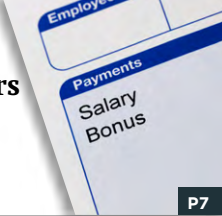


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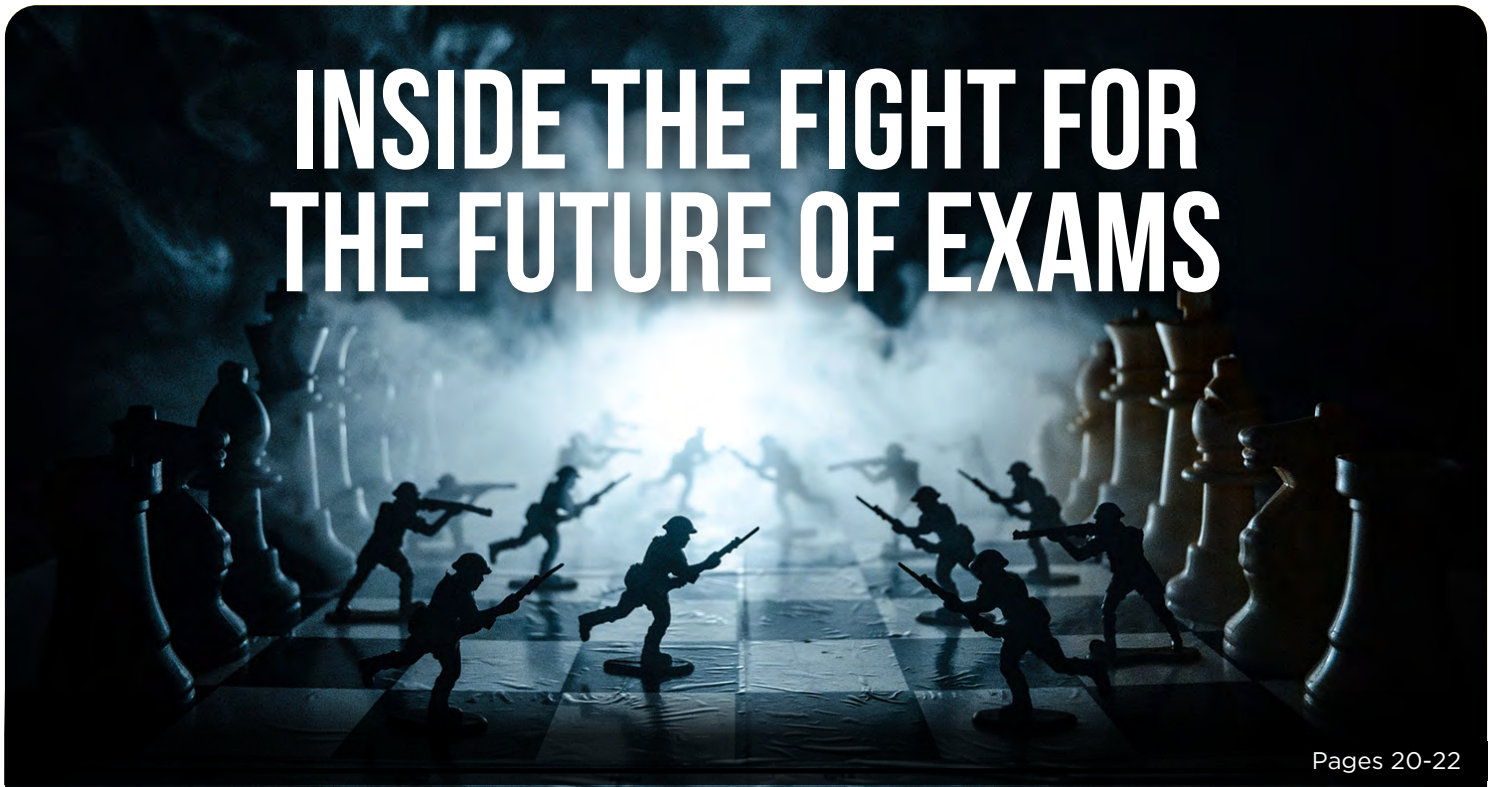
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Zahawi gives us a taster of his school priorities



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- New figures reveal vaccinations underway at just three in 10 schools
- Experts call for walk-in centres to jab youngsters as Covid absence soars
- Ministers 'must act with urgency' as infection rate rise 'really alarming'

JAMES CARR | @JAMESCARR_93

EXCLUSIVE

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INVESTIGATION

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Covid vaccinations in schools lag behind demand

JAMES CARR

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EXCLUSIVE

Pupils at more than two thirds of schools are still waiting for their Covid jabs as leaders say stretched vaccination teams are unable to cope with demand.

It comes as new attendance data reveals a 67 per cent leap in a fortnight in the number of children off because of Covid.

Experts are now calling for walk-in centres to boost the inoculation of 12 to 15-year olds.

Scotland – which has opened walk-in centres for children – has vaccinated, proportionally, three times more of its eligible pupils than England.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said the union was increasingly concerned about the speed of the vaccination rollout.

Not enough staff to cope

A TeacherTapp survey of more than 5,000 teachers on Tuesday found just 21 per cent had pupils who had started to be vaccinated. Another 9 per cent said the programme would start this week.

School sites have been used to vaccinate pupils aged between 12 and 15 since September 20.

The vaccinations are done by the School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS), with about 60 teams working across England.



The teams are made up of clinical staff, such as paediatric nurses and school nurses.

There are about 3,400 secondary schools.

Barton said schools had reported that SAIS teams “underestimated the challenge of vaccinating so many students at once”. Instead they had to provide vaccinations to “certain year groups and arrange to return at a later date”.

Schools had also reported cancellations as demand outstripped supply and issues developed with a parental consent website. Schools also had to “manage the administrative process without sufficient time to make these arrangements”, Barton said.

An SAIS team member, who *Schools Week*

has chosen not to name, claimed uptake was “much higher than anticipated and we just don’t have enough staff to cope”. The team has paused the flu vaccination programme to concentrate on Covid, the team member said.

“It’s a much slower process with teens, due to checking consent. They just need more time spent with them compared with adults,” they added.

Barton said it was important the programme was properly resourced so it could be rolled out as quickly as possible.

England lags behind Scotland

Data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) revealed that as of Sunday, just 9

Just 2% of CO2 monitors delivered to schools

Just two per cent of the promised carbon dioxide monitors have been delivered to schools so far, a month after the government’s £25 million ventilation scheme started.

But education secretary Nadhim Zahawi said around a third of those promised would be delivered to schools by the end of the month, before deliveries “ramp up” in November.

Challenged on the roll-out pace by BBC Breakfast on Thursday, Zahawi explained it was dictated by a combination of supply and working with schools to “see how many

they need”.

Around 300,000 carbon dioxide monitors have been promised to state schools.

Just 41 schools got monitors in the first week of the scheme, which commenced on September 6. Special schools have been prioritised.

The first mainstream schools are set to get monitors later this month.

Asked for an update on the number of monitors delivered so far, Zahawi said the “last number” he saw was around 7,000 – which is just over two per cent of those promised.

But he said that more than 90,000 will be delivered by the end of this month and then “through November we scale up to all 300,000”.

“We are ramping up through this month and next,” he added. “The important thing is to get all 300,000 into schools to help them monitor the CO2 in the classroom.”

A TeacherTapp survey of 7,500 teachers conducted last month found 80 per cent were teaching in classrooms without a CO2 monitor. However, this is likely to include schools that have bought their own.

INVESTIGATION

per cent of 12 to 15-year-olds in England had received the vaccine. This represents about 257,400 children.

Meanwhile, Scotland, which began vaccinations at the same time, had vaccinated 27.9 per cent of its 12 to 15-year-olds as of Wednesday, representing more than 65,000 children.

Children in England are not eligible to visit the walk-in centres responsible for most adult immunisations.

But north of the border, children are offered their injections in drop-in clinics and community settings.

Helen Salisbury, a GP and lecturer at the University of Oxford, said the decision to solely use SAIS was "sensible... But it only really works if you've got enough staff in school medical services and they haven't – it's a really under-resourced sector".

She said many parents had queried why they couldn't take their children to other centres. "It seems the staff that are capable of doing it are not in the place where the kids are."

Dr Deepti Gurdasani, an epidemiologist at Queen Mary, University of London, said there was a sense of urgency around adult vaccination, "which is just not there for childhood vaccination".

Kids with Covid miss out on jabs

Data published by the Department for Education estimated 204,000 pupils, or 2.5 per cent of the pupil population, were absent for Covid-related reasons on September 30, a 67 per cent rise from the 122,000 absent on September 16.

The UK's chief medical officers initially recommended the vaccination of 12 to

SCOTLAND SOARS AHEAD OF ENGLAND

England, 12 to 15-year-olds

9%
VACCINATED

Scotland, 12 to 15-year-olds

27.9%
VACCINATED

"Teens need more time spent with them compared with adults"

15-year-olds in a bid to reduce Covid-related disruption in schools.

But pupils who test positive have to wait 28 days before they can receive the vaccination – meaning they miss out when the SAIS visits.

They then have to wait for return visits, many of which are scheduled after half-term.

Professor Kate Arden, the director of public health at Wigan Council, warned the all parliamentary group on Covid this week of a "real delay" because of high infection rates,

"The high transmission rates going on in that age group pushes a real delay in the programme being delivered," she said.

Data released last week showed one in 20 secondary pupils had Covid last week, according to the latest data.

Urgency needed to speed up programme

Salisbury said the government must act with "appropriate urgency to get these children vaccinated because the rate in which cases are going up is really quite alarming".

Covid inoculation is also clashing with other vaccination programmes. Tim Marston, the headteacher of The Roundhill Academy in Leicester, said 60 per cent of eligible pupils, about 320, received the jab last Thursday.

However, about 50 pupils were unable to get a Covid shot as they had recently received the human papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation.

The delays mean the NHS is in danger of failing to meet its initial promise to offer vaccinations to all children in the eligible age group before October half term. The holiday is just two weeks away.

A spokesperson for the NHS would only say that "hundreds of schools are already up and running and vaccinating school-age children".

Schools can defer Ofsted over vaccines

Secondary schools will be able to request deferral of Ofsted inspections if they will clash with vaccinations for pupils. The Department for Education told school leaders the "vaccine rollout should take priority" in a letter sent yesterday (Thursday).

It added: "We have confirmed with Ofsted that, in order to support the 12-15 vaccine rollout in schools, any school that has been notified of an Ofsted inspection at the same time as administering the vaccine can

request a deferral."

In-person inspections resumed this term after being suspended for much of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Vaccinations were rolled out to 12 to 15-year-olds last month, and most are being administered in schools.

No further details have been given on how schools can request deferrals. Ofsted has an existing policy on deferrals, but it is not known if it will apply in this instance.

NUMBER OF 12-15 YEAR OLDS VACCINATED IN ENGLAND

DATE	NUMBER VACCINATED	%
19/09/2021	162,715	5.7
26/09/2021	188,577	6.6
03/10/2021	257,422	9

Source: UKHSA

NEWS

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The salmon's off, but there's soup, sandwiches and spuds

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Salmon and paprika potatoes are off the menu with pupils now having to choose between a lunch of soup and a sandwich or a baked potato as driver shortages and recruitment problems bite.

Nearly 500 primary schools in Lancashire are offering a cut-back menu for two weeks to allow kitchens a chance to restock as supplies were disrupted this week.

Jacquie Blake, chair at Lead Association for Caterers in Education (LACA), said about 80 per cent of its members faced some disruption, but a "hot, healthy meal" was still available.

However, children in some areas have no choice but sandwiches.

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) will now seek feedback from headteachers on how widespread problems are, and raise it with the government if needed.

Zoe McIntyre, from Food Foundation which is helping to lead Marcus Rashford's #endchildfoodpoverty campaign, said: "With the combined effects of the cut in Universal Credit and rising food and fuel bills there is no doubt millions of families are facing increased levels of food poverty."

"We know that children need hot and nourishing food in order to learn and thrive and seeing schools having to cut back on what they are serving the kids is increasingly worrying in the current crisis."

In Lancashire, a typical three-choice menu can vary from sausages with creamed potatoes, broccoli and carrots to crispy bubble-coated salmon with paprika potatoes, green beans and carrots. Both are followed by a dessert.

But now this is limited to two main choices for the 65,000 pupils who receive meals: soup and a sandwich or a baked potato with a variety of fillings. There is also a salad bar, fresh fruit, yoghurt, desserts, organic milk and drinking water (see picture).

Jayne Rear, an education cabinet member on the county council, said there had been national "issues with food supply chains" caused by a shortage of delivery drivers and food industry



One of the temporary two options on offer to 500 schools in Lancashire

workers.

"We are working hard to minimise the effect on our schools, but in some instances we may need to offer a reduced menu compared to our usual large choice."

The council said that all of its suppliers were local and three-quarters of the food it bought was produced in the UK. It was experiencing problems because of the size of its customer base – it is the country's fourth largest local authority – and the volume of meals served every day.

Blake said Lancashire was the only example of widespread disruption, but many schools were altering menus.

"If you did not receive apples for an apple crumble, you could make a pear crumble. The standards are still there, the menus are just being tweaked."

In June, Schools Week reported that school meals could be disrupted as a driver shortage, fuelled by Brexit and Covid, put deliveries at risk. This was followed by a nationwide petrol shortage.

Blake said the disruption was also a result of recruitment and retention issues, especially among chefs, and disclosing and barring service (DBS) checks taking weeks to clear.

Schools were also facing long waits for kitchen equipment, such as a new oven, to arrive. This

could take up to six weeks in some places.

At Great Academy Ashton, in Tameside, only sandwiches and toasted paninis have been offered since the beginning of the school year, following a delay in the arrival of new catering equipment.

David Waugh, the academy's principal, said the equipment was ordered in May and was expected to take four to six weeks. Instead, it took between ten and 14, but hot food was due to start again on Monday.

Three other schools in the north west have had reduced menus – from four choices to two and a picnic bag – because of Covid-related illnesses, catering firm Dolce said.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said while it had not heard "too much" from schools about supply issues, any delays on fresh food would be a "serious concern and would need to be urgently resolved".

Hayley Dunn, the business leadership specialist at ASCL, added: "Any disruption to food supplies is obviously concerning, particularly if it begins to impact on the quality, range and healthiness of school meals."

Roy McKenzie, from the Road Haulage Association, said "no sector is exempt" from a shortage of lorry drivers.

Experts challenge ministers over £3k teacher bonus

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The government “risks treading a well-trodden path to failure” with its plans for a £3,000 bonus to “send the best maths and science teachers to the places that need them most”.

Teacher recruitment and retention researchers this week questioned the viability of the £60 million “levelling up premium” announced in Boris Johnson’s Conservative Party conference speech.

