higher for male teachers across all grades. Male classroom teachers are paid £36,900, compared with £36,000 for women. The gap widens at leadership grades – with the average pay for men £62,700 compared with £57,200 for women.



### Schools are spending less time teaching non-EBacc subjects

Last year, 67.4 per cent of teaching hours at key stage 4 were spent teaching the EBacc, and 64.4 per cent of teaching hours at key stage 3.

Just 32.6 per cent of teaching hours at key stage 4 were spent on non-EBacc subjects, and 35.6 per cent at key stage 3, which the report said was "slightly lower" than in 2017.

There's been lots of stuff on how the EBacc is squeezing other subjects out of the curriculum. For instance, a DfE report recently found schools had to teach other subjects in after-school sessions, in tutor time, or cramming them into "intensive" days.



News

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# Trust fears merger will 'raid' £800,000 reserves

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

A large academy trust is preparing to fire the trustees of an affiliated standalone academy after they snubbed merger plans because they feared their £800,000 reserves would be "raided".

The boardroom tussle exposes problems that can be caused by trusts pooling their schools' funding.

The Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy in Runcorn has been part of Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy Trust (OBAT), a single-academy trust, since it was formed in 2010 by a joint venture between Ormiston Academy Trust (OAT) and the University of Chester.

As sponsor, OAT takes a £140,000 annual fee from the school, but is not directly responsible for its operations or finances. After government prompting, trustees at OBAT agreed last year that the school should join OAT.

OBAT trustees say they were assured that the school would keep its reserves, which accounts show stood at more than £800,000 as of August last year.

But in March they voted to halt the merger, claiming OAT had "moved the goalposts" because it insisted the cash be pooled. They said they were also concerned about plans to increase the management fee charged by the trust to more than £218,000 by 2021, a 56 per cent increase.

Now trustees have been issued with notice that the controlling members of OBAT – the majority of whom [two] are senior OAT



officials – intend to hold a meeting to vote them out.

Mike Cunliffe, OBAT's chair of governors and the only member not from OAT, told *Schools Week* he was in favour of moving into a multi-academy trust in principle, but was concerned about the impact on the school's finances.

Cunliffe also accused the larger trust of ignoring advice in May from Damian Hinds, the education secretary, that "a further two members should be appointed to ensure a broad range of perspectives for robust decision-making".

Cunliffe expects he and other trustees will be removed.

"We're not agreeing for them to take our money, so they sack us. Is that democracy?" he said.

"All we can do now is hope the secretary of state tells them to back off."

Mike Amesbury, the MP for Weaver Vale, said the school had done "a remarkable job in quite a deprived part of my constituency", and said he had "real concerns" about OAT's "raid on their budget".

But a trust spokesperson insisted "decisions on whether to sponsor a school are never based on its level of reserves", adding the trust believed it was "best placed" to support the "requires improvement" school.

"As an educational charity committed to improving the life chances and opportunities for all pupils across our network, we endeavour to work closely with schools so they have the appropriate support required to achieve these aims."

Trusts are increasingly pooling their schools' reserves as it means they can use surpluses to wipe out any deficits. Some are also pooling their general annual grant funding.

## An increasingly fractious relationship . . .

A dossier of emails and letters seen by *Schools Week* documents the increasingly fractious relationship between OBAT and OAT.

In January, Vicky Beer, the RSC for Lancashire and West Yorkshire, wrote to Cunliffe to ask for his support in "resolving these issues so the transfer can happen".

On March 27 Cunliffe told Beer that OBAT's trustees had voted 6-2 to halt the move as there was "not the necessary level of trust and cultural synergy" between the two organisations.

On April 3, Cunliffe also urged Damian

Hinds to halt "any aggressive takeover attempts" by OAT, to appoint a fourth member [so OAT did not have a majority of members] and to direct the RSC "to support us to find an alternative MAT home".

But two days later Nick Hudson, the chief executive of OAT, informed Cunliffe the move was in the interests of the academy, its staff and its pupils.

On April 15, he wrote to Cunliffe again to say he "will not be issuing the 28-day notice at this time" to allow time for the education secretary to respond to his letter.

He also said he did not want to "distract the academy during this important examination period".

However, he issued the trustees with notice on June 13 that a resolution removing them as directors would be proposed at the next general meeting on July 15.

Hinds responded to the April 15 letter that although it was "our preference that a trust board is made up of five members" . . .

his department was "unable to appoint members for the trust board".



News

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Council asks Hinds to stop Aspirations' takeover

KATHRYN SNOWDON @KATHRYN\_SNOWDON

An academy trust is seeking legal advice after an "extremely misinformed" letter from Dorset Council urged the education secretary to halt a conversion in Weymouth because parents are "fearful" of its "tough love" approach.

In an extraordinary letter to Damian Hinds (pictured), Sarah Parker, the council's executive director for children, flagged a host of concerns about the proposed takeover of Budmouth College by the Aspirations Academy Trust.

She said the community had a "negative" view of the trust, including its "tough love" approach, warned the takeover would give the trust a monopoly in the area, and raised concerns about the its "financial viability".

Budmouth, put in special measures last year, has a deficit of at least £2.3 million.

The council also told Hinds it would be "testing the legality" of what it believed

was a flawed consultation process for identifying a sponsor. The letter was obtained and published by the Dorset Eye independent citizen website.

But Steve Kenning, the chief executive of Aspirations, said the letter was "ill-advised" and "extremely misinformed" and that the trust has written to all staff at the school to "set the record straight".

He said it was taking legal advice, but would not elaborate.

Parker said the trust would have a monopoly, as it already controlled two of the area's four secondary schools (Magna and Atlantic academies), which "narrows the choice considerably".

"The community do not want an Aspirations academy by default of it being the only option available at the time."

The Competitions and Markets Authority can intervene if a trust's prevalence in an area leads to complaints and amounts to anti-

competitive conduct.

Parker said given what parents "have learnt" about Aspirations' current schools, the "local community is very critical, even fearful, of the 'tough love' and 'unreasonable' approach with young people that is widely reported across Weymouth".

She claimed that the trust's "no-excuses approach" had resulted in permanent exclusions, adding that Budmouth needed a trust that "will support its present identity".

The council said it was facing "several highly significant challenges" because of a process over which it had "no control".

It would challenge the choice of sponsor as the consultation did not meet the requirements of the Academies Act 2010. The interim executive board, chosen by the council, was not consulted as was required.

The DfE was contacted for comment.



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# Inspectors' ability to assess workbooks questioned

JOHN DICKENS & PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS  
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Inspectors without subject expertise struggle to reliably assess the quality of lessons and pupils' workbooks in secondary schools, suggests new research from Ofsted.

The study exposes big issues over whether inspectors can adequately assess the quality of lessons and pupils' workbooks – key pillars of the curriculum focus under its new framework, due to be introduced in two months.

It also flagged other alarming issues with workbook checks. For instance the amount of work in books at the beginning of the academic year means inspectors might not be able to come up with a "valid and reliable" judgment.

School leaders say that Ofsted's suggestion that workbooks from the previous academic year should be made available to inspectors could drive up workload for heads who may feel under pressure to prepare and store "Ofsted-ready" books.

Dr Becky Allen, the chief analyst at Teacher Tapp, said the "book scrutiny monster is going to be worse than the graded lesson observation monster because it affects teachers every single day".

In the new study, Ofsted compared the verdicts of nine HMIs looking at workbooks in five subjects. Two looked at the books, and used a five-point scoring system to assess the work across four indicators.

Ofsted found while all were confident in their assessment for subjects in their area of expertise, only two thirds (six of nine) were confident when scrutinising books outside their expertise.

None of the four indicators produced reliability scores above 0.5, and one indicator produced a score of just 0.38 (see table).

However, this was propped up by the work scrutiny at primary level. For secondaries, the reliability scores for the four different indicators were as low as 0.21.

The report said this was "probably due to the fact that subject knowledge required of secondary school pupils is deeper and more specific than it is at primary school level".

In an article for *Schools Week* in January Stephen Tierney, the chair of the Headteachers' Roundtable, questioned the reliability of workbook scrutiny, warning that inspectors "may well not have any expert knowledge and will basically be having a bit of a punt about

Reliability rates for the four workbook scrutiny indicators

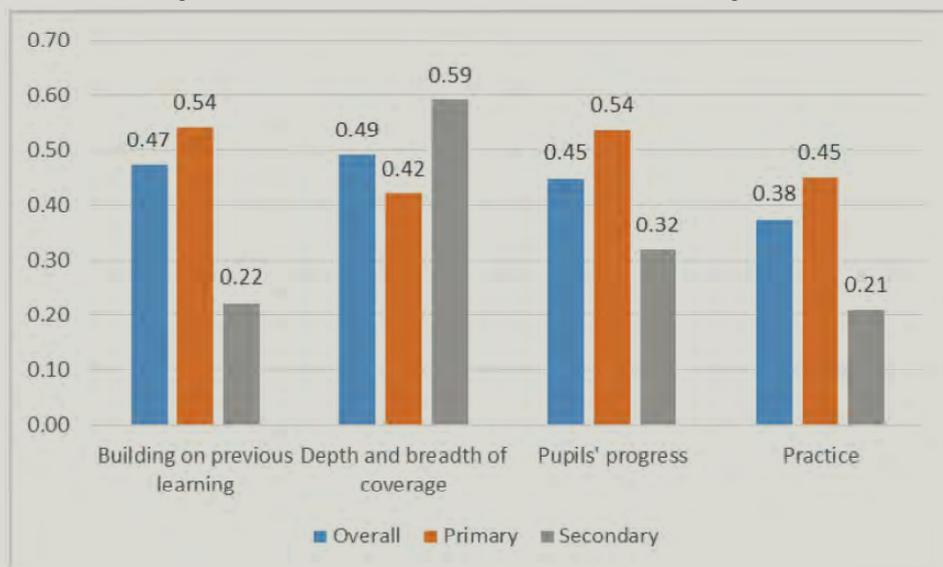


Table 4: Levels of agreement

Kappa statistic	Agreement
0 < x ≤ 0.2	Slight
0.2 < x ≤ 0.4	Fair
0.4 < x ≤ 0.6	Moderate
0.6 < x ≤ 0.8	Substantial
0.8 < x ≤ 1	Almost perfect

what they see".

Ross McGill, the founder of Teacher Toolkit, said providing any reliable conclusions from books was hugely problematic.

"In a climate where we have more teachers leaving the profession than entering, and the rise of evidence-informed dialogue, one would think we would stop doing silly things to one another as professionals."

The watchdog is now planning to develop subject-specific guidance for inspectors in all subjects, in collaboration with "expert groups".

On lesson observations, the report found that in primary schools inspectors had a "reasonable level of reliability" – with curriculum, teaching and behaviour domain statistics to be above 0.6.

However curriculum and teaching statistics for the secondary school sample achieved just a moderate reliability level.

The studies involved only HMIs, who are outnumbered nine-to-one in the inspectorate's workforce by part-time, contracted inspectors.

Tom Richmond, the director of the EDSK think tank, said: "You could easily have a school inspection that does not involve an HMI... we have no idea how bad the situation is (or will be) for the more numerous Ofsted inspectors as opposed to a handful of HMIs."



