

SCHOOLS WEEK

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2021 | EDITION 263

Page 11

Recruitment: Is the policy tank empty?



P22

Bangers and cash for voucher firm



P6

Why special schools are Covid's hardest hit



P29

HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE ACADEMISATION?



Schools Week investigates how the upcoming White Paper should tackle the thorny issue of academisation

Page 4



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SCHOOLS WEEK

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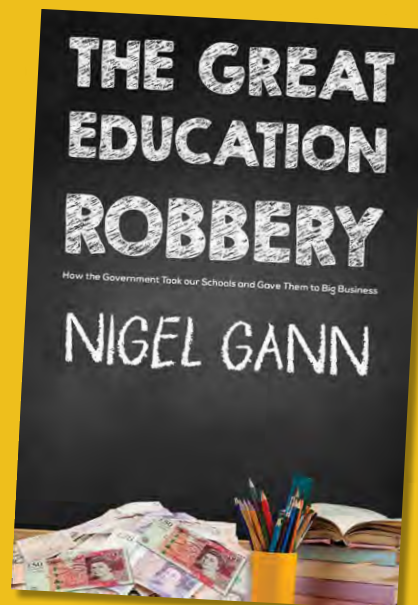
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Academy adviser elections are a go!



Page 15



Was academisation one big money heist?

Page 27



Tackling racism and rape culture is every teacher's job

Page 23



Workload hampers the battle against our child mental health crisis

Page 24

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How should Zahawi tackle his academies problem?

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Nadhim Zahawi faces a predicament. He wants to "scale" the academies sector and believes in the "strength" of multi-academy trusts.

But he seems reluctant to force the issue and has ruled out setting "arbitrary deadlines" for any conversion push. Instead, he wants to "move forward together" with the sector.

Some have taken Zahawi's words at the National Association of Head Teachers' conference this weekend as a softening of the government's stance. His predecessor Gavin Williamson said his "vision" was for all schools to be in "strong multi-academy trusts".

But others believe the new education secretary was simply trying to reassure an audience of (mostly) primary heads that he isn't going to rush them into anything. At present, 37 per cent of primary schools are academies, compared with 78 per cent of secondaries.

But words, especially from a secretary of state, matter. And Conservative-led council Swindon has already dropped plans to convert all its schools on the back of Zahawi's comments (see page 6).

With the first white paper in five years promised, Zahawi is going to have to come up with a plan. The current system is fragmented and causing problems. So what does he do?

Government 'not brave enough'

Sir David Carter, the former national schools commissioner, believes the government "doesn't know what to do" about academisation and is not "brave enough to say 'we are going to move the whole system to academies by X-date'".

"The reality is that for the next ten years we will continue to see incremental change up to around 60 to 70 per cent of the system, and one day someone will have to make a decision."

Rebecca Boomer-Clark, a former regional schools commissioner who now runs the Academies Enterprise Trust, said it was "just not sustainable" to continue running



Nadhim Zahawi

a two-tier school system. A "grown-up conversation" about the best configuration of schools and trusts was needed.

But Michael Pain, from Forum Strategy, said he hoped Zahawi's comments "mark a shift to a more 'hearts and minds' approach".

"Simply talking about the size of trusts or ambitions for how many schools join them, as we've seen too much of from ministers, isn't, by itself, going to interest or enthuse any governing body, headteacher or school community."

'Options on table for both carrot and sticks'

The last time a government tried to force all schools to become academies was in 2016, with Nicky Morgan's ill-fated "education for all" bill.

Jonathan Simons, a former Downing St adviser, said there was a "shared understanding in the DfE about the weaknesses of the Nicky Morgan approach".

But there were options for a more sophisticated approach that brought together "carrots and sticks", including raising the stakes on poorly performing schools, Simons said. Williamson announced in April he would consult on bringing schools with three consecutive 'requires improvement' Ofsted ratings into MATs.

Simons said other options included working with "supportive" councils, and coming up with a plan "in partnership" with the Church of England and Catholic church.

Leora Cruddas, from the Confederation of School Trusts, also favoured working with councils and encouraging schools to be proactive, but cautioned against forced conversions.

'Another ten years to complete reforms'

Although 39 per cent of all schools are academies, 52 per cent of pupils attend the schools.

"It's taken ten years to get to half of children educated in our sector," Cruddas said. "The horizon to complete those reforms is another ten years, 2030."

But Tom Richmond, a former DfE adviser and head of the EDSK think tank, said academisation had "increasingly become viewed as the end rather than the means".

"Without a clear articulation from the government, supported by rigorous research that shows how and why academisation improves teaching and learning, then it is unlikely that local councils, governing bodies and school leaders will be persuaded that this time will somehow be different."

Critics flag autonomy loss and lack of evidence

Ministers also continue to face opposition from unions and campaigners.

Dr Mary Bousted, from the National Education Union, said communities were increasingly recognising that schools became less accountable as academies.

"Contrary to government claims, [they also] lose autonomy as they become absorbed into ever larger and more centralised chains."

Anntoinette Bramble, the chair of the Local Government Association's children and young people board, flagged "mixed evidence about academisation improving standards. And when public spending is facing significant cuts, making academisation the default option for schools, regardless of local opinion, is not an appropriate use of public money".

NEWS

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Tory council backs down on all academies plan

TOM BELGER

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EXCLUSIVE

A Conservative council has ditched plans to convert all schools into academies by 2025 after Nadhim Zahawi, the new education secretary, appeared to strike a more conciliatory tone on academisation than his predecessor.

Swindon council's cabinet was due to approve plans on Wednesday to "support" 25 maintained schools and 18 standalone academies to "proactively move towards" joining multi-academy trusts.