Maths, chemistry, computing and physics teachers in the first five years of their careers will be eligible for the bonus if they stay in the schools that “need them the most”.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi added the scheme would “support the recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in shortage subjects”.

But no further details of which schools would benefit were announced.

Zahawi added: “We know that more than one in ten teachers from the most disadvantaged secondary schools leave to teach in other schools and we are determined to correct that.”

Scrapped policy has been repackaged

The policy is a repackaged version of a similar initiative scrapped last year.

A £10 million two-year pilot offering early career maths and physics teachers in deprived areas £2,000 a year extra to stay in the profession was launched in 2019. Maths teachers were also previously eligible for a £5,000 early career payment.

The Department for Education ditched the scheme while wielding cuts to teacher training bursaries.

When challenged on this by the BBC, Zahawi said: “I’m a pragmatist. I don’t have a problem with saying I’ll bring something back and improve it. It’s a good thing to do.”

But Loic Menzies, a visiting fellow at Sheffield Institute of Education, said the plan “risks treading a well-trodden path to failure”, adding there were “a number of other levers” they could use.



Boris Johnson

He said, with the exception of London and other “grad-magnate cities, teacher labour markets are local.

“That need not be a problem given that there are high-potential teachers everywhere. The government could achieve many of its goals by finding these individuals, drawing them into teaching and keeping them – rather than ‘sending people there’.

“Doing so would also provide local jobs, counteract deficit discourses, and ensure that teachers have connections and credibility with the families and communities they serve.”

Retention experts want more details

In its announcement, the DfE pointed to a Gatsby Foundation report which found increasing pay for teachers in shortage subjects did reduce the number who quit the profession.

Its author, Professor Sam Sims from UCL, told *Schools Week* the success of any scheme would depend on eligibility, adding there was “not really any persuasive evidence” that paying teachers to move school worked.

“If this policy is designed in a way that pays more money to teachers in shortage subjects in order to keep them, then it’s probably a good idea.

“But if it’s more of, ok, we want to pluck you from Brixton and move you to Margate for £3,000 then I think it’s probably not a good

idea.”

Professor Steven Gorard, from the University of Durham, said financial incentives to get teachers into disadvantaged schools “are not new, and have been tried before”.

He said reviews of the “best available evidence” showed that temporary or one-off payments “might encourage some teachers to move to hard-to-staff schools, but that they will tend to remain there only for as long as they have to”.

He added: “£3,000 is not enough to change teachers’ lives and uproot their families.”

‘More human approach is needed’

The government has a poor record on schemes attempting to send the best teachers into struggling schools.

Former education secretary Nicky Morgan’s plans to pay 1,500 “elite” teachers extra to work in under-performing schools was scrapped after just 24 took up the offer.

Menzies added “blunt financial instruments will not be enough to counter the powerful ‘trailing spouse’ effect, as well as people’s deep sense of connection to people and place.

“A softer, more human approach is therefore needed and this depends on the DfE team becoming geographers and studying some maps. Although some of the areas the government is targeting might not be every highly-qualified graduate’s dream, nearby cities might be.”

PARTY CONFERENCE



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Zahawi keeps it short - and simple

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

In his maiden speech as education secretary, Nadhim Zahawi spoke for less than nine minutes at the Conservative Party's annual conference this week, announcing that his government's ambition was to "not simply recover, but to build back better".

While on brand for the conference buzzwords, the speech contained few new policies. But an appearance at a fringe event run by the Young Conservatives provided more insights into Zahawi's education priorities...

A white paper is coming

The biggest announcement was his commitment to publishing a white paper, started by his predecessor Gavin Williamson, in the new year.

The new education secretary was coy on the detail. Schools Week understands previous proposals, such as bringing back key stage 3 SATs and scrapping the directed time working hours cap for teachers, are now under review.

All Zahawi would say is the paper would include plans to "tackle innumeracy and illiteracy".

"We will relentlessly drive up standards, building back a better and fairer school system," he said. "I will work tirelessly to spread opportunity and unleash the brilliance of the young people of this country."

Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, warned that proposals to scrap teacher working hour limits would be "met with fury".

Ofsted investigates pupils missing from school

Zahawi has commissioned a "deep-dive" into absenteeism.

Latest attendance figures suggest more than 200,000 pupils were off last week because of Covid, up 67 per cent in a fortnight.

But Zahawi is also concerned about "persistent absenteeism". Attendance rates are now 86.3 per cent in secondary schools, down from about 95 per cent pre-pandemic.

Covid-related absences only accounted for 2.5 per cent of pupils last week.

"What I want to do is, with Ofsted, look at what themes have emerged from their inspections as to what good practice looks like.

"Why can some schools, very similar demographics, get really high levels of attendance. How do they engage with the student, with the family, versus others that have struggled?"

Ministers tasked with 'embedding technology'

When asked about hybrid models of learning, Zahawi revealed he has also asked his ministers to find ways to "embed technology into the education process".

During a stint as children's minister, he said the department had looked at "what technology was emerging at the time that could enhance the learning experience, but also the workload of teachers".

He gave Google Classroom, Microsoft and other start-ups on marking and lesson

content as examples.

Zahawi also said the online lessons provider Oak National Academy had been "incredibly successful, so I'm looking to see how I can build on that".

He said a teacher worked about 49 hours in an average week, 20 hours of that in front of a class. "If I can take away some of that through some technological enhancements that can only be a good thing," he added. "Any innovation is something I'm very open to."

Intentions to 'scale' academies further

Zahawi also signalled that the Department for Education would continue to pursue its ambition to get all schools into academy trusts.

He warned that proposals from Labour to end charity status for private schools would only "add more pressure on what is the bulk of the education system [state schools]. I need to make sure we continue on the journey of improvement".

"What's worked really well is the academy process," he said. "Multi-academy trusts have done a tremendous job. How do I scale that even further?"

"That should be the focus of any secretary of state, to make sure that the maintained sector has the wherewithal to deliver."

ITT review commitment

Zahawi promised delegates he would "be led by evidence" and "relentlessly focus on what works".

He also reiterated the government's commitment to the teacher training review, saying its "fundamental overhaul" would "make this country the best in the world to train and learn as a teacher".



Nadhim Zahawi

New minister wants more data on 'ghost children'

The new children's minister Will Quince has promised to accelerate the collection of better data so the government can investigate a rise in "ghost children".

Speaking at a fringe event on Wednesday, Quince said about 75,000 children were now home-educated – a rise of 40 per cent over the pandemic.

Estimates also suggest as many as 135,000 have just not returned to school, following Covid closures.

Quince said this was one of his "top issues", but that "unfortunately, in this area there is very poor data.

"We support the right of parents to educate their children at home. Most do a good job, but there are some that don't – and those are the ones that worry me."

A long-mooted home education register could still be a way off. But Quince said he was working to get "better data" for September next year. "If I can accelerate that I will."

"What concerns me as much of the figure, in context relatively small, is the rise – and we need to know why."

He suspects the bulk could be for health reasons, so a reversion could soon follow.

"This is a hot topic for me. It's a polarising issue. There's always local authorities that want more safeguards, but parents want more autonomy and don't want the state interfering.

"I plan to take a data, evidence-based approach – putting the interests of those children at the heart of our response. If we want to see change, data collection is important."

Robert Halfon, the chair of the education select committee, called for a "major effort to track these children and invest everything possible to get them back to school".



Will Quince

PARTY CONFERENCE



Mandatory college visits in pipeline for pupils' career education

SHANE CHOWEN

@SHANECHOWEN

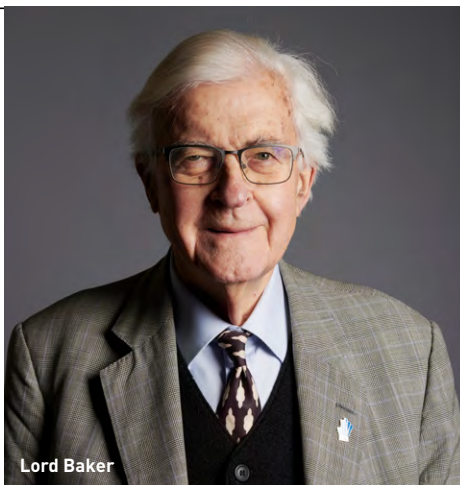
Ministers are set to introduce new laws requiring schools to ensure all pupils have two "mandatory encounters" with colleges or training providers during their careers education.

The measure will feature as government amendments in the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill which is currently making its way through the House of Lords.

The specific requirement will mean schools must set pupils up with further education providers in either year 8 or 9 and then again in year 10 or 11. They must take place before February 28.

The Technical and Further Education Act 2017, known as the Baker Clause, already states schools must ensure "an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access pupils" to inform them "about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships".

But Lord Baker, a former education secretary and architect of the Baker clause, said: "The government has messed up



Lord Baker

the Baker clause. It's not being forcibly administered".

Speaking to sister paper FE Week, Baker also branded the government's new amendment as "inadequate".

Baker intends to file a new amendment that will "oblige" schools to organise three encounters technical education and training providers across their secondary education.

"It will be the duty of schools to do it," he adds. "And that means that if they do not do that activity, they could be legally obliged to do so."

The government said its changes would "give equality to technical education in career advice in schools".

It would mean "all pupils understand the wide range of career routes and training available to them, such as apprenticeships, T Levels or traineeships".

A further amendment will allow religious sixth form colleges to finally academise.

Nearly all sixth form colleges have been able to convert to academy status, and in doing so enjoy the luxury of not paying VAT, since former chancellor George Osborne changed the rules in November 2015.

But a group of 14 sixth form colleges which are Catholic-run have been prevented from doing so due to their religious character, which would not be maintained under current government rules.

The DfE said this week the new measures will now allow "sixth form colleges with a religious faith designation to become a 16 to 19 academy, boosting diversity in 16 to 19 academies and allowing more faith school providers to open 16 to 19 academies with a religious character".

Free school pioneer Lehai confirmed as Zahawi adviser

New education secretary Nadhim Zahawi has appointed former headteacher Mark Lehai as a policy adviser.

Lehai, a former Conservative general election candidate, was founding principal of Bedford Free School – one of the country's first – in 2011.

It had been reported Lehai was in the running for a special adviser role, but *Schools Week* revealed earlier this week his appointment at the Department for Education has now been confirmed.

Well-known in the education sector and a regular media commentator on schools issues, Lehai is a vocal proponent of traditionalist education ideologies, including a knowledge-rich curriculum and strict behaviour policies.

After six years at Bedford, Lehai went on to lead Parents and Teachers for Excellence, a campaign group for education reform founded by Dame Rachel de Souza, now the children's commissioner.

Lehai also served as interim director of the New Schools Network, a government-funded charity, for a brief period in 2018.

Most recently he has been director of the Campaign for Common Sense, which has published research on culture war issues, including gender identity and "wokeness". He has also been a senior adviser at communications agency PLMR since February.

Lehai contested Newcastle upon Tyne North for the Conservatives at the 2019 election, but lost

to Labour MP Catherine McKinnell, who has held it since 2010.

He was educated at the University of Cambridge, and was a maths teacher before moving into school leadership.

His appointment comes after Iain Mansfield confirmed he was remaining at the DfE following the reshuffle, as an adviser to further and higher education minister Michelle Donelan.

Former teacher Will Bickford Smith, a Teach First graduate who founded the Conservative Teachers group, has been promoted to schools policy adviser for Zahawi.

He previously advised former schools minister Nick Gibb in the non-political role.



Mark Lehai

NEWS

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LA schools left out of new ministers' travel plans

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

New education ministers have been busy touring classrooms across the country, with academies their destinations of choice.

They have visited 18 schools, colleges and nurseries since their appointments nearly three weeks ago, an analysis of their social media shows (see box out below).

Ten of these visits, 55 per cent, were to academies and free schools, including sixth forms and alternative provision providers.

It comes as Nadhim Zahawi, the education secretary, this week mirrored the rhetoric of his predecessor Gavin Williamson and spoke of a desire to further "scale" the academies sector. Williamson's "vision" was for all schools to become academies.

Schools Week analysed the visits made by the new ministers whose brief contains schools.

As well as Zahawi, this includes Robin Walker, the schools minister, Baroness Barran, the academies minister, and Will Quince, the children's minister.

Along with the ten academy visits, they visited two community special schools, three nurseries, a further education college, private boarding school and a grammar school.

Ministers may have visited more schools than are documented on their social media accounts, but the Department for Education refused to respond when we asked whether this was the case.

It appears they are yet to visit a local authority-maintained mainstream school. According to data from the National Audit Office, LA-maintained schools accounted for 58 per cent of all state schools last year.

Schools Week previously revealed that Damian Hinds, a former education secretary, visited more than twice as many academies than LA-maintained schools during his first four months in the job.

Williamson slightly restored the balance, visiting 17 academies and free schools, and 13 maintained schools in his first seven months in the top job.

Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union (NEU), said: "There may be an ideological political drive for all schools to become academies, but the fact of the



Nadhim Zahawi chats with pupils at West Coventry Academy during a visit last month. Photo: Tim Hammon, No 10 Downing Street.

Credit: Tim Hammon, No. 10 Downing Street

matter is over half are still LA-maintained.

"So, they need to go and talk to those school leaders and see why they are happy remaining as part of a local authority and why they don't want to become academies. They can't just pretend LA schools don't exist."

Zahawi made five visits to education establishments across his Stratford-upon-Avon constituency, Coventry and London.

One visit was to King Edward VI School in Stratford-upon-Avon – where Zahawi made amends after failing to turn up to the school's Speech Day on his first day as education secretary.

He also visited West Coventry Academy to mark the beginning of its £38 million net carbon zero rebuild.

Ana Neofitou, the academy's head, told Schools Week that the new education secretary held an official turf-cutting ceremony and visited students in their lessons.

While on site Zahawi and Neofitou discussed "the transformational new build and the positive impact it will have on students and the local



Will Quince meets pupils at Belmont Special School. Photo: Twitter



Baroness Barran during a visit to Bright Futures Education Trust. Photo: Twitter.

community".

Barran tops the list with seven visits, including four on the same day in Manchester – making it the most popular area (Quince also visited a school in the city).

SCHOOLS VISITED

ACADEMIES MINISTER
BARONESS BARRAN

7

CHILDREN'S MINISTER
WILL QUINCE

5

EDUCATION
SECRETARY
NADHIM ZAHAWI

5

SCHOOLS MINISTER
ROBIN WALKER

1

NEWS

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Teaching cap safeguarded as schools extend hours

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

INVESTIGATES

Schools have introduced two-week half-terms and slashed meeting times so they can extend the school day without breaching limits on teacher hours.

The government has been reviewing the length of school days after Sir Kevan Collins, the former catch-up commissioner, proposed classrooms stay open for an extra 30 minutes a day.