Daniel Muijs

He added while the research was a "welcome sign of engagement with some critical issues, the worrying findings will not be any comfort to a headteacher who gets 'the call' in a couple of months from now".

But Daniel Muijs, Ofsted's deputy director for research and evaluation, said the study "reinforced both the value of lesson visits and work scrutiny", and showed the value of focusing on a "more limited number of judgment areas".

"That is why we see both as part of a range of data we are collecting on quality of education or behaviour and attitudes. It is also why conversations are so important in our inspection model.

"Conversations with leaders, teachers and pupils can provide the vital context we need to understand what we see."



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EXCLUSIVE

## 'Astronomical' costs may scuttle non-grad teaching apprenticeships



**FREDDIE WHITTAKER**  
@FCDWHITTAKER

The government is still "in listening mode" over plans for an undergraduate teaching apprenticeship, but ministers have been warned schools could be put off by the "astronomical" potential cost.

Attempts to develop an undergraduate degree apprenticeship route, which surfaced in 2016, have stalled over concerns it would mean teaching was no longer a graduate-only profession.

Claire Harnden, the chair of the trailblazer group formed by the Department for Education to work on the apprenticeships, said there was still an "appetite" from ministers for an undergraduate route and that the department was in "listening mode".

But Harnden, the deputy chief executive of the South Farnham Educational Trust, said one of the main barriers was the cost for schools of a three-year apprenticeship.

"It is astronomical," she said at the Festival of Education last week. "Until the government can look at that, we're a bit stuck."

The £9,000-a-year training costs, with the annual salary of about £27,000 for an unqualified teacher, meant schools could end up paying well over £100,000 to train a new member of staff.

Furthermore, the government has insisted that any apprentices paid less than the unqualified teacher pay scale must not be left alone in the classroom.

"If we have a trainee who's paid less than an unqualified teacher they cannot be left in an unsupervised position. With teacher training, that's nigh on impossible for a school that's investing a lot of money," she said.

Schools have paid millions into the apprenticeship levy since it launched in April

2017, but have struggled to find ways to spend any money from the training fund because there are not enough education-specific routes.

A one-year postgraduate teaching apprenticeship launched last year attracted about 90 trainees in September.

Harnden, whose schools employed eight teaching apprentices this year, said "ministerial steer" was another obstacle.

Ministers have been insistent that the profession remain graduate-only. Previous attempts to develop an undergraduate route – even at degree apprenticeship level – have led to concerns about the quality of training.

"We have to make sure that the degree coming in with the apprenticeship is a high-quality degree," Harnden said, adding that the question of how to include subject specialism for secondary teachers would be "challenging".

Dr Clare Higgins, a senior lecturer in education at the University of Bolton, was part of a previous trailblazer group that tried to create a route for teaching assistants without a degree to become teachers.

The project never came to fruition after the group was told its offer was too similar to the postgraduate route.

Higgins told Schools Week that schools had missed out on a "wonderful opportunity" to "mentor and grow" existing staff, adding that many schools were "unhappy about the feel" of the postgraduate route.

She welcomed the news that an undergraduate route was still being developed, but warned that it would be a "non-starter" if apprentices could not teach unsupervised for three years.

Unions are another barrier for the current trailblazer group as they will resist any attempt to pay teaching staff at a level below the official teacher pay scales.

The DfE would not comment, but Schools Week understand it is supporting the group in its work.

## Plans axed for Suffolk free school

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER  
@SCHOOLSWEEK

A planned free school that delayed opening after Roman artefacts were found on its site has been canned.

The Bury St Edmunds STEM Academy was due to open this September in Suffolk. However, it pushed back opening a year after Roman artefacts were found on its proposed site.

The Department for Education has now axed funding, after revised pupil numbers for the area showed there was no longer a need for places.

Steve Boor, the chairman of the Bury St Edmunds All-Through Trust, which was behind the proposal, said the DfE would have to "reinstate the site at its expense".

The government would not say how much this might cost. Boor said contractors were already on site, with initial work such as stripping back the top soil now having to be remedied.

The school was to be based on the playing fields of the trust's Westley Middle School.

An analysis by the National Education Union in 2017 suggested the government could have "wasted" nearly £140 million on free schools that closed early or failed to open.

Harperbury Free School, due to open in Hertfordshire, was cancelled in 2016 – despite the government already having spent £1.9 million.

The STEM academy planned to have 530 pupils with a focus on developing the "next generation of scientists, technicians, engineers and programmers". Companies that included Bosch, Microsoft, Rolls-Royce and EDF Energy were on board with the plans.

Boor said he believed the artefacts found at the Bury St Edmunds site related to Roman kilns.

A DfE spokesperson said: "The latest pupil projections show there is no longer need for the places created by the Bury St Edmunds Technical Academy. This means there is a risk that any new school would either not be able to attract enough pupils to be viable or harm pupil numbers at neighbouring schools."

A Suffolk County Council spokesman said it provided pupil forecasting information at the request of the DfE, but the final say was "entirely with the DfE".

# E-ACT 'rewarded for failure', says campaigner

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

EXCLUSIVE

An academy rated inadequate twice in three years under a major trust is set to close this summer – with its pupils moving to a nearby school taken over by the same trust nine months ago.

The decision to allow E-ACT to close Burnham Park Academy in Buckinghamshire and transfer its pupils and staff to a school it took over in September has raised questions about a “lack of democratic accountability”.

Pupil numbers have been falling at Burnham Park, which Ofsted rated inadequate in July 2016 and again in March this year.

The most recent inspection said it had “lost its way” and “not provided a good quality of education for its pupils since opening as an academy in 2012”.

The 700-capacity school had 235 pupils in January, 118 of them in years 7 to 10.

Rather than rebroker the failing school to another trust, the Department for Education two weeks ago agreed in principle to its closure, with all pupils and staff given the option of moving to E-ACT's Bourne End Academy, five miles down the road.

Janet Downs, from the campaign group Local Schools Network, said the DfE's decision “seems irresponsible”.



“Why on earth did the DfE allow E-ACT to take over Bourne End when it's been responsible for Burnham Park being inadequate twice?” she said. “It's almost like rewarding it for failure.”

A spokesperson for the DfE said it considered transferring schools to other trusts, but “in some circumstances it may be necessary to consider school closure or amalgamation”.

E-ACT has been criticised in the past for growing too fast. In 2014 it was banned from expanding and had to give up ten schools.

The trust, which now has 29 schools after starting to grow again in 2016, consulted on closing Burnham Park between January and March this year.

It criticised Ofsted for “inexplicably” inspecting the school as it consulted on closure, and said the “inadequate” result “reflects the academy at

a time when its future is so uncertain”. E-ACT also told Schools Week that Ofsted reneged on a commitment to defer the inspection.

The consultation also noted the council wanted to rebroker the school, as it was the only secondary in its catchment area.

E-ACT will offer free transport for all Burnham Park pupils to Bourne End for as long as they attend the school.

But Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said it “reveals in a stark way the lack of democratic accountability in our brave new education system”.

“Decisions are being made with no references to those with the most direct interest in the decision. It is a disgrace.”

Bourne End initially joined Wycombe High School Academies Trust in 2014, moving from special measures to requires improvement. However, Wycombe gave up the school after failing to agree a “realistic funding solution” with the government.

On June 13 the government gave approval that E-ACT could close Burnham Park. It is now undertaking a four-week listening period before making a final decision.

An E-ACT spokesperson added: “This is a sad time for us all. However, we would like to reassure academy parents and students that they will have our close support over the coming months and during the transition to Bourne End.”

KATHRYN SNOWDON | @KATHRYN\_SNOWDON

## New academy guidelines on whistleblowers

Academies must make it easier for whistleblowers and be more transparent when issued with a financial notice.

The new requirements are part of the updated *Academies Financial Handbook* for 2019, published yesterday.

Trusts will also now be required to submit an annual report to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to show how they have checked that their internal systems are effective and compliant.

The bolstered rules on whistleblowing say that academies must ensure all staff are aware of the process, know what protection is available to them and know who to approach if they have concerns. Trusts were also told to

ensure that all matters raised were responded to “properly and fairly”.

Earlier this year, *Schools Week* revealed that Andrew Morrish, the chief executive of the Victoria Academies Trust, threatened to uncover and “deal with” a whistleblower at a failing primary school after a letter was sent to Ofsted raising issues about safeguarding, trust expenditure and treatment of staff.

Trusts are also now required to publish financial notices on their websites within 14 days of the notice being issued. They must keep it on the site until the notice is lifted by ESFA.

The handbook also provides guidance on the secretary of state's powers in tackling cases of mismanagement, including removing trustees

– something sector leaders have been urging the DfE to use more.

There is extra guidance on the role governing bodies should play to make sure the pay and other benefits of senior staff are reasonable and reflect their responsibilities.

Details on executive pay now includes commercial interests. Trusts were told to ensure the board was aware of the business interests of senior executives.

The new guidance, which highlights the need to maintain a risk register to ensure procedures and systems are adequately scrutinised, also outlines the role of trustees and emphasises the importance of robust governance.

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# Second council ditches off-rolling

JOHN DICKENS & PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@SCHOOLSWEEK

A second council that sanctioned off-rolling pupils has ditched the practice after one of its schools was censured under Ofsted's crackdown on the practice.

The Sutton Academy in Merseyside was rated "requires improvement" after Ofsted found it off-rolled under a process agreed by St Helens council with school leaders.

The council told *Schools Week* the practice had been in place for six years. Under the scheme, pupils moved from mainstream to The Launchpad, which provided alternative education.

St Helens said all moves were "done in good faith, transparently and regulated by common agreement between schools and the alternative provision, with strict criteria", but it had since amended the practice.

Ofsted found 12 pupils who had been attending alternative provision were removed from Sutton Academy's roll in January and transferred to the AP, which meant they would not be represented in published information about the school.

Inspectors said the "process is well established at the school and has taken place for many years", adding that more year 11 pupils had been off-rolled last year. Many were disadvantaged pupils or had special needs.

Their report added: "Leaders and a representative from the local authority could not provide inspectors with any convincing reason for this practice."

However, Alison Sherman, Sutton Academy's principal, told the *St Helens Star* that Ofsted's definition of off-rolling was an area of "huge disappointment and controversy" and described the inspection as a "political decision and one that is being used to change local practice".

She also said the school's policy was for alternative provision education to begin as

## INVESTIGATES



early as year 8, although the pupil would not be taken off the school's roll until year 11.

Discovery Academy, in Stoke-on-Trent, was censured in March for off-rolling. The practice was backed by the local authority, which later also ended the practice.

It's thought their arrangements kept pupils from permanent exclusion. They were kept on the mainstream school's books as long as possible to keep a place open.

Dave Whitaker, the executive principal at Springwell Learning Community, which provides AP education in Barnsley, said there were "more systems like that than we are probably aware".

"It means pupils don't have to go through the barbaric process of permanent exclusion. They [school leaders and the council] are trying to do the best thing, but this shows we are still lacking a bit of clarity from Ofsted."

However, he warned this relied on headteachers not to abuse the system.

Writing for *Schools Week*, Dan Owen, a specialist adviser for school inspection policy at Ofsted, said inspectors "carefully weigh up all of the evidence" before deciding whether a school was off-rolling.