The move sparked fears of forced conversions. But David Renard, the council leader, warned without a "strategic approach", remaining maintained schools risked being "left out in the cold" and council finances could suffer.

Baroness Barran, the new academies minister, even backed the move, calling it "innovative" and telling Schools Week she looked forward to seeing a "positive impact".

A council report described its plans as a "response" to Gavin Williamson's "vision" for all schools to join MATs.

But the council has now watered down the project. The initial key proposal – to support all schools to join trusts and "plan implementation" for maintained schools by 2025 – has been axed.

Zahawi appeared to have taken "a different line from his predecessor" in an address to the National Association of Head Teachers' (NAHT) conference last weekend, Renard said.

Revised council papers note the education secretary's apparent support for an "ecosystem" of different schools. Zahawi said he would avoid "arbitrary timelines" for all schools joining MATs, and praised some "brilliant" maintained schools.

It seemed to mark a more conciliatory tone than under Williamson. Anne West, an education professor at LSE, said Zahawi's past life as a councillor might have made him "not as anti-council" as his predecessors.

But the move is likely to come as a blow to the government, which wants more schools to become academies – specifically joining multi-academy trusts.

The amended Swindon plan says while the



NEU members protested as Swindon council voted on controversial academy plans

government's "ultimate intent" appears unchanged, the council should carry out "further investigations" with its regional schools commissioner.

The cabinet voted to "consider the implications" of all schools joining trusts, and "work with schools to explore options and opportunities of school governance structures".

The report had highlighted the growing "financial pressure" of falling council income as maintained school numbers dropped. This required a "new model of working".

Rob Kelsall, the national secretary of the NAHT, welcomed the U-turn, but warned that headteachers' trust had been "shaken to the core".

He had written to the council, telling it school leaders and governors had "grave concerns" about forced conversions. The letter criticised apparent "abdication of the council's responsibility" and a "lack of meaningful consultation".

Several heads attended the vote at the council's offices, while the National Education Union staged a protest outside. Hannah Packham, the union's regional secretary, condemned the "top-down" move.

Even South Swindon's Conservative MP Robert Buckland said the council had "wisely pulled back", saying he favoured "evolution not revolution". Zahawi had struck "exactly the right note".

The U-turn may disappoint supporters and dash

hopes other councils follow suit, however.

Sophie Harrison-Byrne, the director of New Schools Network, called the initial plans "really positive", with many trusts keen to work with councils.

Benedick Ashmore-Short, the chief executive of the Park Academies Trust, which has two schools in Swindon, had called the council "brave and bold". The 2025 deadline allowed time for "try before you buy" agreements, but he acknowledged a risk of "rash decisions" and a MAT "beauty parade".

Nick Capstick, the chief executive of The White Horse Federation, which runs 11 schools locally, also said before the reversal that the plan "makes sense" if done in a "measured" way.

Renard acknowledged there had been a lot of concern about forced conversions, but denied any had been planned.

Officials would still work in partnership with single academies and maintained schools to "look at all the options". The council was also "already looking to facilitate meetings" with MATs and schools.

Kelsall said he remained concerned by the "direction of travel", however.

A government spokesperson said all procurement had followed the rules, and contracts drew on firms' "expertise and resources" – with no evidence of "profiteering" by Edenred.

NEWS

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Voucher scheme company's profits jump 29 per cent

TOM BELGER

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EXCLUSIVE

The multinational company that ran the Covid food voucher scheme faces fresh scrutiny after posting "eye-watering" profits this year.

Edenred won contracts totalling £384 million to run the government's free school meal replacement voucher scheme when Covid forced partial school closures.

The scheme was heavily criticised over initial distribution delays, Edenred's appointment without an open tender and value-for-money concerns.

New accounts filed by the French company's UK subsidiary show a 28.7 per cent year-on-year jump in overall profits to £13.9 million in 2020, in contrast to many companies' struggles during Covid.

Total revenues more than doubled to £23.2 million in 2020. The accounts said running the voucher scheme and other contracts "enabled a sustained business performance" in 2020. Its highest paid director earned £444,000, up from £371,000 in 2019.

A National Audit Office (NAO) investigation into the contracts last year said the Department for Education was "surprisingly unconcerned" over whether Edenred was "profiting at taxpayers' expense".

The government had an "open book arrangement", giving it access to Edenred's income and costs relating to the scheme. But the NAO found the DfE chose not to use it, admitting it "did not know details of the potential profit or loss Edenred may have made".

Sarah Olney, a Lib Dem MP, said the public accounts committee (PAC) that she served on had previously found the DfE "failed to ensure the contract terms provided the taxpayer value for money".

She said it added "insult to injury" for struggling families who had been left waiting for vouchers. "To hear Edenred has enjoyed eye-watering profits, despite these clear shortcomings, is appalling."

The accounts do not reveal the voucher scheme's impact on margins and the DfE has cited commercial confidentiality when refusing to share profit details with MPs.



But officials told the PAC that profits were "reasonable" and the scheme cost 1 per cent less than the vouchers' total value.

Edenred declined to comment, but in the past has refuted claims of "profiteering".

The government now faces demands for transparency over profits made from its contracts, as figures also show rising margins at Computacenter, the school laptop supplier.

The company, awarded £198 million worth of contracts to deliver devices during lockdown, had its fastest profit growth in two decades last year.

Shareholders are set for another hike in payouts this month, with a planned interim dividend of 16.9p a share – up 37.4 per cent year-on-year.

It followed surging revenues in the first half of 2021 and a 59.1 per cent jump in pretax profits to £115.2 million.