The *Sunday Times* reported ministers are expected to announce pilot funding this month for schools to stay open from 8am to 6pm.

The *Guardian* reported that Gavin Williamson, the former education secretary, was sounding out plans to cut the cap on teacher hours, currently 1,265 per academic year, to ensure schools could staff longer days.

But *Schools Week* has found leaders that already run extended days have managed to do so within the cap.

NET Academies Trust (NETAT) extended the school day at its primary schools in Harlow, Essex, by 40 minutes five years ago. This was used for extra-curricular and academic catch-up.

The trust extended the May and October half-terms to two weeks to free up teacher time.

A different model to extend the day by 30 minutes, with a two-week half-term in October alone, is being trialled at its Waltham Holy Cross Primary Academy. The impact of both models is to be reviewed at the end of this school year.

Jo Coton, the chief executive of NETAT, said: "It's been an excellent initiative and we advocate a longer school day – our parents and staff are really supportive of it. Above all we have seen such huge benefits for our pupils in terms of catch-up, booster sessions, teaching more subjects and extra-curricular opportunities.

"Teachers and support staff make good use of it and are able to rest and recuperate during the longer half-term."

Meanwhile, at Summit Learning Trust in Birmingham, each headteacher has carried out



an audit on staff time to allow them to extend every day by an hour for year 11 pupils.

One of the trust's schools found 55 hours of extra time per teacher by shaving 15 minutes from before and after-school duty each day, cutting six hours of meetings and four hours of detention time a year.

Vince Green, Summit's education director, said: "I don't think there's a professional body who is saying it's a good idea to abolish the 1,265.

"When you've got a good staff culture and you've got staff who are flexible and willing to work flexibly and balance working life with home life, then it works."

Star Academies has also cut back on meeting time, including having meetings with teachers during assemblies, to enable after-school catch-up.

Star has also "overstaffed" by employing more English and maths teachers and has adjusted some staff hours so they work 9am until 4pm, rather than 8am until 3pm.

But Lisa Crausby, STAR's director of education, said if the government wanted to extend the day for all pupils then, ideally, schools needed more funding.

"Extra money is always the answer as we can pay people for extra time."

The government has this year handed schools

£579 million extra cash to employ tutors to help pupils catch up. This is on top of the subsidised National Tutoring Programme.

Tutors can be current or retired teachers, teaching assistants or trainees – although some staff will need specialist training.

This year's school teachers' pay and conditions document also includes details of a new teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payment.

A fixed-term award TLR3 can now be awarded for teachers who undertake planning and preparation, as well as coordination and delivery of tutoring. This includes when it is outside normal directed hours, but during the school day.

A freedom of information request by *Schools Week* in July showed the Department for Education had "no systematic data collection" of finish times in English schools.

But its school snapshot survey, due to be published this autumn, will contain information on school day hours based on a survey of 4,500 teachers.

A TeacherTapp survey this year found that only one in 20 primary schools and one in five secondaries closed before 3pm.

A DfE spokesperson said the government was "committed to an ambitious, long-term education recovery plan and an excellent education system that works for all"

NEWS IN BRIEF

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Ofqual deputy Meadows leaves post after seven-year tenure

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

EXCLUSIVE

Ofqual's second-in-command during the 2020 grading fiasco has left after seven years at the watchdog.

Dr Michelle Meadows was deputy chief regulator and executive director for strategy, risk and research. She left her post last month to join Oxford University as associate professor of educational assessment.

Julie Swan has now been appointed deputy chief regulator alongside her role as executive director for general qualifications. She has been with Ofqual since it was set up in 2008.

New chief regulator Dr Jo Saxton said Swan's "excellent leadership skills and valuable contribution" to Ofqual's work for more than a decade made her "the ideal person to step into this important role".

She added: "I would like to take the



Dr Michelle Meadows

opportunity to thank Dr Michelle Meadows. We are extremely grateful for the enormous contribution her work has made at Ofqual during the past seven years, and we wish her every success in her new appointment, which had been planned for some time."

Swan said she looks forward to supporting new chief regulator Dr Jo Saxton "as we transition out of the extraordinary arrangements in place during the pandemic".

Cath Jadhav, director of standards and

comparability, has taken over Meadows' executive director role on an interim basis.

Sean Pearce remains as chief operating officer, as does Catherine Large as executive director of vocational and technical qualifications.

Meadows joined Ofqual in 2014. She was grilled by MPs last year after the government's U-turn on awarding grades moderated by an algorithm in 2020. Students were instead given centre-assessed grades.

She said the grading model was tested "thoroughly" and said she didn't believe that the algorithm "ever mutated". This came after prime minister Boris Johnson blamed a "mutant algorithm" for the fiasco.

More recently, Meadows said that "flexibility of thinking [was] required" to make a move to online exams in the future, as has been mooted for several years. She was previously a research director at exam board AQA.

Education sex abuse helpline granted three-month extension

A child sex abuse helpline set up in the wake of the allegations posted on the Everyone's Invited website will continue for another three months.

Department for Education funding for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to run the free hotline was due to end last week.

The Report Abuse in Education service launched in April to support those who have experienced sexual abuse and harassment after thousands of abuse allegations were published online.

Funding has now been secured for another three months, meaning the hotline will be available until the end of this year. The total cost for the helpline is £200,000.



The helpline has so far had 721 calls – more than 100 a month – with 129 referred to a statutory agency. Of the 254 calls where further information was given, 130 were an adult or child victim. Of these, 78 were female, 45 male and two transgender.

The Everyone's Invited website has published more than 16,000 testimonies of sexual abuse and harassment in its bid to highlight the issue and eradicate "rape culture".

Individuals can access the service by calling 0800 136 663 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk

DfE seeks CPD body to boost girls' physics participation

A new organisation to oversee all science CPD programmes will be tasked with boosting the number of girls taking physics.

Currently three separate bodies provide science CPD programmes: the general science network, a physics network and a bursary scheme.

But an early engagement tender reveals that the Department for Education wants to create a single body to oversee all the schemes instead.

DfE says this will help "present a clear and easily navigable offer for teachers to access science-specific CPD from key stage 1 and key stage 5".

The body would provide "high-quality" CPD for teachers to improve the number of students studying science subjects at GCSE and A-level and achieving

good results.

It also aims to improve science participation from under-represented groups, particularly the number of girls studying A-level physics.

Entries for sciences have been increasing steadily over the past five years. However, the ratio of boys to girls taking A-level physics is over 28,000 to 8,500.

However, the tender is subject to the spending review. No cost is given.

The scheme would run from April next year until August 2023.



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Trustees leave as new investigation opens at Holland Park

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

EXCLUSIVE

Another investigation has been launched at a school under scrutiny over allegations of a "toxic" environment after a staff member was recorded apparently shouting at a pupil.

It comes as four more governors resigned at Holland Park School in west London, with experienced leaders parachuted in by the government in their place.

The 'outstanding' school, dubbed the "Socialist Eton", has faced allegations of a "toxic" working culture and "public shaming" of students, prompting a council investigation.

Now another investigation is underway after an audio recording posted by a campaign group of former Holland Park students surfaced online.

It appeared to show a staff member shouting at a pupil last Friday to "shut up" and "don't answer back".

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) said the local authority designated officer was coordinating an investigation.

Jane Farrell, the school's new chair of trustees, said the incident was "immediately dealt with".



Colin Hall

"Appropriate action is happening at present that involves support from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea," she said.

RBKC launched a three-month "learning review" in September into allegations of safeguarding failures at the school. The council said this week it will be led by Kate Richards, the former chief inspector at the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

Farrell said Richards had "significant experience in the field of effective safeguarding practice".

The school's leadership team "welcomes the review – viewing it both as a chance

to improve on the good practice already existing at Holland Park and as a means to learn from recommendations that the review may make".

Four new trustees were appointed last Friday (see box out) with the support of the Department for Education. All are "experienced and senior education professionals who have committed to service the Holland Park School community", Farrell said.

They take the place of Margaret Allen, Elizabeth Rutherford, Dr Krish Soni and Michael Tory. The four, who resigned on Tuesday, will remain as members of the trust.

The DfE's academy handbook states there should be "significant separation" between members and trustees. The government's "strong preference is for a majority of members to be independent of the board of trustees".

There is no suggestion of wrongdoing by any of these trustees.

Farrell thanked them for "their dedicated service" to secure "the school's successes".

Farrell, a specialist in culture change, was sent in by the DfE after the former chair resigned last month.

Colin Hall, the school's head, will also retire at the end of this year.

The improvement experts parachuted in by DfE

Teresa Tunnadine

Chief executive of the Middlesex Learning Trust since 2017, Tunnadine was previously a long-serving headteacher, national leader of education and Ofsted inspector. She was appointed CBE for services to education in 2013.



Roy Blatchford

Former government adviser Blatchford founded the school improvement National Education Trust in 2006, and more recently chaired ASCL's 'The Forgotten Third' commission. He was appointed CBE for services to education in 2016.



Dr Vanessa Ogden

Ogden is the CEO of Mulberry Schools Trust. New Holland Park chair of trustees Jane Farrell is also chair at the trust. Ogden also has a doctorate specialising in education policy and school improvement.



Adrian Percival

Percival was CEO of the Haberdashers Aske Federation for nine years up to 2020. He previously led a school improvement programme at Capita, and is now director of Loddon Education Consultants.



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Disciplinary panel hears 'cheating' and 'off-rolling' claims against Suffolk trust

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

An award-winning trust chief executive and two senior colleagues are accused of complicity in a "culture of cheating" and off-rolling to keep its flagship school's 'outstanding' rating.

The former leaders at the Samuel Ward Academy in Suffolk appeared before a disciplinary panel this week over allegations of "dishonest" behaviour, which could see them banned or facing other sanctions if found guilty.

Ex-head Howard Lay, who then became chief executive of the trust, denies encouraging or previously knowing about "dodgy census data" or "coursework malpractice" in either role, according to his barrister.

Yet Lay, head of school Andrew Prestoe and assistant head Pat Stalker all accept that off-rolling and exam malpractice did take place in 2015 and 2016. A Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) probe was launched after the practice was exposed by whistleblowers.

All three staff members had left the trust by 2018, after which it was rebranded Unity Schools Partnership. Former regional schools commissioner Tim Coulson was appointed CEO, and it now has 30 schools, mainly in Suffolk.

'Do whatever it takes'

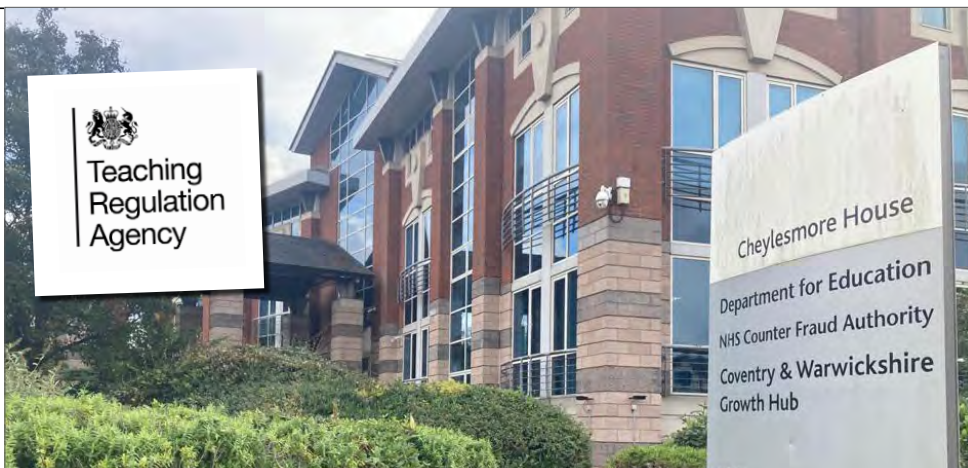
Lucy Coulson, presenting the TRA's case, argued that leaders including Lay were "well aware" of off-rolling. She said the case to consider was whether Lay was "actively involved".

The academy had a "culture of cheating and pressure to succeed", she added, with witness statements including the claim Lay set "ridiculously high performance standards".

"People interpreted [Lay's alleged] instructions to 'do whatever it takes' as an instruction to cheat."

Pat Stalker admitted she was "actively involved" in discussions over which key stage 4 pupils to off-roll based on behaviour and attainment between 2013 and 2016, according to her lawyer, Andrew Faux.

Faux said that after some pupils performed badly in science coursework, Stalker also admitted giving pupils "data on an experiment they had not actually done", rather than students doing



experiments themselves.

AQA subsequently banned her from high-level coursework control for three years.

Kids off-rolled to 'keep outstanding' grade

Meanwhile Prestoe's solicitor, Tim Glover, said Prestoe admitted dishonestly instructing others to off-roll pupils for the 2016 census "to keep the school 'outstanding'."

Prestoe further admitted failing to notify the exam board after being made aware grades were potentially "over-inflated" in French. Pupils had received "too much help" in controlled assessments, though Prestoe was uninvolved, denied dishonesty and removed the grades, Glover added.

But the TRA's Coulson urged the panel to consider whether Stalker and Prestoe were "under so much pressure they had no choice" over off-rolling.

Both staff members said they were aware of but not involved in off-rolling as early as 2010-11, when Lay was headteacher. Prestoe's lawyer claimed Lay was "directly involved".

According to Coulson, Prestoe said he twice queried the practice, but Lay allegedly responded first that he would sort it out, and the second time that he would "take the rap".

While Stalker accepted her conduct was dishonest and could bring the profession into disrepute, her lawyer alleged "extreme pressure" – particularly from Lay – to keep the trust's only 'outstanding' rating.

'Not worst kind of off-rolling'

Lay now accepted that he "should have known"

about off-rolling and done something to stop it. But his defence hit out at alleged "blame-shifting" by others who were accused and by witnesses.

Lay's barrister Jonathan Storey said his client, who won a 2014 educational leader of the year award after securing two 'outstanding' Ofsted ratings, was a "visionary school leader" who demanded high standards.

But he "wasn't one who found detail very engaging", and "didn't personally understand a lot of it" in areas like data, Storey added. His involvement at the secondary in Haverhill was also "limited" after he became trust CEO, and he denies unprofessional conduct.

Meanwhile, children off-rolled at annual census time were not told to find education elsewhere, but "kept in school, educated, sat exams and got results" as external candidates, according to Storey. "It's bad, but not awful – not the worst kind of off-rolling."

Samuel Ward Academy was downgraded to 'requires improvement' in early 2019. Ofsted inspectors reported that frequent headship changes and 30 teachers' departures the previous year had left the school in a "fragile state".

Inspectors claimed that the trust itself was "failing to check the performance of the school or hold leaders accountable for the achievement of pupils" until September 2017 – shortly after Coulson joined. But they praised its new leadership under current head Andrew Hunter.

A Unity Schools Partnership spokesperson said ahead of the hearing that it was unable to comment until it had concluded.