Although he said school leaders often had "rational, logical and convincing explanations" for pupils leaving and could show their decisions were "reasonable", if explanations "don't add up" then inspectors were likely to say a school had off-rolled.

That would include asking why a pupil was removed in year 11 before the census date, and not kept on roll until the end of the year.

Owen said: "Our inspections of these schools have reflected on the differing impact this practice has on the lives of the children and young people affected.

"We have carefully evaluated the level of care and attention schools have given these young people before and after they left the school roll, and inspectors have considered this in their judgments."

Ofsted has now reprimanded five schools for off-rolling, although it has identified 300 schools with exceptionally high levels of pupil movement.

It has refused to publicly name these schools, but has begun alerting councils and academy trusts to the schools it has concerns about

In a report published last week, Falmouth School, in Cornwall, was rated "inadequate" after inspectors found some pupils were removed "against the wishes of the family, the advice of the local authority and the professional judgment of other agencies".

Sue Godzicz, the interim chair of governors, said the school was "disappointed" with the judgment, but accepted "that lessons have to be learnt and that work needs to be done".

Dan Owen, page 26

# NHS property firm's losses 'warning sign' for LocatED

**JOHN DICKENS**

**@JOHNDICKENSSW**

A report savaging the state-owned company that runs NHS land is a "warning sign" for the Department for Education's property company, says the chair of the public accounts committee (PAC).

NHS Property Services, which runs thousands of properties for the NHS, such as doctors' surgeries and clinics, has racked up £1 billion losses since it was set up six years ago.

A report by the National Audit Office (NAO) also criticises the company for having no formal leases with most of its tenants and for lacking the power to collect more than £500 million in unpaid bills.

The DfE's state-owned property company, LocatED, was set up in 2016 by a group of property experts, including Elaine Hewitt, the chief executive of NHS Property Services.

Meg Hillier, the chair of the government spending watchdog, said the NHS report should act as a "warning sign" for the DfE. "Just because experts are doing property



doesn't mean you shouldn't keep scrutinising it and watch the value for taxpayer."

LocatED, which says it is "Britain's biggest property start-up", was given a £2 billion warchest to buy sites for free schools, taking the responsibility away from the Education Funding and Skills Agency.

The government said the company – which it owns shares in and which will be operated from Whitehall at "arm's length"

– will bring "greater negotiating power" and help to secure sites at "best value for the taxpayer".

A PAC report in 2017 found the DfE on average paid about 20 per cent more for free school land than official valuations.

Four sites had cost more than £30 million each.

Hillier said the PAC would focus on public land, which was a "big general concern" – although she admitted this was more aimed at the sale of land.

But, as *Schools Week* revealed in April, LocatED had shortlisted up to 20 school sites as having surplus land that could be sold to raise cash.

The move marks a shift from simply buying land to advising academies on how to "optimise" the land they already have.

One of the concerns raised by the NAO report was the level of bonuses paid to directors.

LocatED's 2017-18 accounts, published in February, show that Lara Newman, its chief executive, got a bonus of between £20,000 to £35,000, on top of her salary of at least £185,000.

JOHN DICKENS | @JOHNDICKENSSW

## DfE struggles to a 'D or E' from spending watchdog

The Department for Education tops a "departments of concern" list in the end-of-year report by the chair of the government's powerful public accounts committee.

Meg Hillier, the chair of the spending watchdog, highlighted the continuing financial strain on the sector, which she suggested the DfE and Ofsted had neglected. She also highlighted a "lack of grip" over the academies system, and a failure to improve children's social care.

The annual report, published yesterday, said the DfE "tops" her "departments of concern".

Speaking to *Schools Week*, Hillier said: "It's a worry. Schools are being very squeezed, and we think there could be an impact on children's education. But neither Ofsted or the DfE is willing to take up the baton."

The report, informed by the work of her committee over the year, flags Hillier's personal perspective on the issues across Whitehall departments.

When asked to grade the DfE on its performance, she said she would give it a "D or an E". "It is trying, but is hampered by the ministers."

The Labour MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch said she wanted the department to acknowledge funding problems and provide "some actual clarity and honesty about these numbers".

There was "obfuscation" from MPs over the claim that "more money than ever before" is being spent on schools – it was "financially liberate" to use that term, she said.

She also said that countability and

transparency in schools was very poor, pointing to how parents at the Whitehaven Academy in Cumbria had to put in freedom of information requests to get basic information from Bright Tribe, the trust that runs the school.

"How ridiculous, just to get information from a school.

"Governing body minutes should be published and available to everyone. This isn't just academies, either.

"We fund our public services, we have a right to know more."

A PAC report published in January, from its inquiry into academy accounts and performance, found that high-profile academy failures had "damaged" children's education.

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## Sport for all – but where will they play it?

JOHN DICKENS  
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Damian Hinds has urged schools to make physical activity “an indispensable part of a child’s day”, despite allowing new schools to open without playgrounds or sports facilities.

Writing in *The Daily Telegraph*, the education secretary spoke about school sport and his “ambition to ensure every pupil has the chance to find one [sport] they love”.

He said he wanted to encourage pupils to be “as active as possible in a way that they enjoy... The core academic subjects are hugely important, and always will be, but I want sport and physical activity to be an indispensable part of a child’s day.”

This seems to jar with his government’s actions, with some free schools opening on sites without playgrounds or sports facilities.

And the company set up by ministers to buy new free school sites said the government did not believe they all needed playgrounds or fields. “Successful free schools have been delivered in buildings of all types.”

Paxton Academy, a science and sports specialist free school in south London, has operated in temporary buildings on a rugby field for five years.

One senior leader at the school, set to move into a permanent home next year, told *Schools Week* it only had an indoor “multi-purpose space” for PE, with low ceilings and no equipment.

The DfE finally agreed to install equipment and soft flooring on the school’s small concrete yard last year after arguing that it “wasn’t good value for money”. Only one class can play outside at a time.

Ofsted rated the school as “requires improvement” in 2017, highlighting the “cramped spaces in which pupils are required to play and learn”.

A public accounts committee inquiry in 2017 raised concerns about schools built without “adequate on-site outdoor space” which the Department for Education defended as an “acceptable compromise”.

A committee report said: “Setting up new primary schools without a playground or secondary schools without sports facilities is storing up problems for the future and limits the effectiveness of schools to deliver the full curriculum.”

# NASUWT

## The Teachers’ Union

### Former president excluded after speaking out

FREDDIE WHITTAKER  
@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

A teaching union has removed an executive member after she questioned the lengthy suspensions of senior officials and the timetable for the general secretary’s re-election.

Susan Parlour, the former president in Northern Ireland for the NASUWT, has been excluded from the union’s national executive.

Documents show the union began action against the teacher last October, weeks after she questioned its handling of disciplinary matters and less than two months after she asked for a timetable for the re-election of general secretary Chris Keates.

*Schools Week* reported earlier this month how Keates’ five-year term, stipulated by union law, has ended.

But the general secretary has yet to call an election and is serving in an interim capacity – despite there being no provision in the 1992 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act for her to do so.

This week, the body responsible for regulating unions in England told *Schools Week* it had received a number of reports about the NASUWT, including one related to Keates’s re-election, and was considering what complaints to put back to the union for formal consideration.

Parlour is the fifth person that the union has suspended or removed after they questioned the actions of the union’s leadership.

It claims Parlour was “aggressive” when she asked about earlier suspensions, that she behaved “inappropriately” and acted in a way that was “prejudicial to the interests of the union”.

But Parlour claimed this week that the leadership wanted to keep her quiet.

She also accused the NASUWT of hypocrisy over the suspensions, some of which have been in place for well over a year.

“We are against protracted suspensions, that’s our policy. Chris Keates has talked on a number of occasions about suspensions and how they can be open to abuses of power,” she told *Schools Week*.

“It just seems to be that there’s one rule for them in how they treat their employees and another for everyone else, and that anybody who questions that, well, off with their head.

“That’s the way they deal with it. They won’t accept questions about their own way of dealing with things.”

Earlier this year the union was ordered to reinstate Richard Harris, a former regional organiser, after an employment tribunal found it was likely he was sacked for whistleblowing.

Harris, like Parlour, had been subject to allegations about his own conduct, but claims he was forced out because of his activity within the GMB union, which organised strikes by NASUWT staff last year.

*Schools Week* also revealed earlier this month how three other senior national officials have suspended following disputes with the organisation’s top team.

In one case, a senior staffer has been off work for more than 18 months, while two others were suspended about a year ago.

Documents seen by this newspaper confirm Parlour was first notified of action against her after she questioned senior elected officials about the whereabouts of suspended staff. She has submitted four complaints to the Northern Ireland Certification Officer, which holds unions to account.

The office of England’s Certification Officer confirmed it too had received a number of reports about the NASUWT. Although it did not have investigatory powers, the body can put formal complaints to the union and preside over hearings on the issues reported to it.

The union said it would be “inappropriate” to comment.

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Stats

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# Analysis: the schools no longer 'outstanding'

PIPPA ALLEN-KINROSS

@PIPPA\_AK

INVESTIGATES

Dozens of Church of England primaries have fallen from "outstanding" to the bottom two Ofsted grades, while 16 schools also downgraded had not been inspected for a decade or more.

Schools rated outstanding are exempt from reinspection, but the government has faced growing pressure from Ofsted to allow more regular visits.

Earlier this month, Ofsted revealed it had inspected 305 "outstanding" primary and secondary schools between September 1 last year and March 31, representing 8 per cent of all exempt schools. Of these, just 16 per cent kept their top grade.

A *Schools Week* analysis of the inspections carried out during the seven-month period, and published on the Ofsted website, showed 16 had fallen from "outstanding" to "inadequate", and 68 to "requires improvement".

Sixteen had not been inspected for a decade or more, with one waiting 13 years since its last full inspection.

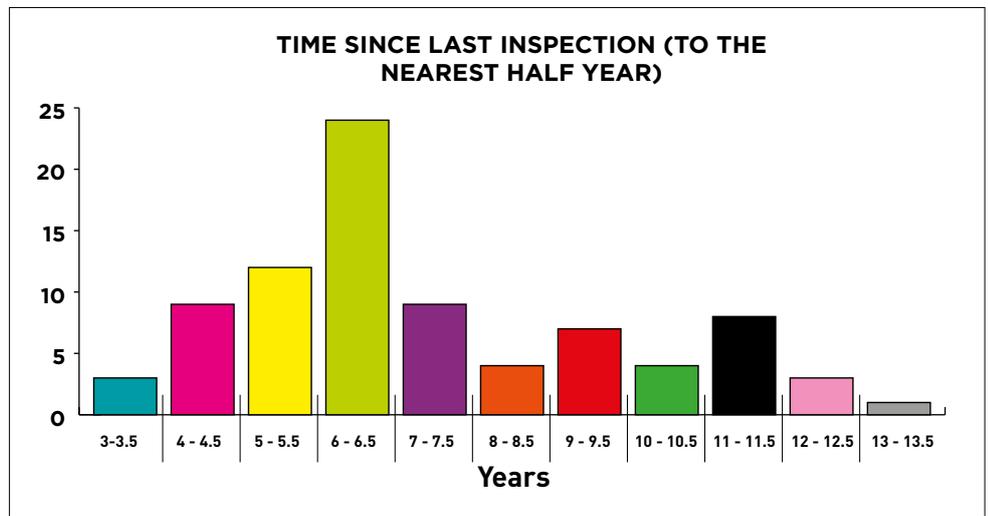
Two of the downgraded schools were Jewish, despite fears from the community that Ofsted was unfairly targeting Jewish schools. Twenty-six were Church of England (CofE), and eight were Catholic.