The DfE's laptop programme also came under fire over distribution delays, the lack of competition when Computacenter was given its first deal and founder Philip Hulme's donations to the Conservative party.

A source close to the company said later agreements followed competitive bids.

Pat Thomson, an education professor at the University of Nottingham, said the government should not only reveal companies' margins when striking deals, but also have a "conversation with taxpayers" over acceptable profits.

More evidence was needed to prove outsourcing was more efficient. "As taxpayers, we don't expect this to be a siphoning away of our money, a sort of corporate welfare by stealth."

A NAO investigation found inadequate transparency over government Covid contract decisions, but acknowledged officials had to act urgently. The Cabinet Office highlighted "rigorous" government processes at the time.

Stephen Morales, the chief executive of the Institute of School Business Leadership, said commercial organisations needed incentives and sufficient margins to sustain their work.

But he said schools and the government alike needed to appeal to tech, building and other firms' "moral compass" and insist on transparency to avoid being exploited when striking deals.



Stephen Morales



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Police called in as anti-vaxxers 'grab' pupil at school gates

JAMES CARR

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EXCLUSIVE

An anti-vaccine protestor grabbed an autistic pupil outside his Derbyshire school gates last week then screamed at him that the Covid jab would "make you infertile".

In a separate incident, pupils at a school in Tyne and Wear were grabbed and shown graphic images of dead and dismembered children.

Education leaders have now called for "preventive measures" to protect schools hosting vaccinations, while unions say schools "cannot manage this on their own".

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said it was "increasingly concerned" about the tactics used by some anti-vaccination protesters.

"We have also been made aware of incidents in which protesters have managed to gain access to school sites. This sort of behaviour is utterly unacceptable."

Anti-vax protests have targeted schools since it was announced last month their sites would be used to vaccinate pupils aged between 12 and 15.

On Friday, a protester grabbed a 14-year-old pupil from The Long Eaton School in Derbyshire as he tried to avoid engaging with the group.

The school was scheduled to begin vaccinations on Monday.

The pupil's mother, who wished to remain anonymous, told *Schools Week* her son was trying to cross the road when the protester "got hold of him and was shouting in his face how 'you're going to be infertile'".

The protester allegedly grabbed the pupil by his blazer.

The mother said she was "disgusted" by the assault and warned "schools don't seem to be able to do anything" because it was not on school property.

"It's never acceptable for an adult to put their hands on a child . . . it's an alarming escalation from shouting slogans."

Richard Peel, the school's principal, said the police were notified, but the protesters left before they arrived and "have not



"It's an alarming escalation from shouting slogans"

returned to the school site since".

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, was "appalled" by the incident and warned "no child should be made to feel scared or intimidated".

Derbyshire Police confirmed the incident was reported but "no further action is being taken".

St Thomas More Catholic School in Blaydon, Tyne and Wear, was also targeted last Monday.

Jill Turner, the school's deputy head, said a minority of protesters "caused some significant upset" with inappropriate behaviour.

"This involved showing students pictures of dead and dismembered children that they were claiming were associated with the vaccination. They also grabbed some students as they tried to avoid their contact."

Northumbria Police said protesters had left by the time officers arrived, but inquiries were ongoing.

Schools Week previously reported that

anti-vaxxers, led by Piers Corbyn, live-streamed themselves outside school gates claiming the Covid jab caused cancer, infertility and death.

Schools were also sent bogus vaccine consent forms that warned the jab could cause blindness and miscarriages.

Barton said schools could not manage on their own, calling for "prompt support from the police as necessary".

Turner said the school was "hopeful" that preventive measures would be put in place to support other schools scheduled to host immunisation teams.

Schools Week previously reported how Shaun Davies, the leader of Telford and Wrekin Council - an area in which protesters have repeatedly targeted schools - had written to West Mercia's police and crime commissioner requesting "more powers to move people on".

While he is yet to receive a response, he warned that councils and police "have very little powers to deal with protests."

"This is not about Covid, or the merits of the vaccine, but about allowing children, teachers and school staff to go to school without any fear."

The DfE believes there has not been an increase in pupil and staff intimidation in recent weeks. A spokesperson added: "It is never acceptable for anyone to pressurise or intimidate pupils. . . and protestors engaging in this type of behaviour should immediately bring it to an end."

INVESTIGATION

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The councils forced into Covid action

SAMANTHA BOOTH & JAMES CARR
@SCHOOLSWEEK

Almost 10 per cent of schools are in areas where blanket Covid restrictions have been reintroduced as infection rates rise, new analysis shows.

Schools Week has found 11 councils are advising all schools in their areas to reintroduce Covid classroom measures, such as face coverings, bubbles and a ban on assemblies. The measures affect more than 1,700 schools – 9 per cent of all primary and secondary schools – and about 600,000 pupils.

Five unions this week jointly demanded Nadhim Zahawi, the new education secretary, reintroduce Covid safety measures nationally.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates that about one in 15 secondary school pupils tested positive for Covid in the week up to October 2.