The case continues.

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High Court papers reveal trust's safeguarding failures

JAMES CARR

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A former trust boss took three staff members on a golfing holiday to Kenya during term time after allegations came to light that one had repeatedly accessed porn on a school device, a High Court ruling revealed.

Khalsa Academies Trust's now departed chief executive Nick Kandola also made "flippant remarks" and "appeared to downplay the seriousness of incidents", the ruling states. They include an alleged rape and use of pornography by staff members.

The golf trip left the academy short of staff and medical cover "potentially placing children at risk", a safeguarding review by Buckinghamshire Council in November 2019 – commissioned by the government – found.

The safeguarding concerns have come to light in a High Court ruling, handed down on Tuesday.

Deputy judge Gavin Mansfield threw out the Sikh trust's attempts to pursue a judicial review against government plans to strip it of Khalsa Secondary Academy.

Khalsa claimed it was discriminated against by the DfE "because of its Sikh faith status". It also claimed the DfE "acted irrationally" by refusing to delay a decision on the termination notice because of Covid.

However, the judge rejected all grounds of the challenge and dismissed the application "in its entirety".

The Sikh free school in Buckinghamshire will now be handed over to the Sikh Academies Trust. The transfer had been paused while legal proceedings were ongoing.

Safeguarding concerns revealed

Khalsa Secondary Academy was issued with a termination notice in June 2020 by Baroness Berridge. This followed an Ofsted inspection which rated the school 'inadequate' and highlighted safeguarding concerns.

The court ruling reveals that prior to this inspection, in November 2019, regional schools commissioner Dame Kate Dethridge had asked Buckinghamshire Council to conduct a safeguarding review. It upheld six safeguarding allegations, the court ruling stated.

Mansfield summarised these findings in his



ruling, which included that Kandola had taken three staff members on a golfing holiday to Kenya.

There was also evidence that pornographic material had been accessed on one of these staff member's computers on "several occasions".

Buckinghamshire was told by the trust the staff member had been dismissed, when in fact they resigned, and the allegations came to light before the golf trip, the ruling stated.

There had also "been a serious allegation of rape by a female pupil against a male pupil" in an out-of-bounds area that had not been locked.

Additionally, "serious allegations" had been made against a staff member for making "inappropriate remarks while teaching a year 8 class".

Kandola did not support a request for this staff member to be suspended and also suppressed safeguarding concerns from being reported, Mansfield's ruling said.

'Thin evidence' of extremist group claims

Kandola, who founded the trust and remains a trustee, said the "allegations made against me and others by disgruntled ex-employees were investigated by two independent reputable organisations and were unfounded".

However, Mansfield in his ruling said: "Despite the arguments of the trust, I am not at all persuaded that those reports have been shown to be wrong by any subsequent evidence."

For instance, one of the investigations referred to by Khalsa looked at allegations not related to

the Buckinghamshire report, Mansfield said.

The trust argued that the DfE had also "overlooked, misunderstood and or ignored" serious concerns that it was under attack because of its Sikh identity both from "secular forces" and "fundamentalist Sikhs".

They said extremist groups had allied with ex-governors from one of its schools and "were involved in an organised campaign to bring the trust down".

Kandola claimed the "allegations should not have been upheld and were the product of a conspiracy against the trust".

But Mansfield found the evidence of these campaigns "was very thin". He stated both the findings from the Buckinghamshire and Ofsted reports "were damning".

A council spokesperson said it was "pleased that the judge has upheld our report and found that there is no evidence that it was factually incorrect".

They added the council takes safeguarding "extremely seriously" and is committed to work with any trust in the area "to ensure our children and families are looked after and safe".

Shaminder Rayatt, chair of the trust's board, said it was "disappointed with the decision" and will be considering its options in the coming months, "including making an appeal".

She added the schools will "continue to improve the safe running of the school".

The trust is now led by Simon Webb, who until recently was a DfE adviser supporting free schools.

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NAHT wants more support to ease heads' workload

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

A school leaders' union wants the government to act on the worsening wellbeing of headteachers, with its president warning that they "cannot keep pouring from an empty cup".

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) will debate a motion at its conference starting today to investigate how to better support school leaders' workloads.

The motion pledges to press the government on how flexible working for heads, including part-time, co-headship or phased retirement, could help.

Research by the Universities of Nottingham and Oxford found two in five headteachers plan to leave the profession early within the next five years. The most experienced leaders are twice as likely to want to go.

Covid was the main influence for a quarter of those wanting an early departure, while more than half cited it as a contributing factor.

Tim Bowen, the NAHT's president, will tell the conference tomorrow that leaders put themselves "directly in harm's way" last year to keep schools open when "little was known about the virus".

Bowen, on secondment from his headship at Maple Primary in Hertfordshire, will say: "I know how hard it has been – I know what you have given, the pressure you have been under, the courage you have shown and the sacrifices you have made. I pay tribute to you all."

Outlining why he chose the wellbeing charity Education Support as his presidential charity for the year, Bowen will add: "Goodness knows, we have all felt like it has been too much at one point or another. Getting professional help when that happens is absolutely vital.

"You cannot keep pouring from an empty cup, as the saying goes. You must make your personal wellbeing a priority."

The NAHT motion outlines that while other professionals have used Covid to re-evaluate their work-life balance – moving to more flexible working patterns – school leaders have been left behind.



Tim Bowen

Should the motion be passed as expected, the union will work with others on the benefits of flexible working and how to reduce workload for heads.

It will also commit to considering the potential benefits for members of independent models of coaching and mentoring.

Sinéad Mc Brearty, the chief executive of Education Support, who is also speaking at the conference, said it was an "unavoidable fact that over time, prolonged stress, anxiety and fatigue can lead to burnout.

"We need to prioritise properly the mental health and wellbeing of our school leadership teams as we recover from the pandemic so they can ensure that all staff

are equipped and supported to do their best work."

The Department for Education is to launch a school leader wellbeing support scheme this term, backed by £760,000 funding.

But tender documents show the scheme must only reach 2,000 school leaders – meaning only one in ten might get support. There are 20,000 state schools in England.

Under the scheme, leaders will receive at least six sessions of online peer support or one-to-one online or phone counselling.

A wellbeing survey last year found that 20 per cent of teachers had no form of mental health support available at their school or college.

OTHER NOTABLE NAHT MOTIONS

- Lobby government to cancel SATs next year, and review primary assessment
- Create guidance to ensure leaders in schools not yet 'good' get support
- Press government to reverse the £90 million pupil premium cut
- Call for a national review of children missing in education
- Develop a "codified" pay system for school business leaders
- Call to end teacher pay freeze, including a review of leaders' pay structure
- Ask government to ensure policy changes shared with schools before the media
- Government guidance that allows specific changes to be tracked and easily identifiable

NEWS



State v private school funding gap widens

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The gap between state school spending and private school fees in England has more than doubled in a decade.

Analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found average private school fees were £6,500 (92 per cent) higher than state funding in 2020-21.

In 2009-10, the gap was just £3,100, or about 39 per cent.

It follows a decade in which the average private school fees, excluding boarding fees and allowing for bursaries and scholarships, increased 23 per cent in real terms, while per-pupil funding in the state sector decreased 9 per cent.

Luke Sibieta, an IfS research fellow and the report's author, warned that "longstanding concerns" about inequalities between private and state school pupils would "not begin to be easily addressed while the sectors enjoy such different levels of resourcing".

The report acknowledged there was "clearly a wide distribution in spending levels within the state-funded and private sectors".

However, the think-tank pointed out that even funding for the most deprived state secondary schools, about £7,000 in 2019-20, "is only half the value of average fee levels in private schools".

Fees for private sixth forms are now about three times higher than state funding for that age group.

There are also "good reasons to believe" the figures "probably understate the gap in resources" as they do not account for investment income, endowments and donations, which are "likely to push up private school spending by

more".

The analysis also uses private school fees for the UK as a whole and compares them to state spending in England only "due to the availability of data over time".

Figures for private school fees in England only "would probably be higher, given that figures for Scotland and Wales are below the UK average".

The release of the analysis follows a recent renewal by Labour of its commitment to end VAT and business rate exemptions for private schools.

The organisation said it hoped in future analysis to examine the "fiscal consequences" of the commitment, "the effects of which will depend on a range of factors such as potential changes in demand and the spending patterns of private schools".

Geoff Barton, the head of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was "pretty outrageous that the government has cut funding in real terms to schools and colleges over the past decade, while independent school fees have increased over the same period".

"The funding gap between the two sectors has always been there, of course, but the fact it has widened to such a huge extent does stick in the throat."

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said the government's "failure to invest in schools" had forced them to "cut back on staff, support for pupils, and activities that enrich the school day".

"A far more ambitious programme of investment is required from the government if schools are going to be able to deliver the education that the current generation of pupils needs and deserves."

The Department for Education was approached for comment.

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DfE earmarks £3.3m for team of law firms

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

The Department for Education has hired seven law firms to provide legal advice on insolvency, audit and fraud cases – at a cost of up to £3.3 million.

Tender documents show the companies will be put on a rota over the next two years to advise on legal matters. Cases will likely involve "financially distressed" colleges, academy trusts, independent and higher education providers for the DfE's provider market oversight (PMO) division.

The DfE anticipates there will be around 40 of these "projects" each year, although there is "no guarantee of work and no retainers".

A spokesperson for the department said the tender had caps on what the winners can charge to "ensure greater value for money" to the taxpayer.

Hourly and day rates for each of the seven firms have been redacted in the tender documents.

But they do show the contracts each commenced on September 3 for an initial one-year period – valued around £2,067,000, with an option to extend for a further 12-months – which would cost an additional £1,275,000.

While the contracts are expected to be utilised more often in the further education sector, the government has been caught up in legal battles over academies in recent years.

One high-profile example is the Durand Education Trust, which continues to pursue a legal challenge over compensation for giving up commercial facilities on the site of the former Durand Academy in south London.

According to the tender documents, the lawyers will also provide advice on "counter-fraud and investigations" and "freedom of information and GDPR provision".

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Devil will be in detail of £3k teacher bonuses

As well-respected researchers point out in this week's edition, the devil will be in the detail when it comes to the government's latest (or rather, rehashed) plan to retain teachers in disadvantaged parts of the country.

Given the previous incarnation was unceremoniously scrapped last year, and given the prominence the announcement was given in an otherwise policy-lite PM's conference speech, you would have thought the government would want to be ready and willing to answer questions about it.

But alas, several days after the pledge was made, we are still none the wiser about how it will work in practice.

As many have pointed out, the pandemic-related boost to teacher recruitment and retention is likely to be shortlived. The government needs a credible, detailed plan for what happens when numbers inevitably start to tail off again, and it needs one fast.

Zahawi must speed up jabs roll-out for kids

It was right to show caution on the decision to vaccinate 12 to 15-year-olds. But once the decision was made, it should have been full steam ahead.

The sluggish roll-out will only put more children at risk, as well as missing more school.

There are only 60 school immunisation teams, tasked with making their way around 3,500 secondary schools.

Why can't England follow the lead of Scotland and open up some of the many vaccine walk-in centres for children? Parents could take them on the weekends, or after school.

It's what Scotland has done - and it has vaccinated three times as many youngsters as England.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi has promised he 'won't stand back and let school attendance fall'.

Surely intervention to speed up the jabs roll-out - which he until recently oversaw as vaccines minister - is a good start?

SCHOOLS WEEK



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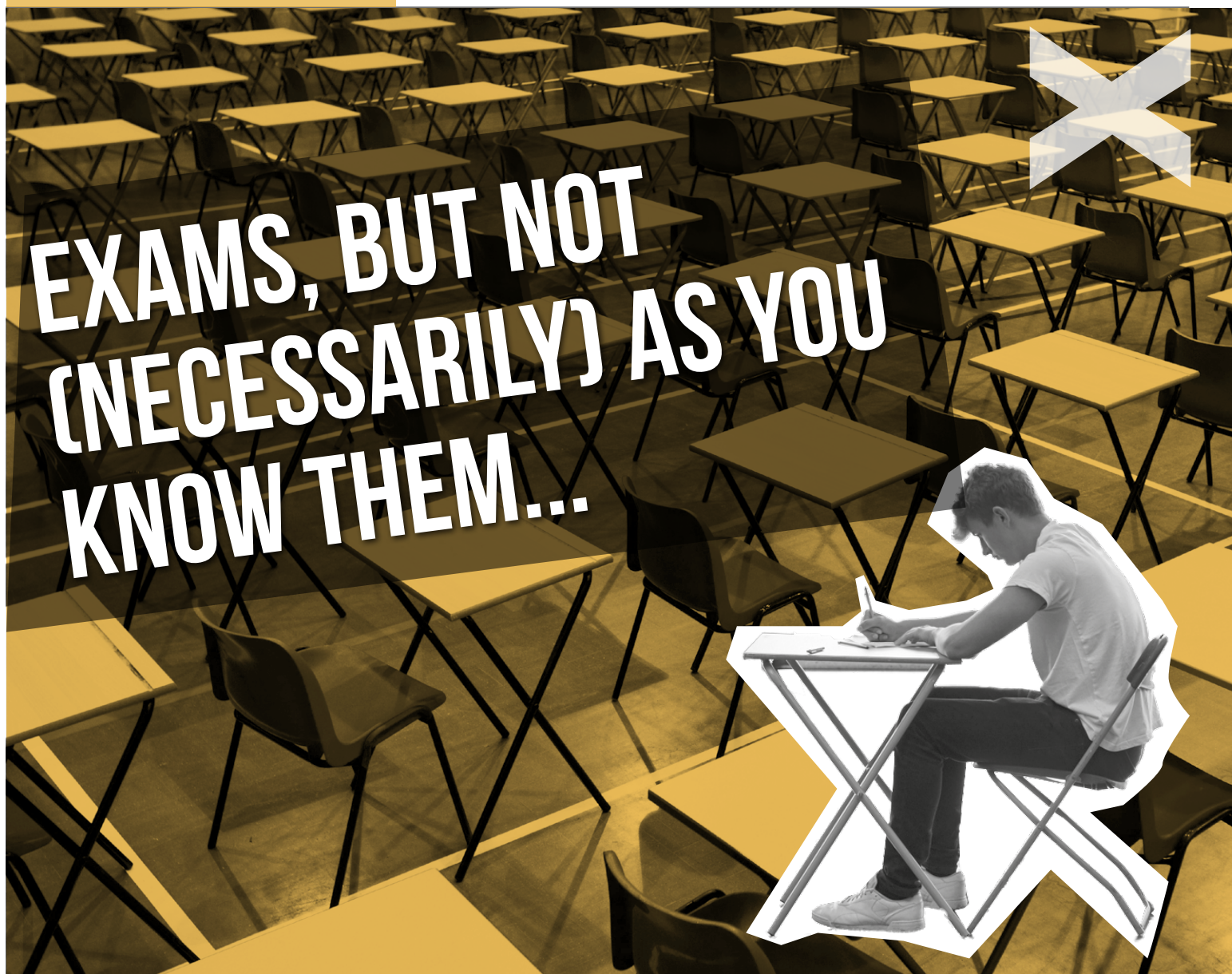
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EXAMS, BUT NOT (NECESSARILY) AS YOU KNOW THEM...