The Rev Nigel Genders, chief education officer for the CofE, said it was "difficult to draw out any particular pattern" without looking in detail at individual schools, but the church wanted "the very best possible outcomes for children so they can achieve their fullest potential".

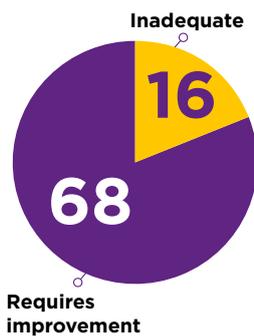
"That inevitably involves really rigorous inspections, and so we support Ofsted's new framework."

A spokesperson for Ofsted reiterated its call for the government to drop the exemption and to "fully resource" the watchdog to inspect the outstanding schools.

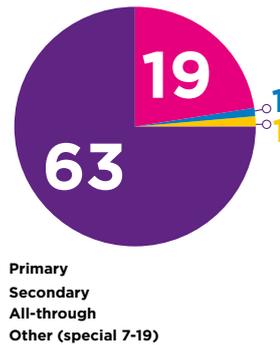
"The quality of schools can decline for various reasons, but it is often down to the lack of effectiveness of the leadership and



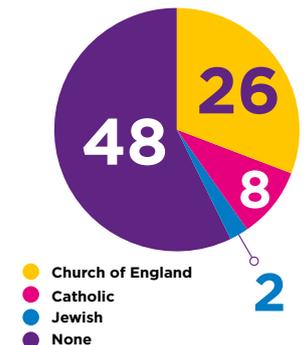
NEW GRADES OF SCHOOLS



SCHOOL PHASE



RELIGIOUS CHARACTER



management team," she said.

"Taken together, this shows that there are gaps in our knowledge of the schools that were judged to be outstanding some time ago – and why they need to be inspected routinely."

In December, the government told the watchdog to step up its interventions of so-called "exempt" schools so that poor standards of safeguarding could be picked up

Of the 84 downgraded schools identified by *Schools Week*, 21 were academies. Nine of these were the only school in their trust. Twenty-eight were community schools, while 18 were listed as voluntary-aided and 11 as voluntary-controlled.

Primary schools were the hardest hit, with 63 falling to the bottom two grades. Ten of the 16 "inadequate" schools were primaries.

Jules White, the head at the "outstanding"

Tanbridge House School in Horsham, West Sussex, and leader of the Worth Less? campaign, said the downgrading of schools "emphasises the need for all schools to have frequent and reliable scrutiny". But he warned that Ofsted's "obsession with a blunt four-point grading system" was misjudged.

"Parents are not well-informed by a system that relies on a snapshot judgment that can't possibly get under the skin of all the factors that influence a school's performance," he said.

Tom Sherrington, an education consultant, said Ofsted inspections were not "reliable enough" to identify the difference between good and outstanding schools "with any degree of consistency".

He said it made sense to drop the exemption, but "not because of some giant scandal that these schools are worse than people are led to believe".

# News

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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# Hinds sticks to his guns on LGBT lessons

**JOHN DICKENS**  
**@JOHNDICKENSSW**

Ministers have stuck by their guidance on LGBT lessons, despite concerns it is putting headteachers in the firing line.

However, teacher unions seem to have become more supportive as the ministers strengthened their expectations around the issue.

*Schools Week* reported earlier this year how headteachers were concerned about the draft guidance for teaching relationships, sex and health education.

The guidance, finalised on Tuesday, still says that it is up to primary school heads to decide whether teaching about LGBT relationships is age-appropriate for their pupils – which heads says leaves them in the firing line for parent protests.

Damian Hinds, the education secretary, has said he would “strongly encourage” primary schools to discuss with pupils how there were “different, strong and loving



families, including families with same-sex parents”.

The stronger language seems to have got some detractors onside.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said Hinds had “strongly encouraged every primary school to continue what they are already doing – to teach about relationships in an inclusive way.

“The statement is a clear signal to schools that when it comes to talking to pupils about the different kinds of families and relationships they may encounter in their lives, it’s a question of ‘when’ and not ‘if.’”

However *Schools Week* understands the union will continue to push for the guidance to be beefed up.

From September early-adopter schools will begin teaching the new content, before a nationwide roll-out next year.

The government will also publish details of a new working group shortly.

It has also published new guidance on online safety, urging schools to teach pupils about social media influencers, the dangers of online challenges, and how to spot fake news.

The advice calls on schools to consider what they are already delivering through the curriculum, and build in additional teaching as required to ensure their pupils are receiving a “fully rounded education with regard to online safety”.

Hinds also challenged tech companies on Wednesday to have a “moral duty of care” to put child protection at the front and centre of online platforms. “Children are children and should always be protected as such,” he said.

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**Mark,**  
Uniformed Services learner  
and now Prison Officer.

# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Heads need reassurance on 'book scrutiny monster'

When Ofsted first published its draft inspection framework, headteacher Stephen Tierney highlighted the major issues with inspectors having to do checks of workbooks in subjects in which they were not specialists.

Lo and behold, new research published by the inspectorate shows just that. It's worrying, given that the new framework is due in just over two months.

There are also some concerning findings on the reliability of how well inspectors can actually assess pupils' books.

The research has spread panic amongst the sector about those "unintended consequences" too - particularly a line asking schools to store old workbooks for inspectors to look at.

As Becky Allen so poignantly points out (and we've used her quotation on our front page), has the inspectorate just created a "book scrutiny monster", with heads doing needless activities to make books "Ofsted ready"?

Kudos to Ofsted for its engagement over some critical issues, and being transparent about its findings. But heads will need reassurances.

## £100 compo for teacher test error is another gaffe

We all make mistakes. But the government has surely made another gaffe with its approach to informing would-be teachers they had failed the QTS skills test because of a marking "error".

Some of the would-be teachers, told they had failed years ago, went back to study in other areas, or took lesser-paid jobs in schools.

To be informed years later that they had actually *passed* the tests is one thing, but a generic email from the government department offering them a measly £100 in compensation is, as one recipient says, "insulting".

After all, as a parent of one of those affected told us: "Because of their error, my son and other young people have had the whole course of their life changed."

Not surprisingly, those affected are now looking at taking legal action against the government for loss of earnings, something a lawyer believes they have a good chance of succeeding in.

SCHOOLS WEEK

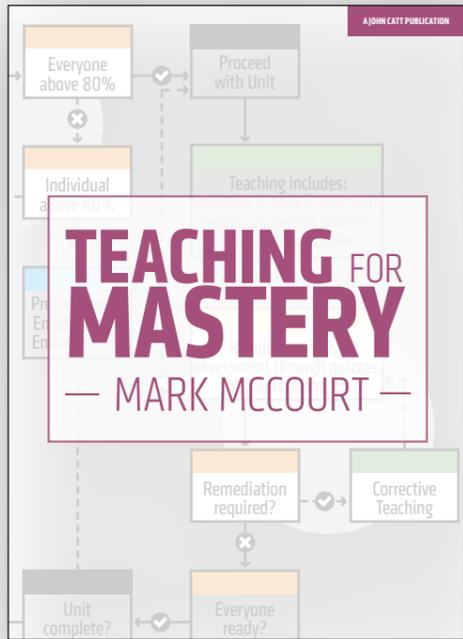


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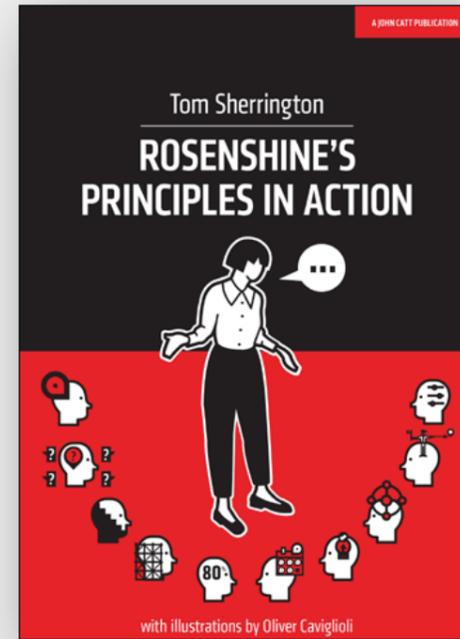




## TEACHING FOR MASTERY

MARK MCCOURT

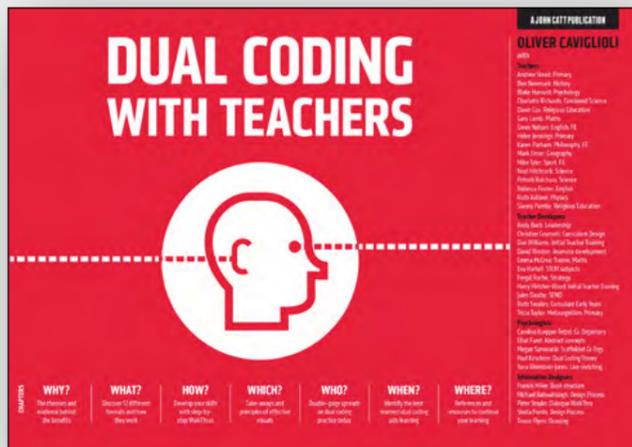
There are many models of schooling; some work, some don't. Mastery is an entire model of schooling with over 100 years of provenance, its impact has been researched for decades, with many of the world's greatest education minds testing and refining the approach. It's one of the models of schooling that actually works.



## ROSENSHINE'S PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

TOM SHERRINGTON

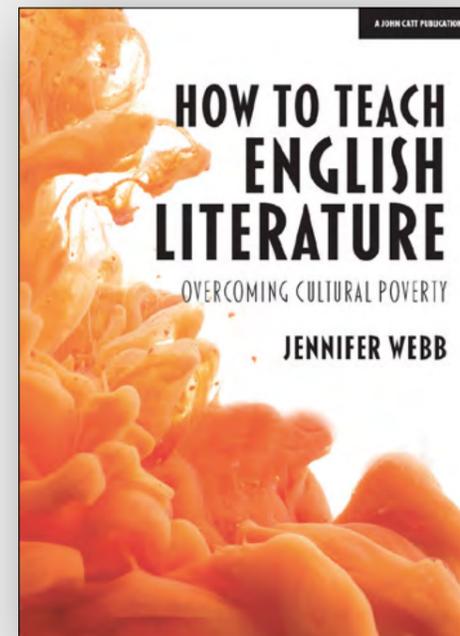
Barak Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction are widely recognised for their clarity and simplicity and their potential to support teachers seeking to engage with cognitive science and the wider world of education research. In this concise new booklet, Rosenshine fan Tom Sherrington amplifies and augments the principles and further demonstrates how they can be put into practice in everyday classrooms.