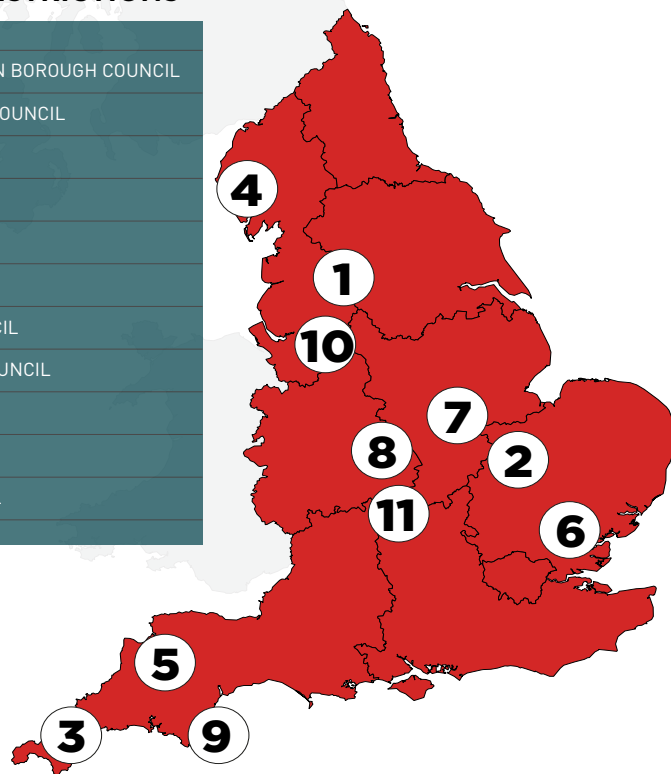
Current government guidance sets out thresholds for introducing stricter measures in individual schools.

A National Association of Head Teachers' survey previously revealed more than one in four schools had already exceeded these thresholds by the end of September.

Department for Education guidance states measures to address "more widespread

THE COUNCILS WITH BLANKET SCHOOL COVID RESTRICTIONS

- 1 CALDERDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
- 2 CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
- 3 CORNWALL COUNCIL
- 4 CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL
- 5 DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL
- 6 ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
- 7 PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL
- 8 STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
- 9 TORBAY COUNCIL
- 10 TRAFFORD COUNCIL
- 11 WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL



issues across an area" are made by ministers on an "area-by-area basis".

Just three of the councils advising blanket measures are among the top ten areas hit hardest by Covid (see table).

Meanwhile Essex – also advising measures across all its schools – has 321 cases per 100,000, placing it in the bottom third of case rates across the UK.

Trafford has the highest infection rates,

COUNCIL		COVID RATE PER 100K PEOPLE (LAST 7 DAYS)	VACCINATION RATE OF 12-15-YEAR-OLDS	PUPILS UNDER RESTRICTIONS	SCHOOLS UNDER RESTRICTIONS	POLITICAL PARTY IN CHARGE
1	CALDERDALE	542.5	7.9%	36,270	96	LABOUR
2	CAMBRIDGESHIRE	427.3	14.7%	86,839	244	LIB DEM, LAB AND IND ADMINISTRATION
3	CORNWALL	492.2	7.9%	30,286	32	CONSERVATIVE
4	CUMBRIA	588.5	19.9%	69,311	307	LABOUR AND LIB DEM
5	DEVON	350.1	8.2%	40,585	43	CONSERVATIVE
6	ESSEX	321.6	16.4%	121,410	448	CONSERVATIVE
7	PETERBOROUGH	582.8	7.4%	38,376	72	CONSERVATIVE
8	STAFFORDSHIRE	514.7	8.7%	117,926	370	CONSERVATIVE
9	TORBAY	350.9	8.5%	9,160	8	LIB DEM AND INDEPENDENT
10	TRAFFORD	832.6	17%	41,644	84	LABOUR
11	WOLVERHAMPTON	370.6	4.90%	19,828	20	LABOUR
ENGLAND AVERAGE		366.8	12.7%			
TOTAL WITH MEASURES				611,635	1,724	
% WITH MEASURES NATIONALLY				7.5%	9%	

INVESTIGATION

according to data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), with 832.6 people per 100,000 testing positive as of October 7.

There have been outbreaks at about a third of its schools, and since Monday the council has requested secondary school pupils and staff wear masks.

Parents are also being asked to wear masks when dropping off and picking up children.

Under current guidance children are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with Covid, or are a close contact of someone with Covid.

But Trafford staff and pupils in this situation are asked to take daily lateral flow tests (LFT) before attending school.

Calderdale, Cumbria and Peterborough have also been hit hard.

Calderdale council is advising secondary schools to implement face coverings and asking all schools to limit mixing of groups.

Pupils who live in a household where someone has Covid are asked to stay off school for up to five days and get a PCR test.

Meanwhile, Cumbria say pupils in this situation must either conduct daily LFT tests or have a negative PCR to return to school.

In Peterborough, and its combined authority of Cambridgeshire, secondary schools are advised to reintroduce face coverings in communal spaces. Primary staff may consider the same arrangement, guidance states.

Staff should socially distance within school buildings and are advised to move all non-essential visits with parents to virtual meetings.

Jyoti Atri, the director of Public Health for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, said



they were "sensible precautionary measures" and recommended that schools follow the advice.

Councils and public health directors can only advise measures, they cannot force schools to follow them.

Cases have dropped in Cornwall and Torbay where the local councils introduced enhanced measures in August.

Both were given five weeks of extra government support, including temporary use of masks in communal areas in secondary schools.

In Cornwall, rates fell from 829 per 100,000 on August 22, to 242 on September 15. But cases have slowly been creeping up since the measures ended on October 1.

It's a similar picture in Torbay where cases dropped to 284 mid-September, but rose to

367 last week.

Last week *The Daily Telegraph* reported schools had reintroduced face coverings at the urging of "militant lefty" council groups. But five of the eleven councils with blanket measures are Tory-led.

On Saturday, five unions – GMB, NASUWT, NEU, UNISON and UNITE – wrote to the education secretary calling for the reintroduction of Covid safety measures such as social distancing, bubbles and face coverings in secondary classrooms.

The letter warned that DfE thresholds were "set too high; meaning that cases can already be spreading across a school before additional measures are considered".