A battle for the future of exams is underway. *Schools Week* investigates ...

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

The headlines have been building for a while. You will have seen them: "Scrap GCSEs", "Reform exams", "Focus on skills". But some of the recent calls for change are not coming from teaching unions, but from voices within - or once close to - the government.

Conservative MPs have published a paper saying GCSEs should be "replaced with academic, technical exams and apprenticeships at 18". Just before the pandemic, Robert Halfon, the education select committee chair, said "pointless"

GCSEs should be replaced with a "national baccalaureate".

Some backbenchers were unnerved by evidence that Michael Gove's reforms to GCSEs in 2015 had widened, rather than closed, the disadvantage gap.

Then Covid-19 hit. Confidence in the system plummeted as exams were cancelled followed by countless U-turns and chaos.

As academy trust boss Peter Hyman, says: "The problem was particularly bad in countries like England, because we don't have multiple modes of assessing. It's launched a conversation about not putting all our eggs in the exams basket."

Now there are more commissions, reviews and reports on assessment than perhaps

ever before in the country's history, with the Labour and Conservative Party conferences packed with fringe events on the topic.

The players pulling the strings

A number of reviews and commissions have been established. The Independent Assessment Commission (IAC), which is looking at the 14-19 age range, is hosted by the National Education Union (NEU), a campaigner for reform.

The IAC has ten commissioners, including Dame Alison Peacock of the Chartered College of Teaching and Olly Newton of the Edge Foundation think-tank. It is chaired by Louise Hayward, professor of educational assessment at the University of Glasgow. In

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"We must not throw out the baby with the bathwater – our exams are rated throughout the world"

an interim report, the commission proposed five principles for assessment, including being more inclusive and future-facing, with a "New ERA" of "equitable, reliable assessment". The full report arrives next month.

I ask Hayward whether the commission will recommend GCSEs be scrapped, but she says she cannot speak before the final report. However, she is clear on one thing: comparable outcomes must go.

The commission, like many others, is significantly motivated by what the Association of School and College Leaders calls "the forgotten third" - the proportion of pupils who do not get a pass in English and maths at the end of secondary school because of the "comparable outcomes" methodology of grade distribution introduced in 2011.

"Qualifications should reflect what a young person has achieved, not be downgraded or advantaged by their year group," Hayward says. She wants a return to criterion-based, rather than comparative, assessment.

Nansi Ellis, the NEU's assistant general secretary, adds that as learners now stay in education until 18, there should be fewer exams in year 11. "There's no reason you should have to bank everything at age 16. Instead, you could bank some things, at different times, and not always through a written exam."

'Teachers want more involvement in assessment'

The Future of Qualifications and Assessment research project, set up by the education giant Pearson, is another player in the debate. It has a 25-strong "independent expert panel", including academy trust bosses, Lord Blunkett, the former education secretary, and Sir

Michael Wilshaw, the former chief inspector.

The focus is once more on 14-19 and an interim report out in June, which claimed to bring together the views of 6,000 stakeholders, found "young people want something to show for their years of learning". However, it also found teachers "want more involvement in assessment" and overall "there is too much weight on exams".

Sharon Hague, a senior vice-president at Pearson, says the consultation revealed that "accountability is a limiter. The way school performance is measured limits schools being able to give children a completely free choice."

On comparable outcomes, she adds: "I'm not saying there aren't changes we can make to how assessment operates to make it more equitable. But that's obviously not something exam boards can do alone."

Third, there is The Times Education Commission, which includes Lucy Heller, the chief executive of Ark Schools. Assessment will be discussed, she believes, but she shares her own thoughts with *Schools Week*.

"I'm really keen we don't throw out the baby with the bathwater – our exams are rated throughout the world." But she is also concerned by a model in which some pupils leave without a sense of their strengths.

"I'm never clear why we don't use the system of music grading [for instruments] for modern foreign languages or other subjects. So rather than a GCSE [grade] in French, you would have a ladder in language

training." It's a version of "stage not age" assessment, she says.

This idea crops up again as a popular solution for that "forgotten third" in other groups.

Soft skills trial rolled out across trusts

The Rethinking Assessment group was launched a year ago by Hyman, who is co-director of the Big Education Academy Trust, in partnership with the Edge Foundation. He believes a "comprehensive learner profile" in which pupils bank credits and achievements across projects, subjects and skills throughout their school career will allow them more insight into their strengths, and be useful to employers.

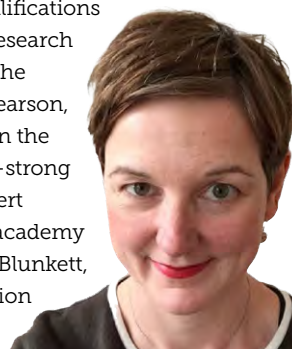
"Employers are spending millions on what they call strengths-based assessment, so we're looking to see how we could bring that into schools."

The group is also putting the new ideas into practice: this year assessment pilots will begin across schools on "ways of creating a holistic umbrella qualification that recognises the strengths of every child", Hyman says. *Schools Week* understands that Academies Enterprise Trust is also interested in exploring ways of recognising wider pupil achievements and assessing oracy skills.

The idea that "soft skills" should not or cannot be rigorously and reliably assessed makes no sense, he says, given that the early years framework requires staff to assess these skills in toddlers. "We've got this weird anomaly where when they're four-years-old, we think it matters, but then, for some reason, not later."

The frantic circumstances of the pandemic also does not prove teacher assessment is unreliable, he says. After all, Ofqual's own research in 2018 showed one in four exam script grades at GCSE and A-level was wrong.

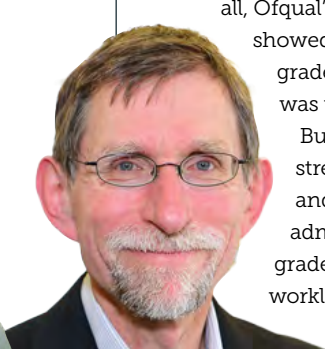
But what about teacher stress? Last month Ofqual and the government admitted teacher assessed grades had had "significant workload implications for teachers".



Julie McCulloch



Nansi Ellis



Tim Oates

LONG READ

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Groups not running a commission or review have also put forward their thinking on paper.

The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) is running a Bridge to the Future series, or think-piece papers, including "Coherence and Systemness: The Future of Assessment and Qualifications".

Steve Rollett, its deputy chief executive, says his organisation is cautious about some suggestions. "The risk of not assessing at 16 is we could end up with a narrower set of qualifications only at 18." There's also a "difference between saying we ought to develop soft skills in children, and saying we ought to assess them".

However, CST thinks the number of exams children have to sit needs to be thought about. Staged assessment might be useful in some subjects, he says.

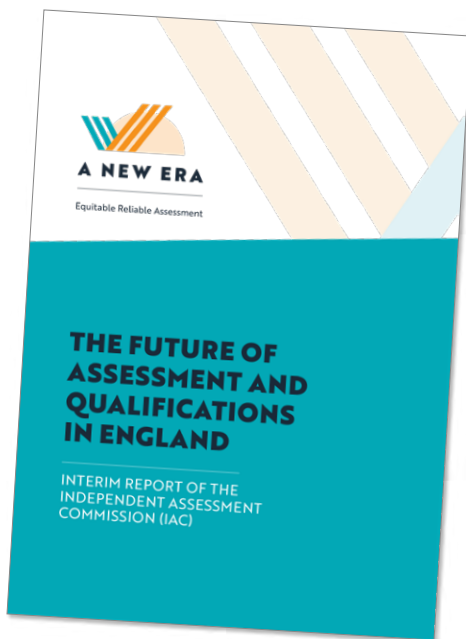
A "Blueprint for a fairer education system", published in June by the Association of School and College Leaders, suggests reducing assessment in primary schools to just a year 1 phonics test and year 6 SATs test.

The association also wants to tackle the "forgotten third" through national assessments set by a curriculum review body on a ten-year cycle. "The slower pace of curriculum change would mean assessments change less often, and then comparable outcomes becomes less necessary," says Julie McCulloch, the director of policy at the association.

Like others, she calls for "adaptive testing" on digital devices, which presents questions in response to an individual pupil's performance, so reducing a sense of failure as well as stretching high-attainers.

Calls for 'caution' over exam replacements

There are, of course, warning voices too – although they do not appear to have mobilised as have their

**"It's a conversation about not putting all our eggs in the exams basket"**

opponents, despite flaws in many of the proposed reforms.

A version of assessing children "when they are ready" was piloted in single level tests in 2007, says Carole Willis, the chief executive at the National Foundation for Educational Research.

She said a range of concerns were raised at the time. More tests would be needed for children at every level throughout their schooling, the curriculum and teaching could be distorted, costs would be higher and

children could end up taking tests many times in order to 'pass'.

Removing comparable outcomes is also tricky because "some mechanism is needed to maintain standards, and ensure that exams and grading decisions remain consistent over time - because the questions change every year", she said.

Meanwhile, Tim Oates, the director of assessment research and development at Cambridge Assessment, says that qualifications and exams in England "have supported a whole series of helpful functions. They structure learning, support selection, give students and teachers an idea of standards and depth of treatment of topics and ideas, motivate young people and help the state look at the quality of education".

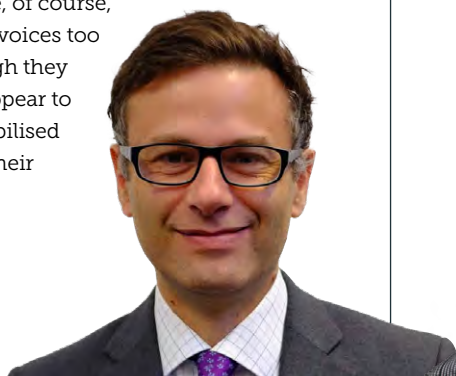
For many of these reasons, the top performing education systems have high-stakes assessment at 16, he says. "The idea we're an outlier just isn't accurate at all."

Colin Hughes, the chief executive of exam board AQA, also warns there "just isn't a huge groundswell of desire to abandon 16-plus examinations". A report on GCSEs from AQA out this week found 73 per cent of pupils surveyed were glad they did GCSEs – but they would also like to be assessed on a broader range of skills.

Both are concerned, though, by the impact too many exams at once have on mental health.

Everyone is agreed a conversation must be had. It's an exciting conversation, but there are some oversights, with more focus on GCSEs than primary assessment, and little mention of assessment of SEND pupils. It's also perhaps surprising that there is no official group set up to retain the current system.

"We must hasten slowly," smiles Heller.



Peter Hyman



Lucy Heller



Sharon Hague

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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The work of schools to close attainment gaps becomes all the harder with every child who falls into poverty, writes the NEU's new president, Daniel Kebede

The decision to cut Universal Credit by £20 a week makes a mockery of Boris Johnson's commitment to "level up". It will plunge half a million more people into poverty, including 200,000 children, which means it isn't just a decision about household budgets but one with profound educational repercussions.

This move goes against the warnings of charities, doctors, economists and politicians across the political spectrum. Even Iain Duncan Smith, a former Conservative leader and the architect of Universal Credit, has called for a U-turn on this decision. But his appeal to "do the right thing" has also been roundly ignored.

As someone who has worked in schools for the past decade, I know that household income determines educational outcomes more than anything else. The past 18 months or so have pointedly proven the deep-seated link between economic and educational inequalities.

Yet government policy is hitting those most in need the hardest. People receiving Universal Credit, which subsidises the low pay of millions of workers (including many who have played a heroic role as key workers during the pandemic) will now face painful and life-altering decisions about how to provide not luxuries but the very basics of subsistence for their families: food, clothing, heating.

Children have been long forgotten in the policy-making decisions of this government. Children starting year 9 this term and preparing to pick their GCSE options were born in the wake of the financial crisis. The political context of their whole lives has been



DANIEL
KEBEDE

President,
National Education Union

The Universal Credit cut is also a cut to education

one of budget cuts, wage stagnation and austerity.

This sustained austerity prior to the pandemic had a deeply damaging impact on the life chances of those born into low-income families. In the pre-Covid year of 2019-20 we saw child poverty rise to 4.3 million. Had

alarming rise, we have witnessed the situation get increasingly worse. Under this government's stewardship, the lives of millions of children are increasingly resembling a modern-day Charles Dickens novel. The fact that one in five schools is now also a foodbank should be to

"To our shame, one in five schools is also a foodbank"

Covid never emerged, it was expected to exceed 5 million that year. The Resolution Foundation has predicted that one in three children will be living in poverty by the time of the next general election.

And instead of addressing this

our national shame. Without urgent action, it is likely to get worse.

Schools and colleges do their utmost to support children and their families in need, but they cannot do this on their own. Funding cuts to local authority and school



budgets have all but wiped out access to professional services and desperately needed support, including the decimation of child mental health services.

The government rejected its own former Covid catch-up tsar's recommendation of £15 billion for education recovery. Instead of Sir Kevan Collins's plan, a piecemeal approach has been put in place that will hinder teachers' efforts to meet the learning and emotional needs of their pupils. So unconvinced was Sir Kevan that this alternative approach would come anywhere near tackling the long-standing issues exacerbated by Covid that he resigned his post. And what lesson did the government learn by that? Not to have a catch-up tsar, of course. We are told they have no intention of replacing him.

Child poverty prevents us from flourishing as a society. The skilled workforce of the future is lost. Artists, doctors, scientists and inventors are lost. Lives are lost.

Our children and young people deserve so much better. One Conservative commentator was heard this week saying the UC cut would encourage people to "pick themselves up by their bootstraps". All I hear in that is blaming the victims of yesterday's child poverty, while justifying today's.

We know that poverty is policy responsive. And if we can't expect policies to reduce it from this government, we should at least be able to expect policies that don't increase it.

We ask the chancellor to "do the right thing" by our communities and our schools. Reinstate the £20 to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit at the autumn Budget and ensure families on legacy benefits are included.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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JOHN STEVENSON

Northern Research Group of Conservative MPs

Rishi Sunak must extend the pupil premium to level up our schools

Levelling up must mean tackling persistent inequalities in our school system, and the spending review offers an opportunity to do just that, writes John Stevenson MP

The seismic changes delivered by the pandemic have created a unique opportunity to implement new policies in our schools for the benefit of all children, but particularly for those in the most disadvantaged communities. Issues over free meals and digital access have captured the nation's attention, and schools' efforts to keep children safe, well and learning have been widely praised.