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OLIVER CAVIGLIOLI

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## HOW TO TEACH ENGLISH LITERATURE: OVERCOMING CULTURAL POVERTY

JENNIFER WEBB

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INDEPENDENT THINKING FOR EDUCATION

# NEW BOOKS FROM JOHN CATT

# Profile

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ



## “Leadership is about getting people on side”

### Amarjit Cheema, chief executive of the Perry Hall Multi-Academy Trust

Amarjit Cheema is not a “top down” academy boss who believes in dictating how her schools or communities should approach learning. “The people in the classroom – they know what’s going on,” says the chief executive of the Perry Hall Multi-Academy Trust. “We’re very much about the individuality of our schools and their identity.

“If you look at the education horizon now, the

big thing is about assistant-led leadership, not down-led leadership. It’s about getting people on side”.

Cheema’s leadership was recognised this year when she was awarded the OBE in the Queen’s Birthday honours. When I ask why she thought she got the honour – which made her and her husband cry – she suggests: “I make sure everyone around me feels they’re valued”.

She oversees six very different primary schools across Wolverhampton, Staffordshire and Worcester: there is a “blue sky thinker”

headteacher at one, a “systems and processes” head at another.

Leadership styles and the curriculum need to reflect their communities, while bringing about “change from within”, she says. At Dunstall Hill primary in Wolverhampton for example, 83 per cent of children have a first language that is not English, but just 7.5 per cent of pupils have the same profile at Berrybrook primary, also in Wolverhampton.

Listening to Cheema talk about her career, you can see how her approach has informed

## Profile: Amarjit Cheema



With her father and daughter in 2009

everything she does. But this skill of sharing leadership was not always her strong point. An undiagnosed dyslexic, school was a struggle and she was left thinking she needed to do everything herself. She tells of one of her harder moments at school in an English lesson. She was 15, but it “still brings a lump” to her throat.

“I’d worked out when it was my turn to read so that when it came to me I didn’t look foolish. My English teacher caught me at it, and he said you’re not paying attention and you’ll amount to nothing. I was put down two sets, into the ‘thicko’ class.”

After she began teaching she saw the member of staff again. “I said, ‘you don’t remember me, do you. You said I’d amount to nothing’. He turned to ash.”

This gradual return to confidence followed an arranged marriage at 17 to an “amazing man” whose family believed strongly in the power of education and giving back to the community. Cheema took her maths GCSE while pregnant and at 21 became a nursery nurse.

Then she trained as a teacher and rapidly rose up the ranks. But when a headship in a medium-sized primary and a deputy headship in a large

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**“One teacher told me I’d amount to nothing”**

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primary came up, her head advised she go for the deputy role.

“She said, ‘you need to learn to delegate’. I would just do everything myself, it was easier that way. On reflection, she was right.” In 2004 Cheema took her first full headship at Woodfield Infant School in Wolverhampton and in 2010

she became head at Perry Hall primary. Her two great lessons – never make a child feel small and share leadership – followed her.

“I always say to staff, ‘never shout at my children’. They’re small human beings, you gain their respect. And if you earn their respect, you’ve got them for life.”

The trust grew steadily. Perry Hall primary was the first school in Wolverhampton to convert to an academy and become a trust, taking on Berrybrook in 2014 and moving it from special measures to “good” by 2017.

Dunstall Hill joined in 2016, moving from “requires improvement” to “good” in April this year. In June 2018, Bird’s Bush primary, Tamworth, also in special measures and yet to be inspected, joined. In September last year, Woodthorne primary in Wolverhampton joined, followed in February by Stanley Road primary in Worcester. Both had been graded “good” by Ofsted.

The results since are quite astonishing: at Dunstall Hall, 70 per cent of pupils are meeting

# Profile: Amarjit Cheema

the expected standards in reading, writing and maths. At Perry Hall it is 81 per cent, compared with a local authority average of 65 per cent. A lower than average proportion are reaching expected standards at Berrybrook, but progress scores are above average in a school where 40 per cent of pupils are on free school meals compared with the national average of 14 per cent. Data for other schools is not available yet.

“The one thing I learnt quickly is that what system works in one school doesn’t work in another,” Cheema says. “A lot of trusts would say differently.”

One of her heads, who deals with behaviour issues to help pupils become more respectful, works best with a team that oversees “the mechanics”, she says. Another head with a more “volatile” community focuses on processes to help staff to feel more secure.

“The leaderships are different, but it works for their communities.”

Cheema’s empowering approach is now being tested as her team designs a PSHE curriculum against the backdrop of protests from some Muslim parents in nearby Birmingham to LGBT relationships education. Cheema is frank about her approach.

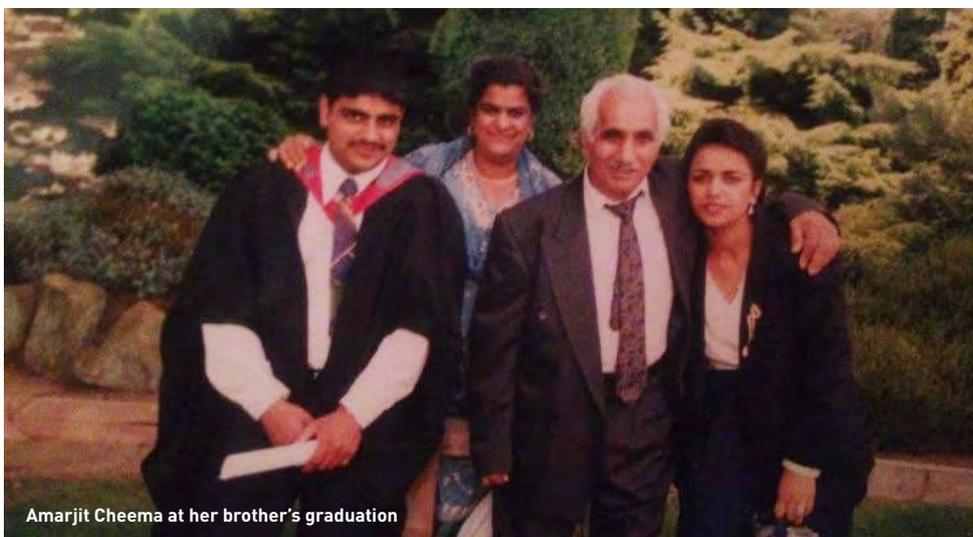
“We have a core curriculum, but it will be adapted to meet the needs of those communities. If I turned around and said ‘this is what we’re going to do’, I would lose some very good staff.

“In some of our schools we have a high Muslim community, and we’d be foolish to put this in as a specific module. It’s about talking about healthy, positive relationships.” Parents have also been invited to give their thoughts on the new curriculum. How LGBT relationships are taught, “needs to be up to schools”, she says.

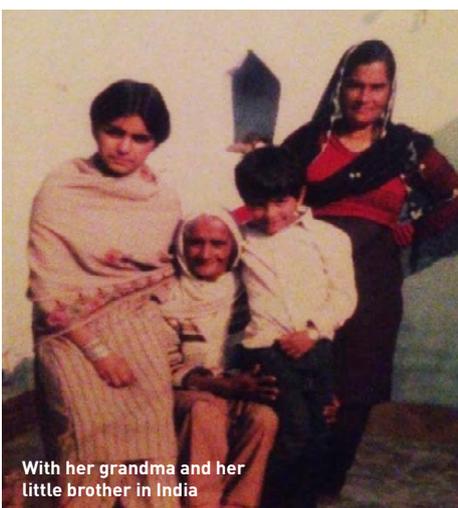
Yet despite her strong belief in the individual identity of communities, Cheema rejects the idea that her Sikh family background helped her to reach out; instead, she attributes her successes to listening and having high standards. She relays a headship interview which left her “fuming”: “The panel asked me, ‘you’re young, you’re brown and you’re a woman. Tell us how you will win our community over’.

“I sat there and said, ‘gosh, I must go and dust my mirror down’. Did those words seriously just leave your mouth? The difference is your approach as a leader.”

Cheema believes in creating “change from within” – she trained as an Ofsted inspector when she became a head so that she could understand



Amarjit Cheema at her brother's graduation



With her grandma and her little brother in India



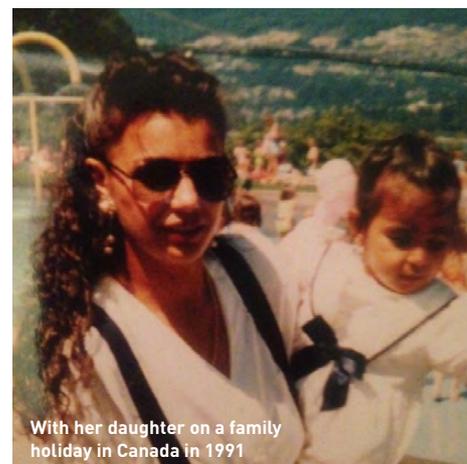
With her mother-in-law, Bibs, a big influence in her life

## “What works in one school doesn’t work in another”

the accountability system.

“If the governing body has appointed you to make sure the children get the best education they can, the best way to do that is from the inside.” Her advice is to “make sure the information you’re relaying to the inspector is accurate and clear and you sell the best things about your school”. She says her Ofsted training was fantastic, and challenges those who would scrap it.

Cheema appears to have the rare quality of



With her daughter on a family holiday in Canada in 1991

speaking her mind while encouraging others to speak theirs. Now her trust has applied to open a free school in Tamworth and wants to grow in Worcester. Perhaps heads who miss their autonomy should apply.

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## DAN OWEN

Specialist adviser for school inspection policy, Ofsted

### Numbers alone can't tell us that off-rolling has taken place

**Schools sometimes put their interests first when a child is removed from their roll – which is why Ofsted is determined to look at any unusual pattern of pupil movement, says Dan Owen**

Children and parents up and down the country are being quietly encouraged by school leaders to leave that community. In some cases, parents are coerced into taking their child out of school, or children are shunted off the roll, so that schools can maximise their results. These cases are the exception rather than the norm, but they are still worryingly widespread.

Ofsted's job is to call this out where we find it.

We define off-rolling as: "the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the best interests of the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll."

We see pupils leaving to be home-educated, or moved on to the register of an alternative provider or another mainstream school. These are often the right destinations for those children, but in some cases the

school's interests are put first.

Sometimes, and very worryingly, pupils don't move to another destination at all.

We should be clear to separate this from exclusion. Inspections show us that it's not always pupils with behavioural difficulties who are off-

be appealed, whereas off-rolling is opaque and offers children and families no protections.

In 2017-18 about 20,000 pupils left their school in year 10 or 11 – the most important point of their education; about half did not turn up in any other state school.

This convinced Ofsted that we must look much more closely at any unusual patterns of pupil movement.

The numbers alone can't tell us that off-rolling has taken place. Inspectors will ask questions about unusual patterns of pupil movement, but we have to inspect a school to carefully weigh up all the evidence, before drawing conclusions about whether pupils are being off-rolled.

We always have an open mind when we inspect a school with high numbers of pupils leaving. We ask leaders for their evaluation of

decisions they've made were in pupils' best interests. Often they have rational, logical and convincing explanations for a pupil leaving, and can show their decisions were reasonable.

However, sometimes a group of pupils will be deleted from the roll, just before the census, and moved to the roll of an alternative provision they have attended for some time. Guidance says these pupils should be "dual rolled", so that the school maintains a relationship with them and they can hopefully reintegrate. But some schools remove these pupils to improve their published results. If leaders' reasons don't add up, we are likely to say that the school has off-rolled these pupils.