"Without a change of direction, we risk damaging the education of thousands of children at some point before Christmas."

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Schools 'picking up pieces' of broken system during Covid

The extent to which families rely on schools to fill basic needs like access to food and support services has been laid bare by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Families turned to schools as "important sources of support", research by University College London based on interviews with 50 parents and seven schools shows.

Schools dealt with children in need of food and clothing, families in "inadequate" housing, those with limited digital connectivity, pupils facing mental health crises and even some facing domestic violence.

Addressing food insecurity was the "most immediate priority" for all schools in the study. They went to "considerable lengths" to ensure pupils received at least a meal a day.

The reliance on schools reveals "fundamental weaknesses in our current welfare system that urgently need repair", the report warned.

Pupil premium funding "does not adequately reflect the work schools do to support children living in poverty or struggling with difficult issues at home", UCL said.

Headteachers also find themselves shouldering "significant responsibilities

within networks of support that have themselves fragmented". This "diminishes system resilience".

Co-author Professor Alice Bradbury said: "Schools are picking up the pieces from a welfare and social services system that no longer provides a real safety net for families. For those schools, the impacts of poverty on children's lives are impossible to ignore."

The report concluded that schools' voices should be heard when it comes to recovery, and that policy funding for education needs to focus on "building system resilience over the longer term".

NEWS

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Energy crisis hits schools as bills to rise 50%

SAMANTHA BOOTH

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EXCLUSIVE

North-east schools have been told to expect a near 50 per cent hike in their gas bills, as one council supplier asks ministers for a bail-out to meet rising energy costs.

An investigation by Schools Week has also found other leaders are budgeting tens of thousands of pounds to meet soaring costs. Since January, wholesale gas prices have risen 250 per cent across the world.

Heads' cost concerns are also exacerbated by having to keep classroom windows open to try and control the spread of Covid.

Council leaders in Northumberland have now written to schools minister Robin Walker and chancellor Rishi Sunak calling for "additional resources". A letter sent to schools warns of gas prices rising 48 per cent and electricity bills by 26 per cent.

While the majority of schools are on fixed-term energy deals, meaning they should be currently unaffected by rising costs, energy in Northumberland is handled by the North East Procurement Organisation.

A letter to Northumberland heads said NEPO uses a "flexible purchasing method". The organisation did not answer our questions this week, but experts say this can mean rates vary throughout the contract, as opposed to a fixed rate over several years.

NEPO is a partnership of 12 north-east local authorities, meaning thousands of schools could be affected.

Dame Maura Regan, CEO at Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust, has schools across four of the north-east regions. They all received letters warning of the hike.

"We will have to pay the bills and something has to suffer," she said. "We will try our level best to make sure that the most goes towards children's education, but the reality is we have to pay the bills and something has to give."

A Northumberland council spokesperson said, "Whilst we have been prudent in our procurement arrangements, we are not insulated from the spike in energy prices and this will inevitably lead to in-year cost pressures".

But the local Labour opposition is calling for answers on how the council allowed itself to be



hit by the price rises.

Tim Golding, head of strategic partnerships at Zenergi, which supports 3,000 schools to find energy deals, estimated around two-thirds of schools were on fixed contracts, meaning their prices should be stable.

The remaining third were on flexible rates, meaning they could feel the brunt of rising costs.

The Crown Commercial Service, which runs the School Switch service, said numerous schools and academies "bypass fixed-term fixed-price contracts" and instead opt for "aggregated, flexible and risk-managed arrangements" run by CCS and other public sector buying organisations.

Schools or trusts renewing energy deals in the coming months could also be hit.

Stephen Mitchell, CEO at Oak Multi Academy Trust in Leicester, said they are due to renew this year "so expect to be hit by the rises in due course", adding that the rise could be "really quite significant on school budgets."

"Out of this, I'm hopeful that the sector, across the country, will look towards better efficiency for heating and insulation. There are too many old schools out there without effective or efficient systems."

Meanwhile, at Ladybridge High School in Bolton, an extra 20 per cent – about £17,000

for electricity and £12,000 for gas – has been budgeted this winter if heating is to be on more because of open windows.

Paddy Russell, headteacher, said: "We are talking about a significant amount of money. It's tens of thousands of pounds, which is obviously teachers' salaries."

Geoff Barton, general secretary at school leaders' union ASCL, warned schools cannot absorb extra costs and the government's approach to ventilation has been "wholly inadequate".

But the Department for Education has so far not committed to covering any extra costs this winter.

An Association of Colleges snapshot survey, shared exclusively with sister publication FE Week, show colleges face rising energy costs of £20 million in total this academic year.

A DfE spokesperson said: "Schools experiencing financial issues can access a range of schools resource management tools, and, in serious circumstances, additional funding or advances from local authorities or the ESFA."

A NEPO spokesperson said they are working with "energy managers across north-east local authorities to support them in understanding the impact and to maximise energy efficiency measures".

NEWS



School improvement charity goes bust

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The school improvement charity Achievement For All has gone into administration amid a £1 million deficit and issues over “double counted” revenue.

Dr Kulvarn Atwal, chair of the organisation, wrote to staff this week to announce the move, blaming the “double impact of the pandemic and current pressures on school budgets”.

According to the charity’s latest accounts, it delivered programmes to 30,000 children in 1,879 schools across England and Wales in the 12 months to March last year.

It comes after a damning two-year Education Endowment Foundation study last year concluded that the Achievement For All programme at key stage 2 had a “detrimental effect on learning”.

The trial, which cost over £900,000, took place between 2016 and 2018 and found children in schools that had the intervention made two months’ less progress in key stage 2 reading and maths, compared with children in control schools.