So now is the moment to put education at the heart of the prime minister's levelling up agenda, to close the attainment gap and to provide headteachers with the powers they need to deliver that promise.

The Northern Research Group of Conservative MPs and the Centre for Progressive Policy have recently released a policy paper on how the government can go about delivering this policy priority, and it has further support for our schoolchildren at its heart.

Our report shows that the north west and north east of England

exhibit the poorest educational attainment at key stage 4, while the south east has the highest educational gap between children of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged backgrounds. These persistent educational inequalities must be tackled now if levelling up is to become a reality.

their future children too. It's a cycle that must be broken.

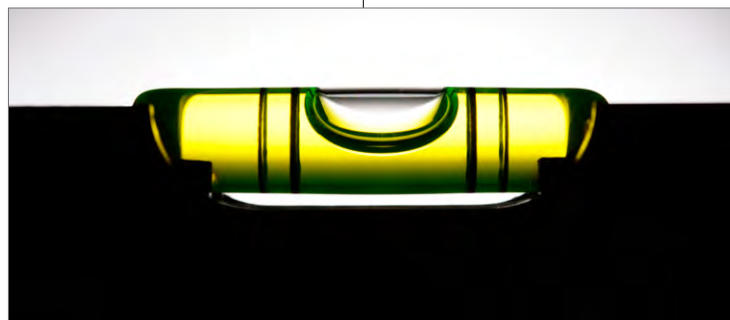
To do this, we are calling on the government to put in place an expanded pupil premium. This extended funding would be targeted at all primary-age children from families whose household income falls under £24,400, benefitting 1.3 million more children, with northern regions receiving the most investment. This would cost an additional £2bn, taking the total cost of the pupil premium from £2.4bn in 2020/21, to £4.4bn.

The pupil premium is one of the signature achievements of the Conservative-led governments since 2010. Extending it is a true Conservative policy, and can play a key role in tackling the educational attainment gap both between and within places.

“ This policy would benefit 1.3 million more children ”

Take my own county, for example. Cumbria has great schools and great teachers. But in spite of their best efforts, as is true across the north of England, many children here are trapped in a cycle of poor educational attainment. Through no fault of their own, they face a future of insecure, poorly paid employment. It's bad for them, bad for the wider economy, and ultimately bad for

Central to the policy's success over the past decade is the fact that it gives money directly to schools. We firmly believe – and this, too, is true to Conservative values – that headteachers are best placed to know what their schools and their pupils need. As is made clear in our report, the NRG and CPP both strongly believe that decisions should be made by those who



are closest to the children who will benefit from them. Whitehall bureaucrats, well-meaning though they doubtless are, are simply too far removed from local communities and their schoolchildren.

Putting the power into headteachers' hands allows them to prioritise their schools' needs, whether that's attracting staff with higher salaries to fill shortages, increasing the number of teaching assistants working with specific students or on targeted interventions, or making educationally important extracurricular activities accessible for all pupils.

We know that education is integral to levelling up. Ensuring all children have access to high-quality education is absolutely foundational to breaking the cycle of insecure work, low wages and even poor health, which disadvantaged communities across the country consistently experience.

We also know that it will require substantial investments of both money and time. The prime minister recently announced it would take ten years. So, knowing the rewards will be worth the commitment, we now need to know how much government is willing to spend.

Expanding the pupil premium to all primary school-aged children from lower-income families would represent a significant step toward remedying these persistent inequalities for the long term. It would not only form a cornerstone for the wider levelling up agenda, but secure its lasting legacy.

My northern Conservative parliamentary colleagues and I hope to see this reflected in the plans the chancellor sets out in the forthcoming spending review.

Opinion

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RACHEL SMITH

Headteacher, Beaconsfield High School

Retention: adult bullying must be confronted head on

Heads are completely alone in the face of intimidation from parents and their communities, writes Rachel Smith, and it's silently stealing too many careers

It is a sad fact that anyone who enters the teaching profession today can expect to face some degree of hostility, harassment or verbal abuse at some point during their career.

To a certain extent, this is to be expected when working with children and young people. This doesn't mean it is acceptable, by any means; but teachers do have training to deal with such incidents, and schools have policies designed to help staff navigate and manage them.

But it should go without saying that schools should never be expected to deal with similar bad behaviour from adults. Yet the threatening letters from anti-vaccination campaigners discussed in these pages last week are just the tip of an iceberg. Threatening, abusive and aggressive behaviours aimed at school staff have become much too common.

Not only are such events extremely damaging to the members of staff concerned – to

their mental and physical health, as well as their careers – they often leave a damaging legacy for a school's reputation, too.

On a pragmatic level alone, they suck up hours of valuable time and resources in correspondence

position to preserve their own wellbeing.

Over the past couple of years, I've been repeatedly presented with that choice myself. A sustained campaign has seen me accused of abusing my power, intimidating staff, lying to governors and being obstructive. My team and I have had to deal with countless emails, freedom of information and subject access requests, which has taken hundreds of hours – all while coping with the pandemic.

We refer to our school as a 'telling' school; anyone who is aware of harassment, victimisation or bullying can feel confident about speaking up. It's a culture of transparency I have worked hard to

“ I realised there was no one to turn to for help

and legal advice. And to add insult to injury, in many cases the organisations that exist to protect school leaders and teachers are unable to act against or stop the perpetrators. Individuals are often simply left with the impossible choice of continuing a demoralising battle or stepping down from their

create and to model, so our board of governors have done their due diligence. No fewer than eight separate investigations by them and external professional investigators have found no evidence to uphold any of the allegations. Yet the campaign continues. Only my departure, it seems, will satisfy



these campaigners.

I know, too, many other heads and teachers for whom, among all the many pressures of the job, such intimidation and aggression has been the deciding factor in standing down from their positions. It's the unspoken truth of the retention crisis and it must be confronted.

There is frustration in our communities, and schools are left on their own to meet this frustration face-to-face. We need to deal with that underlying problem, but in the meantime, we need to be safer.

Enough is enough. We have already normalised signage that states "Abusive behaviour will not be tolerated" in GP surgeries, hospitals and on public transport. It will be a tragic day when we see similar notices in school receptions.

With accountability must also come a culture of support. Yet the Department for Education is more often seen scapegoating local decision-makers than taking a lead on solving issues. When it is supportive, there is not enough press coverage to show that support. And the DfE's solutions are often seen as overruling local decisions and undermining heads' autonomy.

Frightened of inviting only further criticism, heads continue to operate alone and hope for the best. It's a truism to say that leadership is lonely, but the job has never felt lonelier than when I realised there was no one to turn to for help to make things stop.

We deserve better. We deserve the openness, transparency and unconditional support that comes from a culture of telling. We need it in our schools, and we need it for our schools.

So let this be the start.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Pupils are back in the classroom but online learning is now part of the furniture, and that means barriers to access are still a big issue, explains Reka Budai

Deprivation was a barrier to children getting an education during school closures. That's not news. We all know of schools that had to print and post worksheets in the early days of the pandemic, and of pupils who struggled to join live lessons because they were sharing one computer with two other siblings.

But what is new is some emerging evidence that graphically illustrates the scale of the problem. We have been going through our anonymous user analytics at Oak National Academy and cross-referencing it with other research to try and deconstruct the pattern of online learning at the peak of the pandemic and in its aftermath.

What we saw is that pupils in areas of high deprivation faced three particular barriers.

Unequal access to a device

First, they had to have access to a device. An Ofcom study estimated back in November 2020 that between 1 and 1.8 million children (which is at best 11 per cent of all pupils in England) did not have access to a laptop, desktop or tablet at home.

Things did improve during the course of the pandemic. Based on our figures, in May 2020 55 per cent of users accessed Oak from a computer. This rose to 78 per cent a year later, in May 2021.

But unsurprisingly, access to computers was not equal across income groups. The poorest children were less likely to have computers. We saw a nine percentage point gap in computer access between the most deprived and least deprived quintiles



REKA
BUDAI

Research and evaluation
manager, Oak National Academy

The triple jeopardy of deprivation for online learning

of the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index.

After schools opened, this gap reduced to about six percentage points, probably as pupils could use computers in school, and did not have to rely on sharing devices at home.

So why are we so preoccupied with

rising to five times longer if they're on a computer. This stands to reason. Mobile phones are full of distractions that the names of England's rivers or solving simultaneous equations struggle to compete with.

Oak videos were praised by many teachers, who said they were the

“A computer and a data plan are now necessities, not optional extras

the type of device? Because they have a direct bearing on how long a child spends learning.

Not all devices are equal either

This is the second barrier to online learning. A pupil will spend four times longer in an online lesson if they're on a tablet than on a mobile phone,

next best thing to them teaching a lesson themselves. But when pupils had no choice but to view them on a mobile phone, their value diminished. For example, a maths teacher whose pupils largely used mobiles told us they simply could not stick with a recorded Oak lesson without succumbing to digital



diversion. She had to find other ways to teach them.

Streaming isn't free

Finally, even having a state-of-the-art computer is futile if you run out of data halfway through an online lesson. Watching a lesson video on Oak would set back your data allowance by around 250 MB, which will exhaust an average monthly plan within a few days.

We successfully campaigned to have Oak's lessons 'zero-rated' by the telecom giants so pupils got no data charges while on the platform. But it's worth remembering that, by and large, online learning is not free.

And that's why this still matters a great deal, even though schools have fully re-opened. The pandemic has accelerated a drive to more digital and online content in education, from homework and revision to flipped learning. Schools have invested a lot of time and resource into setting themselves up for it, and can see the benefits of sustaining their digital offering. Which means a computer and a data plan are now necessities, not optional extras.

The challenge we've uncovered is significant, and work must now be done to find a solution to match. Making policy isn't our remit, but whether it's extending zero-rating so pupils can freely access high-quality educational content or guaranteeing a laptop and internet for every child (as Scotland has promised), we won't tackle attainment gaps fairly if we don't bridge the digital divide first.



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Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Becoming a Teacher

Author: Alan Newland

Publisher: Crown House Publishing

Reviewer: Amber Smith, Art teacher, Wreake Valley Academy

Becoming a Teacher is about a side of teaching that's often neglected by education books: ethics. It covers morals and responsibilities, but more than that, it's a deep dive into the ins and outs of how teaching changes lives – teachers' as well as pupils'. It raises misconceptions about what teaching is and addresses what is expected of those in the profession.

And for all the seriousness of the topic, Alan Newland writes about it with a genuinely friendly, likeable tone. He illustrates his dissection of the power a teacher has to change and improve young people's lives – and the corresponding risks – with charming anecdotes. For example, I particularly enjoyed his tale of losing multiple children on the London Underground, and another about a young boy who tried to buy him a thank-you bottle of whiskey on a school trip.

But if you're looking for something immediately pragmatic, then you'll have to skip to the concluding chapter, which explores "*Becoming a teacher of character*". It's a love letter to the profession, with some really helpful tips for teaching and, just as importantly, modelling what it is to be a good person.

This book is quite unlike the many texts that I have spent the last year and a half being directed to read as an early-career teacher. There are no clear, workable instructions for how to be a better teacher. It does not have bitesize, shareable content or dual-coded classroom choreography.

But while *Becoming a Teacher* does not build skills, it does build an understanding of the moral weight and noble character of the career. That makes it both terrifying and empowering in equal measures, and in a sector struggling with retaining its early-career workforce, the latter is surely useful. If you're an ECT struggling under a heavy workload and despairing in the wake of that year 9 class, an empowering love letter to teaching might be exactly what you need.

Likewise, a potential PGCE applicant would benefit from Newland's reassuring narration. But underneath that, his representation of the profession is somewhat daunting. If you read this and still want to sign up, then you are in the right place.

A more unlikely readership, but one who would greatly benefit from it, are those relatives of mine, and the tabloid journalists they read, who say things like "but you clock off at 3pm, it can't be that hard". I'm much better prepared to stand my ground in future interactions of this nature thanks to Newland.

I would not, however, recommend this book to a trainee. While Newland is a warm and likeable writer, he is definitely not direct. This is a long read and lengthy deliberations on whether teaching can or should be labelled a profession are quite divorced from the induction experience.

Having recently completed my own SCITT year, I can confidently say that I would not have had the time to read *Becoming a Teacher*. In fact, I did not have time to read much at all. A book such as this is a luxury rather than a necessity, and

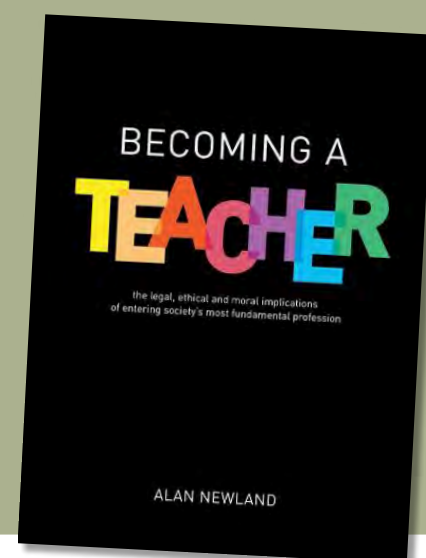
I am in no doubt that a book full of clear, observable, simple instructions to be a better teacher should beat it to the top of the reading pile every time.

That's not a criticism of the book, but its marketing appears to target student teachers and that seems to me to be a glaring problem. *Becoming a Teacher* is a challenging yet worthwhile read. But timing is key, and thrusting this on to trainees could prove counter-productive.

Having said that, for an ECT or an experienced teacher struggling to find their purpose under the weight of a heavy workload, it could be transformative.

Few education books hold the same power and relevance for primary teachers as for their secondary colleagues, or for art teachers as for their maths counterparts. *Becoming a Teacher* is one of them.

So, if you're already in the job and you find yourself needing a motivational top up, buy this book.



Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is
Melissa Jane, class teacher, Castle School,
Cambridge

@MelJaneSEN

Dear Will Quince, welcome to SEND
@TaniaLT for @SpecialNdsJungle

It's a new term, a new school year, and the leaves are falling — and just as seasons change, so do education ministers. This week I have read several posts and threads addressed to Nadhim Zahawi, the new secretary of state for education.

But of course cabinet reshuffles don't just affect the top brass — junior ministers have been reshuffled too. Will Quince, the new minister for children and families, holds the "poisoned chalice" (as Tania Tirraoro puts it here!) of responsibility for SEND provision. The post was previously held by Vicky Ford and Zahawi, neither of whom were especially popular among families of young people with SEND, and Tirraoro does not hold out much hope that Mr Quince will fare any better.

Instead, she anticipates the moment when he will "skip away at the end of [his] tenure with barely concealed relief" — reflecting the conception shared by many that the SEND brief is neither relished nor taken seriously by ambitious politicians. If our new minister wants to challenge this conception, Tirraoro reminds him that he has access to "an army

TOP BLOGS of the week

of real experts — disabled children, young people, their parents, SEND practitioners and sector leaders — and they all know more than you".