In the past year we have identified five schools where off-rolling was taking place. Our inspections reflected on the differing impact this practice has on the lives of the children and young people affected. We have carefully evaluated the level of care and attention schools have given these young people before and after they left the school roll, and inspectors have considered this in their judgments.

We know that lots of schools work extremely hard to meet their pupils' needs. So inspectors will always listen carefully, and be reasonable and proportionate in their judgments. But where we find off-rolling taking place, Ofsted's responsibility is to children and their parents. And if schools are acting against the best interests of the pupils in their care, then our new education inspection framework is clear that leadership and management is likely to be judged inadequate.

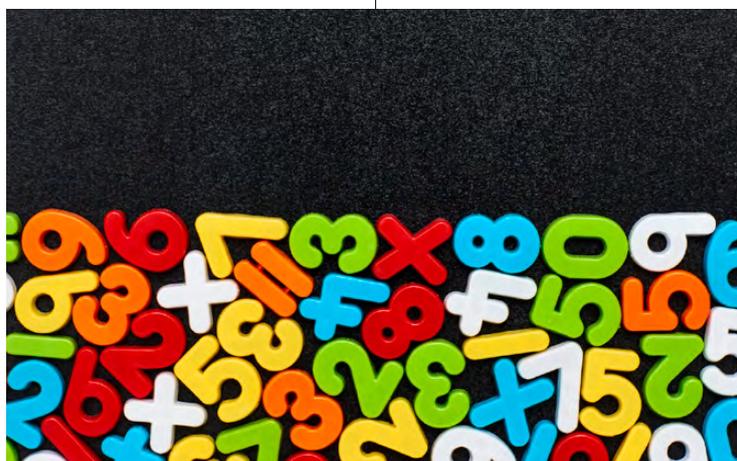
**“ Exclusions are transparent, but off-rolling is opaque**

rolled. Where a pupil's behaviour is challenging, off-rolling deliberately avoids the process and scrutiny that comes with exclusion.

Exclusions are difficult decisions, but they are transparent and can

what's going on. It's reasonable for us to expect leaders to have looked closely at this matter, and for those responsible for governance to have had strong oversight.

Inspectors ask leaders how the



# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**When the student council of a north London secondary met to discuss knife crime, the discussion soon moved away from traditional campaign tactics, says Gerry Robinson**

In a recent school council meeting our students were discussing how they could lead a campaign against knife crime.

There were the anticipated suggestions – poster campaigns, speaking in assemblies, visiting local primary schools and even T-shirts with the (now familiar) slogan “lives not knives”. But the most poignant contribution came from one of our year 10 students: “We don’t need to tell people not to carry knives, everyone knows that it is wrong and dangerous,” she said. “We all know what the risks are, but people still do it.”

What followed was a discussion about aspiration, motivation, finding your passion and being secure in your own identity. Our students were clear that this was where “lives not knives” really started to ring true: how do we get young people to be confident in their own identity, to see a future ahead and to work to achieve it?

In Wood Green, north London, we are no stranger to the anti-knife campaign. Our multicultural school sits in an area with some of the highest statistics for youth violence and gang crime in the capital. Our local ward, for example, was named in [Haringey council's Young People at Risk Strategy 2019](#) as a “hotspot” for knife injury victims under 25 and lethal barrelled firearm discharges.

We have been directed towards the Home Office’s #knifefree campaign



GERRY ROBINSON

Headteacher, Woodside High School, north London

## Knife crime: why a slogan on a T-shirt is not enough

and various other charity-led campaigns. These definitely have their benefits, yet the problem still persists.

There is no easy answer for our students, most of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

change any of that.

A report published last month by the [Institute of Fiscal Studies](#) painted a bleak picture of widening inequalities in pay, health and opportunities that are causing deaths amongst the poorest and

“ Our student council member was right. Identity is crucial

They are living first-hand with the consequences of nine years of austerity measures, decimated youth services, reduction in mental health provision and cuts in education. These are the young people who know what it is to live in poverty. A slogan on a T-shirt is not going to

most vulnerable in society. The report’s findings did not surprise anyone at Woodside, where child poverty is a daily reality.

As I looked around the room in that school council meeting, I was again reminded that one of the greatest strengths of our school

is our diversity, something that we champion daily. While I am confident that this gives students a sense of belonging to a community and make school feel a safe and happy place, what about beyond the school gates, in the streets of Tottenham and Wood Green? Our council member was absolutely right that the issue of identity is crucial.

At Woodside, staff work hard to teach our students far more than the national curriculum. We aim to instil a love of learning, passion for all areas of study and an exciting and diverse range of trips and experiences. We offer more than 70 clubs every week, including coding, ju-jitsu, debating, Lego engineering, chocolate-making, gardening, football, athletics, Mandarin and so much more.

We work to ensure that all cultural identities are represented and celebrated. I would be lying if I said it wasn’t incredibly challenging in the face of funding cuts. But seeing the rather bleak future that our students face is a powerful motivator to work hard to inspire them, to raise their aspirations and to equip them to be kind, compassionate and connected global citizens. We strive to help them know that their lives matter as much as anyone else’s.

With the rise in hate crime, we fear for our students’ safety like never before. Knife and gang crime is by no means our students’ biggest threat. When we talk about “lives not knives”, what we mean is that our children’s lives mean something, but they are being let down by the profound inequalities they face. That’s not a life that any child should have to experience. So it’s not “lives, not knives”. Just “lives”.



# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## STEVE GARNETT

Teacher, Robert Clack School of Science, Essex

### I am a classroom teacher and I want isolation booths

**Isolation rooms are calm, orderly environments with a clear routine. And behaviour is better in schools that have them, says Steve Garnett**

The older I get the more irked I become by the nonsense on social media, especially from EduTwitter types who should know better. Some people seem to have lived their career in a bubble, either protected from the realities of a typical state school or having superhuman powers – such as those who proclaim they have never had, not once, a behaviour problem in their class. Most teachers see through this façade; they know the realities and they understand the pressures of classroom teaching, each and every day.

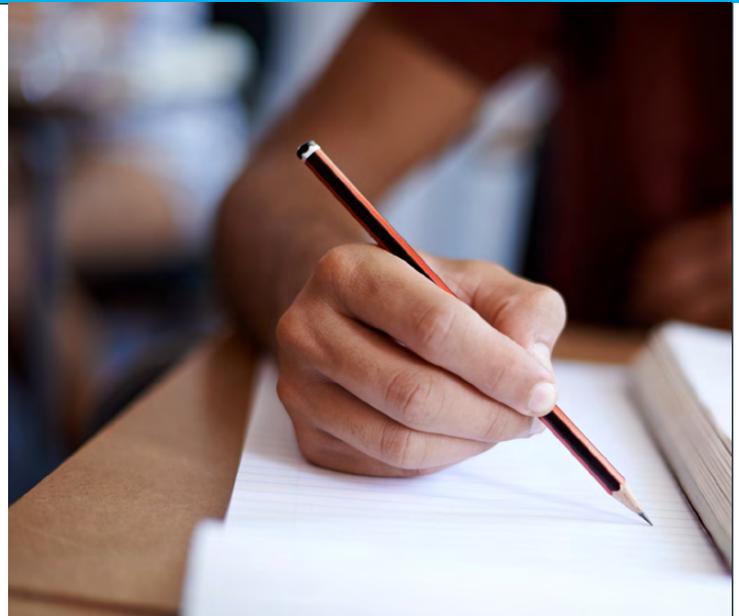
So when the argument that isolation rooms were akin to solitary confinement reared its silly head again, I decided to have a rant on Twitter. Once more, those who wished to ban isolation rooms, booths or no booths, were likening them to draconian dumping grounds, where vulnerable children, like in those images of Albanian orphanages we recall on our TV screens, were left unsupervised, unfed, unwanted. Prevented from using the toilet, children were spending their days in filth and squalor, the dregs of

the school community put there by brutal, uncaring neocons, forced to stare at a wall and punished at every tiny facial movement.

No one pretends that solitary confinement is a pleasant experience. I have worked in a young offenders' institution and solitary confinement is not pleasant: the cells are sparse, young people are locked up, the

wing is bare and the exercise yard small. But there are also books – yes, you read that right, books – and there are wonderfully caring and compassionate adults who desperately want their charges to return to the general population.

Of course, it should not be a pleasant experience. Those in solitary confinement have erred within the prison. Some of the prisoners have committed the worst of crimes and yet the state and society expects them to be treated with respect and humanity, and huge efforts are made at their rehabilitation. If you have not been into a young offenders' institution, you would be amazed at how much intervention these children are receiving from a huge



variety of experts and professionals. The question is, will they take their chance?

And this is exactly where the

“ They are there to protect learning and to unlock potential

similarity to isolation rooms lies; not in the Dickensian satire that some believe isolation rooms to be, but in the genuine, truthful portrayal of what they actually are. Isolation rooms are parts of a school where children are placed short-term because their behaviour is compromising safety or disrupting learning. They are calm, orderly environments with a clear routine. Children are given work and their education continues under the supervision of teachers. Booths can facilitate this, just like in academic libraries.

As a classroom teacher, I want them. I have worked in schools with and without them. Behaviour was always better in the former.

Rightly, there is an element of punishment in being placed there and for most children this is enough to ensure they never see the room, let alone sit in it. For those that do, it is an opportunity to reflect on their behaviour, to seek an understanding of what went wrong and learn for next time. This is key, for isolation rooms are preventive and a pressure valve. They are there to protect learning and to unlock the child's potential.

Clearly, there have been a few instances of malpractice. We should condemn placing students in them for long periods. They are also not appropriate for all SEND children.

Official guidelines may be needed, but instances of malpractice should not be used as an excuse to ban them. Get isolation rooms right and they are a superb tool in ensuring the safety and learning of all students and like solitary confinement, are designed ultimately, for the benefit of all.

# Reviews

## BOOK REVIEW



### The Thinking School

By Kulvarn Atwal

Published by John Catt

Reviewed by Adam Sutton, headteacher of a community primary school and nursery in Brighton

Kulvarn Atwal boasts an impressive history of school improvement that gives his views immediate credibility. In this book he lays out the theories that have shaped the schools he has worked that have used his “dynamic learning communities”. The research evidence he presents over six chapters is clear and compelling.

The first two chapters set the scene for why the research points to teacher learning as key to school improvement, and outline the basic principles of why he advocates “thinking schools”. His premise of “dynamic learning communities” is based on the idea of an organisation that fosters challenge and trust to enable all teachers to continuously improve their practice together by focusing on improving outcomes for children.

This theory is important, but it isn’t until chapter 3 that Atwal sets out ideas that I can implement to start to make real changes in my school. He also gives a clear explanation of the impact I can expect. This involves a model that encourages every sort of opportunity to support teachers in the classroom and develop their practice: from peer support, mentoring and engagement in research. At that point I began to really feel a sense of what a “thinking school” would be like and the difference it could make.

Atwal goes on to put meat on the bones and gives a sense of

the approaches necessary to be successful in the development of the type of community he advocates so passionately. These chapters resonated with me as a practising headteacher working in a challenging context, perhaps because I recognised the pressure to improve pupil outcomes, but also the temptation to find short-cuts or “magic” solutions.