In an email to colleagues, Atwal said following “financial advice” the board had taken the “very difficult decision to cease trading with immediate effect and enter formal administration.

“Throughout the pandemic, the staff of Achievement For All have worked tirelessly to attract new funding and to create new opportunities for schools and settings.

“However, the double impact of the pandemic and current pressures on school budgets means that we are currently no longer able to complete our programmes to schools and settings or offer new programmes.”

He said the organisation’s priorities and focus were its “staff and partners”, and added that the charity was “working hard to enable current schools and settings to continue to access the online resources that have been created and developed over the ten years of Achievement For

All.

“We sincerely thank all schools, settings and their leaders who have worked with us over the years to improve the life chances of all children and young people.”

He said the charity’s trustees had appointed FRP Advisory as administrators. But the firm told *Schools Week* it had not yet been appointed. Atwal said the firm would contact “all staff shortly to advise on the next steps and provide further information as it becomes available”.

Accounts for Achievement For All (3As) Ltd for the financial year ending March 2020 show the charity was facing financial difficulties even before the Covid-19 pandemic.

It recorded a deficit for the year of £1.04 million and had net liabilities of around £1.18 million.

The charity’s operating loss in the year to March 2020 included an “unfavourable variance” of £756,000, which was “largely attributable to a major technical issue with revenue recognition from April to December 2019”.

There was also a “fundamental issue with budgeting relating to the double counting of year 2 programme revenue”.

Covid also impacted on the start date of projects in March 2020, with programme income down by £852,000 and a reduction in project income of £245,000.

The charity said 40 per cent of its project income “did not materialise or start delivery in the financial year”.

Achievement For All brought in almost £1.5 million from school programmes in the year ending last March, down from £1.8 million the year before. Projects and “other income” funding dropped from around £1.4 million to just over £750,000.

The charity was previously linked to an academy sponsor – the Achievement For All Education Trust – which sponsored Park House school in Newbury. Last year the trust broke its ties with the sponsor and is now called Transform Learning Trust.

Achievement For All did not respond to a request for comment.

Private school finally closed after 7 years of failures

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

A fee-paying religious school which segregated staff and treated boys and girls unequally has finally been shut down, seven years after inspectors first slammed wide-ranging failures.

Rabia Boys and Girls School in Luton was accused of “actively undermining” British values by ex-Ofsted chief Michael Wilshaw in 2016.

Inspectors found male and female staff were divided during training sessions, and two years earlier found that girls could not study certain subjects.

The Muslim school has repeatedly failed to meet independent school standards, with multiple “inadequate” ratings.

The DfE eventually banned Rabia from taking more pupils in 2018. But a year later Ofsted discovered it was flouting the ban and was forced to take legal action.

Magistrates then fined the Rabia Education Trust and its chair last May. New chief inspector Amanda Spielman called it an “unprecedented conviction”, which “sends out a strong message”.

Yet earlier this year Rabia’s website said it would continue offering secondary schooling from September.

Now the site says it is finally closing. It still plans tuition services, resources and support for parents to home educate, however. It says children in the local community have the right to gain “key skills to succeed whilst embracing our Islamic faith and culture”.

The school has previously accused Ofsted of having an “agenda against faith schools” and said that it was addressing concerns.

Ofsted’s website says the school has shut. The school’s phone line rang out when contacted by *Schools Week*.

The trust behind the school has also been on the Charity Commission’s radar since 2012. A 2017 inquiry found mismanagement, with a second probe launched last year and regulators imposing new management in March.

The DfE also confirmed this week that two other north London faith schools, Bnois Jerusalem Girls School and TTD Gur School, have been banned from enrolling new pupils because of wide-ranging failures.

A DfE spokesperson said safety and education were “paramount” and the closure reflected Rabia’s failure to improve. The department vowed to work with families to ensure children’s continued education.



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EXPLAINER

DfE sets out changes to teacher training

The government this week set out how national professional qualifications will be funded from now on, plus details of initial teacher training bursaries for the 2022-23 academic year.

Here's what you need to know.

1 NPQ FUNDING AVAILABLE TO ALL SCHOOLS...

Funding for new national professional qualifications (NPQs) will now be available to staff in all schools.

The government had previously said that scholarships for four of the six new NPQs would be limited to staff in the most deprived schools. The change comes into effect immediately.

2...BUT IT'S CAPPED AT 150,000 QUALIFICATIONS

Funding for the qualifications still stands at £184 million, the same as was announced earlier this year when the old eligibility requirements were in place. The Department for Education said the cash would provide 150,000 NPQs over the next three years.

The six new and reformed qualifications are available in executive leadership, headship, leading behaviour and culture, leading teacher development, senior leadership and leading teaching.

A further two – in leading literacy and early years leadership – will be available from next year.

3 BURSARIES REINTRODUCED AND INCREASED IN SOME SUBJECTS

The DfE confirmed that it had increased some initial teacher training bursaries while reintroducing others slashed last year.

However, bursaries in chemistry, computing, mathematics and physics will remain at £24,000, the same as this year. That is despite fears the boost in teacher recruitment as a result of the Covid pandemic will not be maintained.

Next year, bursaries in languages, including ancient languages, will increase from £10,000 to £15,000, while trainees in design and technology and geography will also be eligible for £15,000. They were not eligible at all this year.

However, classics has been removed from the list of eligible subjects.

The bursary for biology goes up £3,000 to £10,000. Applicants may be eligible if they have a first, 2:1, 2:2, PhD or master's. School direct salaried grants will be the same as the bursaries.