Poppie

Sharon for @Wouldntchangea1

It seems fitting, then, to feature two contrasting posts about young people in the SEND system and their experiences in school. October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month, and the Wouldn't Change A Thing campaign (responsible for several beautiful campaign videos which have been a firm favourite in my classrooms over the years) is featuring "a day in the life" of a different young person with Down Syndrome every day.

Poppie, who is eight, has a triple diagnosis of Down Syndrome, autism and ADHD, and her mum Sharon describes the positive experience she's having in her specialist school with a new teacher. Transitions into new classes can often be challenging, but Poppie's new teacher has won her heart via her biggest passion, *Strictly Come Dancing*.

As someone who spent much of last week stomping around the playground pretending to be a zombie, I understand the power of building relationships via your students' special interests, however specific!

Not fine in school: Week 2

@blossoming_autism (on Instagram) for @stephstwowgirls

Blossom's daughter, however, has had a completely different experience of school, which she documents as part of the Steph's Two Girls blog's *Not Fine In School* series. Blossom (who writes anonymously, so I'm going to use her Instagram name) describes being told by a SEN caseworker to "keep pushing [her daughter] until she has a breakdown. We need to see it happen."

When the breakdown came, Blossom had to withdraw her daughter from school and begin home educating her. This is the kind of situation referenced by Tania Tirraoro in her "to-do list" for the new SEND minister: "Few parents of a child with SEND set out to teach them at home unless they have no choice because there is no school offered that is suitable."

Blossom's post also brings up an issue close to my heart — the narrowing of the curriculum for children with SEND in mainstream schools, so they can focus on English and maths. Few would disagree that English and maths are very important, but all children have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum, including art, music and learning about other languages and cultures. As Blossom says, all children have the "capacity to enjoy a rich and varied life".

A stark expression of the challenge, then, for any politician who wants to make a real difference in the SEND system — to try and turn school from a "survival operation" to an "educational, joyful and fulfilling experience" for every learner.

CLICK ON REVIEWS TO VIEW BLOGS +

Research



The Chartered College of Teaching will review a research development each half term. Contact @CatScutt if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

Is there a better, or best, classroom layout?

Cat Scutt, director of education and research, Chartered College of Teaching

A primary headteacher recently asked on Twitter what research says about the most effective classroom layout, noting that her teachers had enjoyed teaching in rows during the pandemic. It's a question that feels like it should have a simple answer — and yet, as with so many things in education, it's a little more complicated than that.

When one group of researchers interviewed teachers about what influenced their decisions around seating plans and classroom layouts, each teacher gave between two and 19 different considerations! These were primarily academic, but issues concerning behaviour management also came out highly.

And yet robust research in this area seems limited. There are remarkably few empirical studies that directly look at desk layout. Wannarka and Ruhl's 2008 research found only eight studies in the previous 28 years that compared at least two of the three common seating layouts.

These three 'typical' seating arrangements are rows, clusters and U-shape (or horseshoe), and the first thing to note is that they lend themselves to different modes of instruction.

Rows are typically seen as the best layout for direct instruction approaches. Pupils all face the front, able to see and hear the teacher clearly, and the teacher is likewise able to see and hear them all clearly. Off-task behaviours may be reduced, and an older piece of research found that while students produced work of equal quality in clusters, they produced a significantly greater quantity in rows.

In comparison, a cluster layout may encourage more interaction during group work. A U-shape may offer some of the advantages of each, encouraging more interaction



but also having a general focus on the teacher. Marx, Fuhrer and Hartig found that students asked their teacher significantly more questions when they were seated in a U-shape than in rows.

Classroom layout clearly also has implications for behaviour management. Wannarka and Ruhl found that in almost all studies they looked at, on-task behaviour increased and off-task behaviour reduced in rows when compared to clusters. The one exception was where the task in question was a brainstorming activity, emphasising the point that the goals we are aiming for must be a part of the decision.

Other aspects of effective behaviour management and learning support are important considerations too. For example, it is likely to be helpful to have access around all sides of a row, cluster or horseshoe layout. This enables strategic placement as part of "walking the room" and ensures teachers are able to see and assess work in progress.

But what about where individual pupils sit? Are there any helpful considerations for seating plans, within whatever desk layout one chooses? Some research suggests that students in the front rows tend to be more attentive, are more likely to ask questions and to participate actively, though there is an argument this may be a case of self-selection in seating rather than a

causal relationship.

Of course, the basics of a seating plan will include placing students with particular requirements appropriately so they have access to the resources they need. Setting a seating plan is also in and of itself a behaviour management strategy, communicating clear expectations and allowing the teacher to group or separate particular students.

Interestingly, one study also found that teacher-defined seating plans, in comparison both to free choice and to randomly assigned seats, led to improved outcomes overall — suggesting that (unsurprisingly) teachers are best placed to make these decisions.

So the best that can be said is that the research is patchy. But what's certain is that it's best to have a seating plan, whatever the layout. And that's reassuring, because we don't always have a choice about the latter, particularly if we teach in multiple classrooms.

Of course, layouts also tend to be subject- or phase-dependent. Labs, IT rooms, music studios and early years settings, for example, typically have their own distinct approaches — and expert teachers who are adept at making the most of these.

Learning from them remains a great bet for developing the routines that are at the heart of effective classroom management.



Week in

Westminster

Your guide to what's happening in the corridors of power

MONDAY:

Remember how we used to bleat on about Gavin Williamson (remember him?) incorrectly claiming that the tutoring revolution would reach six million *pupils*?

Just in case you need a reminder: the true commitment is that government will provide six million tutoring *packages*.

In reality, pupils are likely to get multiple packages – so claiming that six million kids would get support was baloney.

Nevertheless, despite us banging on about it, Labour raising it in parliament and his own bleeding department saying it was incorrect – Gav keeping using the six million pupils figure.

Anyway, hurrah for our new education secretary Nadhim Zahawi.

In his maiden speech this week, Zahawi used the right term. Finally!

TUESDAY:

Anti-vaxxers have been disrupting schools for weeks now. But don't worry heads – no need to call the cops, just show them this *very strongly-worded statement* from the Department for Education instead.

"The education secretary has been clear that spreading conspiracy theories and protesting outside the school gates is unacceptable," a Twitter post said.

Pow, that'll stop them alright.

WEDNESDAY:

Tory welfare chief Thérèse Coffey has copped it after being filmed belting out "Now I've had the time of my life" on karaoke at the Conservative Party

conference. Hours later her government cut the £20-a-week Universal Credit uplift – a lifeline for many families in poverty.

But less reported was the Tory MP singing alongside her: Will Quince, the new children's minister, who is responsible for many of the vulnerable children who will now feel the effects of that cut.

A massive 3.5 million children in the UK live in households that receive UC payments.

**

You wouldn't know that three-quarters of teachers were women, looking at the DfE's ministerial advisers. There are eight men, and at least seven of them are white. We must have missed the time machine that took us back to the 1950s.

**

The global takeover led by Her Maj Amanda Spielman continues at pace. After outlining plans earlier this year to increase Ofsted's SEND inspection remit, fully inspect schools' safeguarding and also get stuck into multi-academy trusts – she now wants to take on... the telly.

She told the Times Education Commission that the television watershed is meaningless because of YouTube, so schools have a duty to teach boys not to send intimate pictures to girls.

"In a society where programmes like [Channel 4's] *Naked Attraction* are broadcast for all to see, and watersheds mean nothing in a world of television on demand and YouTube, it's not surprising that a lot of teenage boys, for example,

are thoroughly confused about why sending girls 'dick pics' is not an acceptable thing to do."

THURSDAY:

A week is a short time in 'Week in Westminster'. After winning plaudits on Monday, the Nadster has been put on the naughty step.

He's made a big deal of following the evidence since being appointed. But living up to those standards has not started well.

When asked on *BBC Breakfast* how many children were in attendance at school last week, Zahawi claimed it was 91 per cent – which is actually the number of kids in class at the start of term. The figure for last week was actually 89.5 per cent. Doh!

OK, OK. It's just one slip of the tongue, so we'll let him off.

Oh, erm, just seconds later Zahawi then claimed teacher starting salaries are "pretty much almost" at £30,000.

Eh? First we've heard. Pay scales this month show the minimum starting salary for teachers outside of London is £25,714.

Oh well. We can let two slip-ups slide, right?

Oh nooo. It's happened again. Completing a hat-trick of blunders in the same interview, Zahawi said the average salary of a teacher is now £41,800.

But the DfE's own Get into Teaching website says that in 2020-21 the average salary for a primary school teacher is £36,900, and £39,900 at secondary!





HEADTEACHER

Wycombe High School's Board of Trustees is seeking an inspirational headteacher for this nationally and internationally renowned girls' grammar school. The current headteacher is retiring in August 2022, after almost 14 highly successful years in post, during which time the school has gone from strength to strength.

Applications are welcomed from existing headteachers wishing to develop their leadership impact and/or strong experienced deputy headteachers. This is an exciting opportunity for a forward-thinking, driven leader who will embrace the ethos and values of this ambitious school and take it to new heights. Applicants must be dedicated to our unwavering commitment to girls' education. Wycombe High School is a national Initial Teacher Training provider, operating an innovative state-independent sector partnership across England and a Mathematics Hub.

We go above and beyond for our staff, and are proud to work alongside Mind, having achieved their workplace Gold Award in 2020-2021 for 'successfully embedding mental health into our policies and practices, demonstrating a long-term and in-depth commitment to staff mental health'. Informal visits in advance of application are welcomed.

For full details and an application form please visit our school's website or contact Mrs Maggie Brookling, HR Manager

**Closing date for applications: 8am on Monday 1 November 2021
Interviews will be held: week commencing Monday 8 November 2021 (We reserve the right to close the vacancy if we have sufficient applications)**

Wycombe High School and WHSAT are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The successful applicant will be subject to a disclosure of criminal records at an enhanced level and must provide proof of the right to work in the UK.

Marlow Road,
High Wycombe, Bucks,
HP11 1TB
01494 523961
www.whs.bucks.sch.uk | mbrookling@whs.bucks.sch.uk



Together we build brighter futures for our young people with special educational needs.

The Ascent Academies' Trust is a vibrant and forward thinking Multi Academy Trust comprising four special academies, all of which are based in the North East of England. The Executive Team shares a strong, strategic view of all academies in the Trust and work in partnership to share best practice and improve outcomes for all students. We currently have 400+ employees who work across our four academies, including a centralised Corporate Team.

At Ascent, our core values of collaboration, high expectations, equity and respect permeate all that we do. We work within the Ethical Leadership Framework. From the moment a new member of staff arrives in our Trust, we ask them to live these values:

Collaboration

As leaders, we help each other as we are all responsible for children in our Trust. Our Trust is only as strong as its' weakest academy and therefore we actively support Trust wide improvement and hold one another to account courageously.

Equity

We work to support each other as helping a member of our team is helping ourselves. Equitable, fair treatment of all our colleagues and young people is at the heart of what we do. We make decisions openly and transparently and always in the best interests of our young people.

Respect

We are honest about our motivations. We treat everyone with kindness and respect. We are loyal and have the courage to do the right thing. We are respectful, polite and good tempered at all times. We are genuine in our relationships with staff and families.

Continual Improvement

We have high expectations for ourselves and others. We focus on personal and professional development, knowing that we can always be better and do better. We grow people so that we have the capacity and ability to persevere with even the hardest work.

POST 1: DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMY (TL&A)

POST 2: DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMY (PASTORAL)

Scale: L12 – L16

Location: Academies across the Ascent Academies Trust

Due to the promotion of the current post holders, the Board of Trustees are looking to appoint excellent, experienced leaders to support improvement in our academies. The successful candidates will be experienced leaders in the field of special education, possess a sound understanding of SEND legislation and have the ability to engage and motivate others towards a clear vision. The successful applicants will have strategic direction and leadership of a key area within the academy in which they are placed. Additionally, the Deputy Heads of Academy will make a major contribution to strategic developments across the Trust. This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to a dynamic, positive and ambitious leadership team.

For an informal discussion about these posts please contact Carolyn Morgan, Chief Executive on Tel: 07717 494437

To apply for either or both of these post please follow the links below, then please click on apply now and use/create your NE Jobs account. If you are interested in both posts, you will need to submit an application to each post:

POST 1: DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMY (TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT)

https://www.northeastjobs.org.uk/job/Deputy_Head_of_Academy_Teaching_Learning_Assessment_/213677

POST 2: DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMY (PASTORAL)

https://www.northeastjobs.org.uk/job/Deputy_Head_of_Academy_Pastoral_/213675

Closing Date: Monday 11th October at 9.00am

Interview: Tuesday 19th October 2021



HEADTEACHER

KIPPAX NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Salary: L13- L19 (£56,721 - £65,735) dependent on experience
Required: January 2022



The opportunity:

The Board of Trustees at the Brigshaw Learning Partnership are looking to appoint an enthusiastic inspirational new Headteacher to one of our schools.

Our excellent reputation is achieved because the curriculum is based on powerful knowledge and rich learning experiences that enthuse and engage children. Our learning goes beyond the national curriculum and enables children to become confident and responsible citizens ready for the wider world.

We believe that working together is the best way forward. We are never content with an 'it'll do' attitude as we firmly believe that commitment is needed from all partners in education, pupils, staff and parents, if success is to be achieved.

Our priority is to establish a culture of continuous improvement. We expect all our staff to commit to being 'better, every day', in our mission to provide a transformative education for our children.

We are searching for an inspirational leader who can:

- continue to grow a powerful aspirational and values-driven culture where all children can succeed
- continue to embed a rigorous academic curriculum for all
- provide enriching experiences for our children to enable them to become responsible citizens

We would strongly encourage interested applicants to arrange an informal and confidential discussion about the role. Please contact Aidan Sadgrove on Tel: 01132878925/07713234203 or email: sadgrovea01@brigshawtrust.com to arrange a suitable time.

Application packs are available from Katie Hollis, EPM, email: katie.hollis@epm.co.uk or tel: 07731 082859.

Closing Date: 18 October 2021 at 12pm

Interview Date(s): w/c 18 October 2021

This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to have an up to date DBS disclosure



Headteacher

The Directors of BMAT and Governors of the School are seeking to appoint a wellqualified, dynamic and passionate Headteacher to lead Little Parndon Primary Academy, on the next stage of its exciting journey. Little Parndon Primary Academy is a two form entry primary school within BMAT and is a happy, warm and friendly school which takes children from the age of 5 – 11 - rated Good by OFSTED. Located in Harlow, a very exciting town to work, with affordable property that can be reached from London by car/train in less than 30 minutes.