The book echoed my own belief that cultural development takes time and is the only way to achieve sustainable and consistently high outcomes for children. It also provides a framework by which “big ideas” can be pulled together and brought into all classrooms as more than their individual parts or ideas unrelated to other initiatives; the realisation of a dynamic learning community.

The ideas are fresh and carefully conceived to paint a picture of improving teaching to improve learning. That is not to say that “peer observation”, “lesson study” and various forms of “coaching” versus “mentoring” haven’t been mentioned in literature before, because they have. But what may be different in *The Thinking School* is that it sets out the underlying principles to ensure these potentially transformative

professional activities are more than buzzwords or fads.

I was also interested in the importance placed on assessment for learning and talk for learning approaches in successful teacher learning and improvement. These were just two examples of where the ideas in the book feel like common sense and intuitively the types of activities you would like to be better at as a teacher.

I enjoyed this book. It challenged my thinking and I continue to think about its ideas some weeks later. Although a little theory-heavy early on, the later chapters give practical examples and frameworks that current school leaders can use to develop teacher learning systems, and that let them see the impact that continuing professional learning can have on the outcomes of children.

Its real strength is a sense that all this is achievable and simply a case of binding together ideas that immediately feel sensible and familiar. I imagine this is far harder to achieve in reality, but the book makes you sure that

the hard work would be transformative.

Like all effective leaders, Atwal succeeds in marrying a strong vision with a set of practical structures that can profoundly affect outcomes for children. He asks, what would happen if all my staff read this book? I might just find out.



**BBC**

# Teach



BBC Teach is the BBC's dedicated website for teachers, offering free classroom resources to schools throughout the UK.

Take a look at  
[bbc.com/teach](https://bbc.com/teach)

# Research

This week's review concentrates on three studies presented by LKMco at last week's Festival of Education at Wellington College

## Patterns and trends that shape pupils' lives

Loic Menzies, Chief Executive LKMco.

These three studies used different methods to explore phenomena affecting young people, whether transitions and attainment, special needs and disability, or family life.

Bart Shaw and Dr Will Cook previewed study findings that shows pupils' perception of their academic ability dips dramatically once they start secondary school. This comes from an ongoing project that LKMco is collaborating on with Manchester Metropolitan University, funded by the Nuffield Foundation. Amongst other findings, the study shows that big gaps emerge between poorer pupils and their peers' perceptions of their ability over the course of key stage 3, particularly in maths and science.

The research uses data from the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS), a national data set tracking 19,000 young people born in 2000. It is particularly useful given concerns about key stage 3 being a "lost phase".

In the next stage of this project researchers will combine MCS data with information from the National Pupil Database to try to explain trends in low-income pupils' progress at secondary school that were highlighted in a 2017 Education Datalab and LKMco report for the Social Mobility Commission (*Low Income Pupils' Progress at Secondary School*; Shaw, B., et al., 2017.) If changes in attitudes really are linked to patterns in attainment, the research could be very important for secondary schools looking to tackle attainment gaps.

The second study, *Special or Unique – Young People's Attitudes to Disability* (Odell, E., currently in press), explores a previously neglected topic: young people's perceptions of disability and young disabled people's experiences of school.

It showed that young people with special educational needs or disabilities



had limited knowledge of their disability, the "reasonable adjustments" they were entitled to and what these adjustments were for. Furthermore, some young people who were classified as disabled did not describe themselves that way.

The study involved 33 disabled and non-disabled young people.

The researchers consulted with a steering group of young disabled people to design research tools that combined artistic methods with discussion. The goal was to help pupils to tell their stories in a way that worked for them.

The study raises questions about how and which pupils are classified as disabled and aims to help schools, policymakers and disability organisations provide inclusive education. One potential implication is that pupils with special educational needs should be helped to understand their disability, and how reasonable adjustments and support could support them academically and in later life.

The third study, *Partners in Progression: Engaging Parents in University Access* (Mulcahy, E., Baars, S., 2018) explored parental engagement: are there different "types" of parent in terms of the way they engage with their children's education, and do different types have different concerns about higher education?

The research, conducted for King's College London's Widening Participation team, aimed to inform and improve the outreach activities schools, colleges and universities offer parents.

Data was drawn from a specially commissioned survey of 1,000 parents who were asked about their engagement with their child's education and their concerns about higher education.

Researchers then used a statistical technique known as cluster analysis to identify different "types" of parents based on their (self-reported) patterns of engagement. It showed that parents fall into four clusters, with most (more than 90 per cent) falling into two clusters characterised by relatively high levels of engagement. There was a modest link between social class and parental engagement, with the relatively more engaged clusters containing more parents that were middle class.

The research also showed that most parents focus on particular forms of engagement such as attending school events and talking to their children about their education, whatever their cluster.

Taken together, these three studies show the range of methods that researchers need to have at their disposal if they are to unpick some of the patterns and trends that shape pupils' lives.



# Reviews



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

@JMSREFLECT

## A thought on creating a learning culture

@SaysMiss

At this time of year, when there may be more mental space to reflect on the past few months and to plan for September, it is great to see so many blogs sharing suggestions and ideas to help learners. This post outlines the efforts of @SaysMiss to create a learning culture in her school. In partnership with local businesses and universities she has arranged a programme of visits and lectures for students that would be the envy of any school. She captures the spirit of generosity in which such work is shared when she concludes with an offer to support others interested in developing a similar programme. Her ethos is that her role is "to provide opportunities for students that they perhaps didn't know existed."

## Dual coding: A Christmas carol

@EDmerger

Following a fantastic talk by @Olicav at the recent ResearchEd Rugby event, I have become very interested in trying dual coding with students. Inspired by the same event, Paul G Moss has cracked on with it and created a wonderful resource for his

## TOP BLOGS of the week

English class. Although specifically focused on his coding of *A Christmas Carol*, Moss's blog is not just of value to English teachers. He sets out the principles, explains how he used the resource, shares some of his students' work and considers how he might use it to support their retrieval. This is a useful read for anyone interested in practical strategies, with helpful links to further reading for the more theoretically inclined.

## Exit tickets: Responsive Teaching 2019 update – encapsulating tasks and retention.

@HFletcherWood

In the true spirit of Responsive Teaching @HFletcherWood revisits some key ideas from his book and reflects on what he has learned since. This post provides a brief summary of how you might design and use exit tickets in class – a short task to show how well all students have understood the lesson's key ideas. He offers practical advice on how to use them to respond to gaps in students' knowledge without creating extensive workload through marking. He also updates the ideas laid out

in Responsive Teaching and suggests the term "encapsulating task" – one that "offers an objective measure of students' success, which provides a focus for planning, assessment and responsiveness". It's a strategy worth trying.

## From "I've done it" to "I've learned it". Terminate the tyranny of the task

@teacherhead

This is a challenge to change our thinking about tasks. It may prove harder to implement than some of the ideas mentioned above, but it is an important read. As Tom Sherrington puts it, "task completion is not a good proxy for learning ... as humans, we are extraordinarily capable of doing things in the short-term without learning how to do them in the longer term". This has important implications for our task design and assessment of learning in the classroom, which Sherrington outlines in his usual succinct manner. He considers how we may need to change our habits as observers as well as teachers, and acknowledges that this is not necessarily an easy shift. But his encouragement to self-reflect and his final resolution to "try harder to avoid the trap" of confusing tasks and learning is one that I shall take forward.

## Doesn't the national curriculum tell us what we should be teaching?

@johndavidblake

With curriculum review on most schools' development plans, the question of where the national curriculum fits in is an important one. In this blog @johndavidblake summarises its history, including some of the aims, successes and failures. He argues that the national curriculum may be able to "answer some of the macro-curriculum questions", but that schools have a lot of work to do in-house to bring "the promise of a curriculum entitlement for all children" to life.

CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +



**Government efforts to reduce teacher workload have failed – it's getting worse!**

**Julie Belanger**

Clearly the survey is not showing much improvement. But, to be fair, we would not expect to see impact of policies that have been introduced AFTER the TALIS data was collected in March-May 2018. The workload reduction toolkit was published in July 2018 and the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy was published in 2019...

**Teacher workload has increased, and eight other findings from TALIS 2018**

**Matt Perks, @dodiscimus**

Somewhat grim reading! I'm wondering how much of the workload metric is continued reduction in experience, how much is funding (class size or timetable, or toilet cleaning increases), how much is sensitivity of self-report to motivation issues, and/or what else. Also, slight lag on this data so workload could have decreased a bit since March-May last year (said he, more in hope than expectation).

**Phasing out private schools**

**Tom Burkard**

It's sheer naivety to think that abolishing independent schools would make England a more equal society – social networks designed to privilege their members exist in all societies. For all its commitment to equality, I somehow doubt that the Fabian Society has many members who dropped out of school at 16 with no qualifications. It's hardly surprising that Angela Rayner didn't show up.

**DfE wants three-year pupil premium plans, but yearly funding stays**

**Harry, @HarryHarryshud**

This is where they can "assume". Look at the numbers they've received for the past five years and make an estimated guess. Not rocket science.

**LGBT protest school 'profoundly let down' by policymakers, says ex-government adviser**

**John Eccleston, @JohnEccleston2**

Sooner or later DfE will have to get off fence and be clear. Not reasonable to expect schools to do it on their own.

**REPLY OF THE WEEK**

**A Brown**

**Ofsted alerts councils and academy trusts to potential off-rolling**

You can't investigate potential off-rolling if you only hear one side of the story. So how about sending a form to all parents who make in-year moves asking them about their experiences? The forms would then be returned to Ofsted who takes them to inspections and gives the school a chance to tell its side of the story. Above-average moves would automatically trigger an inspection.

Doing this would be fair to both sides and wouldn't create extra paperwork for schools.



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

**Dwindling roll forces inner London primary to close**

**Claire Bolderson, @ClaireBolderson**

Rolls are definitely falling in London, but it seems odd to peg a story about families leaving London to the closure of a school that clearly has attainment problems (well below national average) and has slipped from "good" to "requires improvement".

**Agnew: 'No point putting extra money in schools if it's not being spent properly'**

**Julie Cordiner, @juliecordiner**

The reason he has this skewed view is that DfE sees all the reports by school resource management advisers; he doesn't see all the difficult decisions being taken by others to achieve a balanced budget.

**Spielman: 'We're the arbiter of quality, whether you like it or not'**

**David Birch, @birch\_david**

Quality takes many forms, some of which are not testable by inspection. Ofsted should only be the arbiter of whether a school is "good enough".

**Mental health training for new teachers**

**Celia Blair, @cajaz**

Some teacher training courses already had health and mental health sessions. May is not announcing something new, but it is welcome.

**Helen H Foster, @helencentra**

Height of irony! Reinstating funding removed by this government from mental health services should be the priority.

# WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

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

## FRIDAY

Rather bizarrely, details of ministerial gifts published today show that schools minister Nick Gibb received a "painted box" from Uzbekistan earlier this year.

The documents show said box was "above the limit" for gifts so was "held by the department", rather than given to Gibb. Weird.

Meanwhile at the Festival of Education, *Schools Week's* publisher Shane Mann was sent on an errand by command of our noble chief inspector of schools Amanda Spielman to find her a ... toothbrush.