4 SCHOLARSHIPS UNCHANGED, BUT TWEAKS TO APPRENTICESHIP GRANTS

Scholarships in chemistry, computing, maths and physics

will remain at £26,000, the same as this year. Undergraduate bursaries in secondary maths or physics will remain at £9,000, while the troops to teachers bursary will continue at £40,000.

But grants for postgraduate teaching apprenticeships will change slightly.

The amount for chemistry, computing, maths and physics trainees will remain at £15,000, while the grant for design and technology, geography and languages trainees will be £6,000. Biology trainees will attract £1,000. Again, classics is no longer eligible.

5 SAME MONEY ON OFFER, BUT DfE EXPECTS FEWER APPLICANTS

The government said it was making £129 million available for trainee teachers next year, roughly the same as this year, but almost half what was on offer in 2020-21.

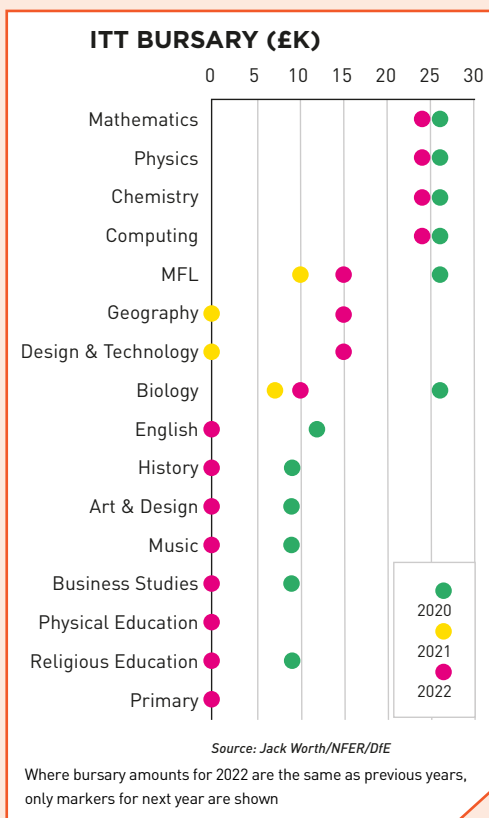
Asked why this was the case, despite the increase in some bursaries, the DfE said it expected fewer applicants in 2022-23.

6 SCHOOLS MINISTER WANTS 'MOST TALENTED, COMMITTED TEACHERS'

Announcing the changes, Robin Walker said great teachers could "transform young people's lives, and I want this country to recruit and retain the most talented, committed teachers who support students to thrive and achieve their potential".

"Quality, face-to-face teaching is the single most important factor in

supporting our young people to recover from the impact of the pandemic, and this investment provides a fantastic opportunity to attract and develop the world-leading teachers and school leaders who will guide, care for and educate our children for years to come."



NEWS

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Academy CEOs earn £127k on average (and men get more)

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Male academy trust chief executives pocket about £15,000 a year more than women, a new analysis has found.

The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) has released a new salary benchmarking service for executive roles in academies.

Based on a survey of 126 individuals in 118 trusts, it covers trusts from five or fewer schools to those with more than 20.

The analysis found the median salary for academy trust chief executives was £126,974. But this varied across the country, with a median of £131,948 in London and the south east, compared with £121,912 in the rest of the UK.

Leora Cruddas, the CST's chief executive, said the benchmarking tool would help trust boards make "evidence-informed decisions on remuneration".

"Without comprehensive and representative data, it is increasingly difficult to understand and benchmark the remuneration of different levels of executive roles in the school trust sector."

It is not known which trusts were included, and specifically whether the Harris Federation responded.

Sir Dan Moynihan, Its chief executive, is England's best-paid CEO, earning at least £455,000, according to the latest accounts. Inclusion of his salary in any analysis would likely increase the average.

The CST said it used median pay for comparisons throughout the report as this was a "more commonly used and robust measure, less open to influence by outliers as can be the case with the mean".

The survey also revealed that men were paid on average 12.5 per cent more than women. The average salary for men was £135,000, £120,000 for women.

The gap was even larger among senior directors and executive heads, with men earning £98,026 on average, more than 18 per cent more than the average £82,719 earned by women.

It comes after a *Schools Week* investigation earlier this year revealed how the country's best-paid academy bosses were pulling further ahead, prompting warnings of an emerging "super league".

Our analysis was based on the accounts of the 277 trusts that have received letters from the government in the past four years about executive pay.

It found that senior figures earned £154,444 on average at trusts with more than 15 schools on the DfE's watchlist, although the figure included pension and national insurance contributions.

Schools Week has also highlighted an emerging gender pay gap, with our analysis in 2020 finding that at the 30 best-paid trusts, the average CEO pay for men was £232,000, compared with £196,000 for women.

Just one of the top 20 best-paid bosses last year was a woman.

But gender gaps exist in other sectors too.

An analysis by *Inside Housing* found women chief executives of housing associations were paid £165,630 in 2018-19, 2.21 per cent lower than the £178,505 male chief executives took home.

Meanwhile the *Health Service Journal* found women health trust bosses were paid about £176,000, compared with £183,000 for their male counterparts.

The tool also compares executive pay in academies to other industries. It found that academy CEO salaries were slightly higher on average than those in public services, but slightly lower than the charity and not-for-profit sector.

Boards wanting to use the tool have to pay to access the full survey results.

RSC adviser elections are underway (finally)

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

The government is urging academy leaders to run for election as advisers to regional schools commissioners (RSCs).

The Department for Education is looking for four new elected recruits to serve on each of the eight RSC regions' advisory boards — previously known as headteacher boards.