All schools are wedded to the co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, equality, democracy, equity and solidarity and are happy and exciting places to work.

Little Parndon Primary Academy benefits from an Assistant CEO, who will work with the successful candidate to ensure effective induction into the role. On-going support and training will be tailored to the experience of the post-holder, providing an ideal opportunity for a senior leader, who aspires to move into their first Headship.

The Headteacher will work with the CEO, the Assistant CEO and the other Headteachers, to secure the delivery of outstanding teaching and learning experiences for all children in all of the five primary schools.

Please visit <https://www.bmat-trust.org/> for further information or email recruitment@bmatrust.org.uk

Headteacher Vacancy



Audley Primary School | West Midlands

We are seeking a truly inspirational leader to join the largest school within our Trust. In addition to an impressive track record of school improvement you will have superb leadership skills and the credibility to motivate and empower others. You will have a clear vision for rapid school improvement and the ability to challenge robustly and constructively alongside the knowledge to facilitate success for both pupils and staff.

As a Trust headteacher you will also be an important senior leader within the wider Trust. You will work alongside other school leaders and be fully committed to driving improvement across the Trust through collaborative effort and the sharing of expertise.

If you would like to arrange an informal conversation about this post prior to making an application please call the Trust's Executive Director of School Improvement, James Hill on 07725 984363.

If you wish to apply for this role, please download an application form from the Trust website www.drbignitemat.org

Applications should be addressed to James Hill, Executive Director of

School Improvement and submitted with a covering letter (no more than two sides of A4) outlining your expertise for a headteacher role in the Trust. Once completed, forms can be emailed to: rhawkins@drbignitemat.org

Please note: In line with Safer Recruitment Practice, the successful candidate will be subject to final references before an appointment is formally offered. The Trust is absolutely committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults through its safer recruitment processes. The Trust expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check will be required for this post.

The Trust Board welcomes diversity and is absolutely committed to equal opportunity.

Closing date for applications: Friday 12th November 2021 at 12.00pm

Interview dates: w/c 22nd November 2021

Start date: Easter 2022



Breakfast Club Assistant

From November 2021 or earlier (Fixed Term) – July 2022

Scale 2 (point 03-04) £22,608.00 - £23,016.00 pro-rata term time only

8.00am – 9.00am one hour daily 5 days a week based at either school site



We are looking to appoint a Breakfast Club Assistant to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for the pupils at either one of our sites. You will be responsible for the assistance of the daily management of the breakfast club. The school promotes healthy eating, and you will assist in encouraging pupils to maintain the schools healthy eating ethos, ensuring a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene at all times.

This role also includes assisting in being responsible for the setting up of the club and supervision of pupils at all times, in the Breakfast Club and in the playground until they are collected by their teacher.

HOW TO APPLY: Please download the application pack from the Hackney Learning Trust website, alternatively email: achoudhry@newwavefederation.co.uk or phone 020 7254 1415.



Closing date for applications: **12pm Friday 15th October 2021**
Interview date: **w/c Monday 18th October 2021**



Teaching Assistant

from October 2021 – July 2022 (Fixed-Term)

Scale 4 (point 07-10) £24,279.00 - £25,614.00 pro-rata term time only 30 hours a week

8.45am – 3.45pm



We are looking to appoint teaching assistants to work in classrooms offering 1 to 1 support for children with special educational needs. School SEND based experience is essential.

The role requires someone who is passionate about children's learning and who has a rich knowledge and understanding of how learners learn. Our parents and carers want the very best education for their children and so do we.

Your communication skills will enable you to build a friendly and professional relationship with staff, pupils and parents. If you are an effective communicator, have vision, energy and believe that every child can and will succeed, we would like to meet you.

HOW TO APPLY: Please download the application pack from the Hackney Learning Trust website, alternatively email: achoudhry@newwavefederation.co.uk or phone 020 7254 1415.



Closing date for applications: **12pm Friday 15th October 2021**
Interview date: **w/c Monday 18th October 2021**



Director of HR

Salary: Grade 11, Pt 42 to Pt 45, £45,859 to £48,863
Full time, 37 hours per week
25 days holiday + bank holidays

Closing Date: 28/10/21

This is an exciting opportunity to join a developing Multi-Academy Trust of six schools. The role will be part of the MAT's Executive Team, leading the developing central services function. The Trust's strategic objectives focus on providing the best possible school experience for its pupils and staff, aiming to be the best employer possible. The role will be based in the Omega Teaching Centre, in West Warrington, however the ability to travel to individual schools is a necessity. The purpose of the role is to provide a comprehensive HR service for over 500 staff within the Trust, to lead the HR Central Service team & cover all aspects of people management. HR support is currently provided externally by the Schools People and Payroll by the Warrington Borough Council Payroll Services

For further details visit www.omegamat.co.uk/recruitment



Director of Estates

Salary: Grade 11, Pt 42 to pt 45, £45,859 to £48,863
Full time, 37 hours per week
25 days holiday + bank holidays

Closing date: 28/10/21

This is an exciting opportunity to join a developing Multi-Academy Trust of six schools. The role is intended to be part of the MAT's Executive Team, leading the developing central services function. The role will be based in the Omega Teaching Centre, in West Warrington, however the ability to travel to individual schools is a necessity. The purpose of the role is to establish a comprehensive Estates Central Service for the Trust, creating an effective Estates Strategy and Trust-wide 5-year Capital Plan and reviewing systems and practices in all schools. This role will work in conjunction with school leaders to lead development through across the various sites and cover all aspects of estates management, ensuring the Trust achieves value for money, whilst improving its capital assets.

For further details visit www.omegamat.co.uk/recruitment

new wave
federation

Classroom Teacher

(Main Pay Scale)

One year fixed term November 2021 – August 2022



We are looking for experienced class teachers to join the New Wave Federation who;

- > Are excellent practitioners with creative and innovative approaches
- > Are committed to the delivery of high quality teaching and learning
- > Have SEND experience and working with outside agencies
- > Possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills

We can offer you schools which are;

- > Well-resourced and have high quality curriculum plans and materials
- > Have friendly, dedicated staff with high expectations
- > Have good opportunities for professional development
- > Opportunity to excel in becoming a Subject specialist or Specialist Leader of Education
- > Offer opportunities for a Teaching and Learning Responsibility in SEND (TLR 2B)

HOW TO APPLY: Please download the application pack from the Hackney Learning Trust website, alternatively email: achoudhry@newwavefederation.co.uk or phone 020 7254 1415.



Closing date for applications: **12pm Friday 15th October 2021**
 Interviews **w/c Monday 18th October 2021**

CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS & ASSESSMENT

Education Manager

Salary: £32,100 - £43,000
Location: Cambridge
Vacancy Type: Fixed Term - 12 months



We are looking for an Education Manager to work with trainers to support the delivery of the highest possible quality training for our customers. Working in the teaching and learning team which also leads on planning content for the Cambridge Schools Conferences and is a hub for thought leadership at Cambridge International. This is a varied and challenging opportunity, and it is an exciting time to join this dynamic team and to bring your creativity and experience to shape trainer development and to influence thought leadership for the future.

The closing date for application is 12 October 2021 and interviews are scheduled to take place on 19 and 20 October 2021. We will be updating those interviewed of the outcome by 21 October.

For more information and to apply please go to our website

<https://careers.cambridge.org/jobs/vacancy/education-manager---12-month-fixed-term-contract-cambridge/934/description/>



Assistant Headteacher L1 – L4 (£42,195 - £45,434)

Kind BE Confident Yourself

The Unity Federation, made up of Castleway Primary School and Leasowe Nursery School, are seeking to appoint an Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Early Years to work with the Executive Headteacher to live out our Federation motto of; 'No Child Left Behind'. If you are passionate about improving outcomes for children, have a desire to do your very best and want to be part of an exciting new Senior Leadership Team ready to make both of our schools the best that they can be, then we want to hear from you.

Closing date: Friday, 15th October 2021 at 09:30am

Shortlisting: Friday, 15th October 2021 at 1:30pm

Provisional date for interviews: Thursday, 21st October 2021



Chief Executive Officer

Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust
Birmingham

- **Salary:** circa £120,000
- **Contract Type:** Full Time
- **Organisation Type:** Academy Trust
- **Subject Area:** Education
- **Contract Term:** Permanent
- **Expiry Date:** 11-10-2021

Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust is a family of seven serving diverse and multicultural communities in East Birmingham. We currently comprise 710 employees who work across our 7 academies, including a centralised Core Team.

You must be able to demonstrate a proven track record as a senior executive leader in a complex education, commercial or charitable setting, where you have delivered on the organisation's vision and strategy with clarity and conviction.

Our Trust is a fantastic place to work, made up of colleagues from diverse backgrounds. We pride ourselves on a culture that embraces inclusivity, wellbeing, professional growth, and collaboration, to help our colleagues invest discretionary effort, which leads to positive pupil outcomes.

Closing Date: 11th October 2021 10.00 a.m.

For a candidate information pack, visit the school website:
<https://www.whmat.academy/225/ceo-recruitment>

REGIONAL SCHOOLS COMMISSIONER - EAST OF ENGLAND AND NORTH EAST LONDON

Salary up to £120,000 per annum

Location Cambridge or London with travel in the region, and attendance at meetings in London and other RSC regional offices.



Department
for Education

Dedicated to delivering first-class education to children and young people across England, the Department for Education is a stimulating and rewarding place to work. With over 9700 open academies and free schools, we're looking for an outstanding leader with a track record of significant achievement and delivery, a good understanding of the education landscape both nationally and locally, a commitment to diversity and an ability to lead through change.

You will be part of a strong team of commissioners, making important operational decisions on behalf of the Secretary of State for all academies, free

schools and sponsors in your region. That means monitoring performance of academies and free schools, driving improvements in underperforming schools, facilitating multi academy trust development and growth, and leading on the opening of new free schools. You will also lead a Civil Service regional team that plays a key role in Covid response work, wider school improvement plans and sufficiency of pupil places. Engaging effectively with trust leaders and stakeholders is key, as is commanding respect in support and challenge in the sector.

Please visit [CS Jobs](https://www.gov.uk/jobs) and search for Regional Schools Commissioner.

FOUNDING PRINCIPAL – HOUSTONE SCHOOL

£70,307 – £89,357
FULL TIME, PERMANENT

The trustees of Advantage Schools are seeking to appoint a Principal Designate from Easter 2022 (or earlier by negotiation) for our brand new secondary school, Houstone School.

Houstone School is due to open in September 2022 in Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire.

We are interested to hear from experienced school leaders with an established track record, who possess the knowledge and expertise to lead a school in line with our trust ambition of offering a world-class education to pupils of all backgrounds.

Informal and exploratory conversations are welcomed – please contact Sophie Heron – sheron@advantageschools.co.uk for an informal and confidential conversation with Stuart Lock, CEO. We encourage in person or virtual visits to the schools in our trust in line with the most recent school risk assessments.

To apply, please download and complete the application form available on our school website: www.houstoneschool.co.uk

Closing Date: 9.00am, October 11 2021



**LANCASTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS**



Lancaster University School of Mathematics

Head of School

This is an exciting and unique opportunity for an individual with a passion for the teaching of mathematics to shape and lead a first-class specialist Maths School.

Opening in September 2022, the Maths School will be the fourth in England - joining those set up by King's College London, the University of Exeter and the University of Liverpool.

The successful candidate will play a pivotal role in bringing the vision of the Maths School to life, enabling the most gifted mathematicians from all backgrounds to realise their potential within an inspiring, inclusive and supportive learning community.

Under the successful candidate's direction and leadership, the Maths School will provide exceptional teaching, an intellectually stimulating

and challenging curriculum along with first-class facilities and high-quality resources for 16-19-year-olds who love maths.

We welcome applications for this leadership post to commence 1st May 2022.

Hours: The role is a full-time position.

Salary paid at L14 to L19 of the SFCA Leadership spine, currently pro rata to £66,285 to £74,628 per annum.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 9.00 a.m. Tuesday 2nd November 2021.

Please apply using the application form provided, CVs will not be accepted.

Further details are available at <https://lusom.ac.uk/job-vacancies/current-posts/> or by telephone on 01772 460181. Interested applicants are invited to have an informal discussion with the Executive Principal, Nick Burnham. To arrange this please contact the HR department on 01772 460181 or email HR@lusom.ac.uk

All offers of appointment are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service Clearance as well as a range of other safer recruitment checks



Vice Principal - Curriculum & Assessment or Teaching & Learning

Applications are invited for the above post. We are seeking an ambitious and proactive leader with a proven track record of excellence to join Haywood Academy & City College and work closely with the Principal and Senior Leadership Team in the delivery of outstanding Teaching and Learning or Curriculum & Assessment to support with the quality of education on offer.

This is an excellent opportunity for the right candidate to take a pivotal role in helping drive the future of this 11-18 Academy on its journey to becoming a 'great' place to learn. The successful candidate will have enjoyed a range of experiences to date that will have prepared them for this role. You will be an outstanding teacher who can demonstrate a track record of raising standards and importantly you will be child centered and able to inspire young people to be the best that they can be.

If you want to work in a 11-18 Academy where you can make a real difference to young people's life chances while working as part of a partnership of Academies that are committed to cooperation and collaboration to unlock talent and fulfill potential, then this post is just right for you. In return, you will be supported and encouraged to develop further and enjoy a long and rewarding career working across the City Learning Trust.

As we strive for a 'great' experience for all our learners, you will have the highest of expectations for young people and staff at Haywood Academy and City College.

The City Learning Trust is committed to raising the aspirations and achievements of all young people within our learning community and is a 3-19 partnership of schools and academies. We aim to create a world-class education system across our community of schools.

We are looking for someone who:

- Has vision, energy and enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- Is proactive, innovative and focused on student outcomes
- Is an aspiring, ambitious leader with excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Has a proven track record of delivering and shaping high quality outcomes for young people

- Is an advocate of partnership working and community engagement
- Is a highly effective classroom practitioner
- Has sixth form experience
- Is committed to raising standards for all students and securing and driving excellence in inclusion

In return we can offer you:

- The opportunity to work in an excellent academy with a talented and committed team of staff
- A dynamic and thriving student body which deserve the best
- The support and shared purpose of the wider CLT Senior Leadership Team
- A competitive salary structure
- Excellent career opportunities and access to a comprehensive programme of personalised professional learning and development
- National and international networking opportunities
- A commitment to your own personal leadership growth
- A comprehensive benefits package

The closing date is 11th October and you will be informed if you are successful for interview by 12th October and interviews will take place on 18th and 19th October.

If you are interested in having an informal conversation about this opportunity, please contact Marie Faichney who will arrange such (01782 853535). It would be helpful if your letter in support of your application is no more than 2 sides of A4. You may if you wish submit a CV with your application but not instead of it.

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The Shared Learning Trust

Click here to contact our team