Upon completion of his (no longer) top secret mission, Shane was announced as official procurer to the HMCI.

Any fears that Luke Tryl, the New School Network's director, would cosy up with the government (he's a Conservative and the charity relies mostly on DfE funding) have been put to bed.

Tryl said today that headteachers whose schools were at the centre of rows over LGBT relationships teaching had been "profoundly let down by policymakers".

Speaking at an event at the Festival of Education, he said policymakers "haven't been willing to be brave enough and come out and say 'this is an expectation for all schools'."

The former special adviser to Nicky Morgan while she was education secretary added: "As someone who has worked in this government I am deeply ashamed that you have been put in that position."

Zing. (But best get calling round those rich donors for a few extra quid, Luke!)

## SATURDAY

Sleeping off the Festival of Education.

## TUESDAY

Roger Godsiff, the Labour MP who told protesters shouting homophobic vitriol outside Anderton Park school in Birmingham that they had a "just cause", organised a debate in parliament on relationships lessons today.

One of his concerns was that books used by the school to teach kids that some of their classmates have two mummies or daddies were not "age-appropriate" (although he later admitted he'd not read them).

Unsurprisingly he has come in for some criticism over his stance, not least from Labour MPs who were quick to say this wasn't the party line.

But it turns out that he's actually the victim. He told the Commons he had been the target of "witch-hunters", which was greeted by cries from his fellow MPs of "outrageous" and "what are you talking about?"

## WEDNESDAY

Damian Hinds (pictured) showed his feisty side at the education select committee today.

On several occasions he shot daggers at MPs for interrupting his waffling – sorry, we mean his concise answers. At



one point he even turned on his fellow Conservative Robert Halfon, angrily asking: "Do you want me to finish what I'm saying?"

We're absolutely sure Hinds's new-found spunkiness had nothing to do with this probably being his final appearance at the committee before he's shuffled out by the new prime minister.

Fear not, despite the tetchy exchanges there was a happy ending. Halfon said he personally very much hoped Hinds would still be in position for the committee's next meeting in September.

The education secretary later spoke at a NSPCC conference, where we're sure he left tech giants quaking in their boots with his tough talk on making them "step up to make sure youngsters are protected from online harms".

We'll quietly put this in the same file (marked "won't make any difference") as his announcement on Friday that social media influencers should take fewer selfies. Sigh.



# Director

## Western Excellence in Learning and Leadership (WELL) Project, Cumbria

**Start date: September 2019 (or sooner) | Contract type: Part Time**

**Salary: Salary: £60,000 per annum | Contract term: Fixed Term**

### *Could you lead the transformation of education in west Cumbria?*

We need an outstanding leader to deliver a ground-breaking project to transform educational outcomes. With £1.7m of funding from Sellafield Ltd and the support of the whole education system, the Western Excellence in Learning and Leadership (WELL) project is a unique opportunity for someone with drive, skill and experience to lead a flagship education project that could set the example for the rest of the country. Inspirational, collaborative, focussed and passionate about achieving the best outcomes for children and young people, this is a project for someone to really make their mark.

#### **The project is focused on three key areas:**

- raising standards through evidence based research approaches;
- supporting disadvantaged pupils to achieve; and
- improving pupil mental health and wellbeing.

These three areas are significant challenges across west Cumbria where average pupil attainment for disadvantaged pupils is consistently below the national average, the number of disadvantaged pupils consistently above, and emotional health and well-being needs more common than other parts of the county.

Using the new funding, schools will work together to deliver a wide-ranging programme of interventions aiming to have a transformative impact in all three areas. Exciting elements of the project include: a new approach to teacher recruitment and retention; development of a West Cumbrian Cultural Passport; evidence based teacher professional development; and new ways of engaging with parents. The project will be delivered using a mix of expertise from within the western education system as well as the best external support and guidance.

As Director you will hold overall responsibility for the progress and development of WELL project, and in particular will be responsible for the work meeting a range of Key Performance Indicators through the design and implementation of a one-year project plan. The role will be office based, but will require extensive travel across the west of Cumbria and sometimes beyond. The role demands close partnership working with all educational establishments supported by the project, along with the ability to deploy significant resource to meet ambitious aims. You will be held to account by the Project Board, and will have contact with a range of external stakeholders. The role is a senior one which holds significant responsibility.

#### **Closing date: 5th July 2019**

Note: This position is offered on a consultancy or secondment basis only.

**To apply:** Email your CV and a covering letter to – **Dan Barton**, Assistant Director for Education and Skills, Cumbria County Council – [daniel.barton@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:daniel.barton@cumbria.gov.uk)

For an informal discussion contact: **01228 226884**

**Interviews:** Candidates shortlisted for interview will be advised by the end of week commencing **8th July 2019**.

**Interviews will take place during week commencing 15th July.**



# HEADTEACHER

SALARY: £58,000-£65,000 | START DATE: JANUARY 2020 [OR EARLIER]

Gretton School is an independent specialist school for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. We welcome students from 5—19 years old, as weekly boarders or day students.

The school is growing and developing, its integrated therapeutic team are working tirelessly alongside the management team and the teaching and support staff to further develop our fantastic practise and outcomes.

We require an exceptional educational practitioner with the ability and ambition to lead and continue to develop the team and the service we provide. The role will require you to work closely with the Principal and Governing board, who are proactive and very supportive. We would require that the headteacher support, guide and take responsibility for the continued development of the teaching staff.

You would be required to work with the SLT to ensure all educational standards are met and that there is a strong focus on delivering a high quality of education and a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. You will also hold the highest possible standards of safeguarding practice, and understand how we develop the whole child in harmony with their autism. You will be supported in your role by the Assistant Head Secondary and Assistant Head Primary. This position is a permanent role to start in January 2020, or sooner if available.

This is a really exciting time for Gretton School, its staff and students, do you have what it takes to share the journey, and effectively lead the school to its rightful bright future?

**For more information and to apply, please email [jobs@grettonschool.com](mailto:jobs@grettonschool.com)**

**Closing date: 11th July 2019**

**Candidates are expected to visit the school between 8th-12th July 2019.**

**Interviews: Week commencing 15th July 2019**



**GRETTON**  
SCHOOL

PURPLE OAKS ACADEMY 3 - 18 | WHISTON ROAD, NORTHAMPTON, NN2 7RR

## Principal - Maternity cover

Ref: 18-19/POA/38774

L20 - L26 (£62,262 - £73,903 per annum)

Required from September 2019 for a fixed term of one year\*



**PURPLE OAKS**  
ACADEMY

**Closing date: 30 June 2019 at midnight**

**Interviews to take place 4 July 2019**

This is a fantastic opportunity for an inspirational and passionate leader to join the Greenwood Academies Trust (GAT) as we seek someone to cover a period of maternity to provide continuity of leadership at Purple Oaks Academy.

### About the Academy:

Our purpose built building opened in January 2018 and will provide 100 places for students (3-18) with a diagnosis of autism and/or Severe Learning Difficulties. The academy is a vibrant place to work with high expectations, aspirations and ambitions. The staff team are dedicated to ensuring students are prepared for the years beyond education and are supported to pursue their dreams.

### About the Trust:

GAT has a proven track record in school improvement, with our pupils at the heart of everything we do. The Trust provides centralised services and support to enable staff to focus on teaching. The Trust also values continuing professional development, giving you access to a variety of learning opportunities including training courses via the Learning Alliance and opportunities for sharing best practice. Working collaboratively between academies in the Trust is embedded in how we work and our three special schools in particular work very closely together.

If you would like to discuss the role in further detail, please contact Annette Montague via email on [annette.montague@greenwoodacademies.org](mailto:annette.montague@greenwoodacademies.org) and if you would like to make a visit to the academy please contact the **Principal, Sarah Martin**, via email on [smartin@purpleoaksacademy.org](mailto:smartin@purpleoaksacademy.org).

If you would like to apply, please visit [www.greenwoodacademies.org/vacancies](http://www.greenwoodacademies.org/vacancies)

# Chief Operating Officer

Salary: circa £70,000 to £80,000 per annum

Hours: Full Time, Whole Time



**Are you highly-skilled and looking for new challenges in the education sector? Can you provide innovative solutions and lead others? If so, this could be your next opportunity!**

## The opportunity:

The Diocese of Middlesbrough is transforming! Our structure of schools and academies have formed into 3 large Regional Catholic Academy Trusts serving the Northern, Central and Southern regions of the Diocese. These system leading Trusts place Catholic education in the Diocese at the forefront of the national schools system, securing outstanding Catholic education for all our children and young people whilst protecting and developing the Catholic identity and mission of our schools.

Following the previous successful openings of our Northern and Southern Regional Trusts, the Central Regional Trust, St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Academy Trust, opened recently and welcomed the first phase of 4 schools on 1st June 2019. A further three phases will see the inclusion of the remaining 14 schools into the Trust by 1st September 2019.

Working closely with the Chief Executive and Directors of the Trust you will play a crucial role in delivering the long term sustainability of the Trust, its strategy for improvement and contributing to the successful implementation of any future growth.

You will be a creative strategist, used to working on complex and wide ranging projects, with the ability to engage stakeholders at all levels. Providing leadership and management for all non academic related services you will have a proven track record of leading successful and innovative teams.

As the Chief Financial Officer for the Trust you will bring expert knowledge of academy financial management and policymaking plus a good awareness of company and charity law, accounting and governance.

## The successful candidate will:

- have a recognised accountancy qualification
- be qualified to Degree level or equivalent;
- have a significant track record of success in senior leadership and strategy development within a comparable complex organisation;
- have a significant commercial track record of building a business; including a broad understanding of marketing strategy;
- have experience of efficient and effective budget, financial, risk and resources management.

Please contact **Jenn Wallis**, HR Partner Avec Partnership Ltd, to request an application pack by email to [jenn.wallis@avec-partnership.com](mailto:jenn.wallis@avec-partnership.com) or to arrange an informal discussion in complete confidence with the CEO, Amy Rice.

**Closing Date: Noon, 5th July 2019**

**Interview Date: TBC**

*The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is central to our ethos and we expect staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to supply references and undertake an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and Section 128 Barring check to comply with the Safeguarding and Child Protection policies of the Trust.*

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ORGANISE YOUR SCHOOL'S RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING FOR 2019/20 WITH ANNUAL PACKAGES AVAILABLE AT SCHOOLS WEEK AND EDUCATION WEEK JOBS.

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RATE CARD: £10,640 + VAT



### GOLD

Unlimited Featured Listings  
1 x Full Page advert/month  
1 x Job of the Week/month

**£10,000 + VAT**  
RATE CARD £16,700 + VAT



Rates are per school/organisation. Group/MAT  
rates available on request.



**Offer rates available until  
Friday 28th July 2019**



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Clare at [clare.halliday@schoolsweek.co.uk](mailto:clare.halliday@schoolsweek.co.uk) or on 020 3432 1397

10<sup>TH</sup>  
anniversary

# FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION

Wellington college

10TH FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION  
WELLINGTON COLLEGE

20 - 21 June 2019 | [educationfest.co.uk](http://educationfest.co.uk)

#educationfest

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We'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who was part of the  
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18-19 JUNE, 2020

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