Nominations opened this week, later than initially planned because of the pandemic, with voting due to take place in November. The results will be announced early next year.

The boards were rebranded as eligibility rules have been widened. Academy trust chief executives without headship experience can now stand, as well as academy heads.

RSCs have a remit to intervene in struggling, expanding or new schools and trusts in their regions. They meet with advisers regularly to decide on conversions, rebrokering and other academy-related changes.

Dominic Herrington, the national schools commissioner, said: "The knowledge, professional expertise and experience that boards bring to RSC decision-making has never been more important."

He encouraged eligible leaders to put themselves forward, and all academy heads to vote in their areas. Heads would receive election information directly "soon".

"We would particularly welcome applicants from under-represented backgrounds," he added.

Each advisory board must include at least one primary and one secondary head, and no more than one person from each trust. RSCs also typically appoint between two and four other advisers themselves.

Print Image Network has won a £14,645 contract to run the elections. It describes itself as "one of the foremost providers of electoral support services in the UK", working with dozens of local authorities.

It says the aim is to have 32 new advisers in post from "as early as January" straight after the elections.

NEWS

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Values matter more than money, says Birbalsingh

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

Values, commitment and consistency are more important than more cash to boost social mobility, says the free school head tasked with improving outcomes across the country.

Katharine Birbalsingh, the head of Michaela free school in north London, has been named as the government's preferred candidate to chair the Social Mobility Commission.

She will lead a "renewed focus ... on areas such as regional disparities, employment, education and enterprise" to help the government's commitment to "levelling up".

Birbalsingh will remain as head of Michaela, dubbed the strictest school in the country. Schools Week first revealed she was a leading contender for the social mobility role in July.

Speaking to Times Radio, Birbalsingh said she wanted to concentrate on "family, schools and routes into work".

When asked if more investment was required, she said: "Money is always nice. However, there are other things that are more important: values, commitment, consistency. There is good work being done in pockets, how do you get that done across the whole country?"

"Sometimes the focus on investment can distract us from other things that really work."

She described her social mobility work as making sure children across the country were given "equal opportunity to be able to make something of their lives."



Katharine Birbalsingh

"It isn't the case that everybody wants to be rich, it's about having purpose in your lives and goals you can achieve. That's where true happiness comes.

"Everybody doesn't have to own a BMW. But everyone ought to have the opportunity to make something of their lives that they want."

Birbalsingh, who received a CBE for her services to education last year, will face a hearing in front of the women and equalities committee before being appointed in the coming weeks.

Once her selection is ratified, a public appointments campaign will be run later in

the autumn to find new commissioners. Alun Francis, the chief executive of Oldham College, is to be named deputy chair.

Liz Truss, the equalities minister, who appointed Birbalsingh, said she was "focused on closing the education gap, employment gap and enterprise gap across Britain".

"Our equality work will address the worries that keep people up at night – like having a good job and getting their child a good education – not tokenistic issues divorced from their everyday concerns."

Birbalsingh rose to prominence at the Conservative party conference in 2010 when she said the country's education system was "broken".

Critics are likely to seize on her appointment as another example of the government's culture wars attack on "woke".

Earlier this year she said "the woke are racist" and warned against teaching "white privilege all the time [as it] actually undermines black children because it tells them that the establishment is against them".

In 2016, the education reformer told The Sunday Times: "All schools should be super-strict. It is about believing that children do best in an ordered and structured environment."

The social mobility commission has been led by interim co-chairs Sandra Wallace and Steven Cooper since July 2020.

Dame Martina Milburn, the previous chair, resigned, saying the role needed expanding to tackle the issue effectively.

SAMANTHA BOOTH | @SAMANTHAJBOTH

ASCL pushes government on date change for pupil premium funding

The Association of School and College Leaders is to meet with the government over school-led tutoring cash being based on 12-month-old census data.

State schools will share £579 million this year to cover 60 per cent of their pupil premium students to help fund catch-up tuition.

However, the funding will be based on the October 2020 census.

Ministers discreetly changed pupil premium funding to be based on autumn last year,

rather than the usual January census, resulting in schools losing millions.

It is estimated that at least 60,000 more youngsters became eligible for pupil premium in the intervening three months.

Geoff Barton, the association's general secretary, said it was important that funding be based on the "most up-to-date and accurate figures" so that it met need. "Otherwise the risk is that schools and their pupils will not receive the required level of support."

The funding for school-led tutoring, the third pillar of the National Tutoring Programme, is paid in three instalments during the academic year.

Barton said ASCL expected the funding allocation to be "adjusted during that time according to more recent census information and any discrepancies made good".

DfE said it used the October 2020 census "so we could provide funding early in the autumn term, enabling schools to begin tutoring as early as possible".

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Time for a proper plan on academies

Forced academisation is not what the sector needs now – it's half-broken by the brunt of Covid, and there are far more pressing priorities.

But the truth is: the current system is a mess. It's hard to work out clear and joined-up roles for everybody without all schools as academies. This is particularly acute with local authorities and admissions.

So what does Nadhim Zahawi do? He's got a big white paper next year, which means he's having to wrestle the conundrum head on.

And it's not started well. Zahawi was challenged about forced academisation plans by a council-maintained school head at a union conference this weekend.

In an extension of his approach to keep the sector on side and not ruffle feathers, Zahawi spoke of an "eco-system" of different schools. He even praised council schools.

But those comments were taken as a backtrack by Swindon council on the government's academy stance. The council has

now pulled out of its own plan to academise all its schools.

Government hopes to nudge schools into becoming academies. And this sort of proactive move by a council is exactly what ministers would have been looking for. The U-turn will be a blow to their ambitions.

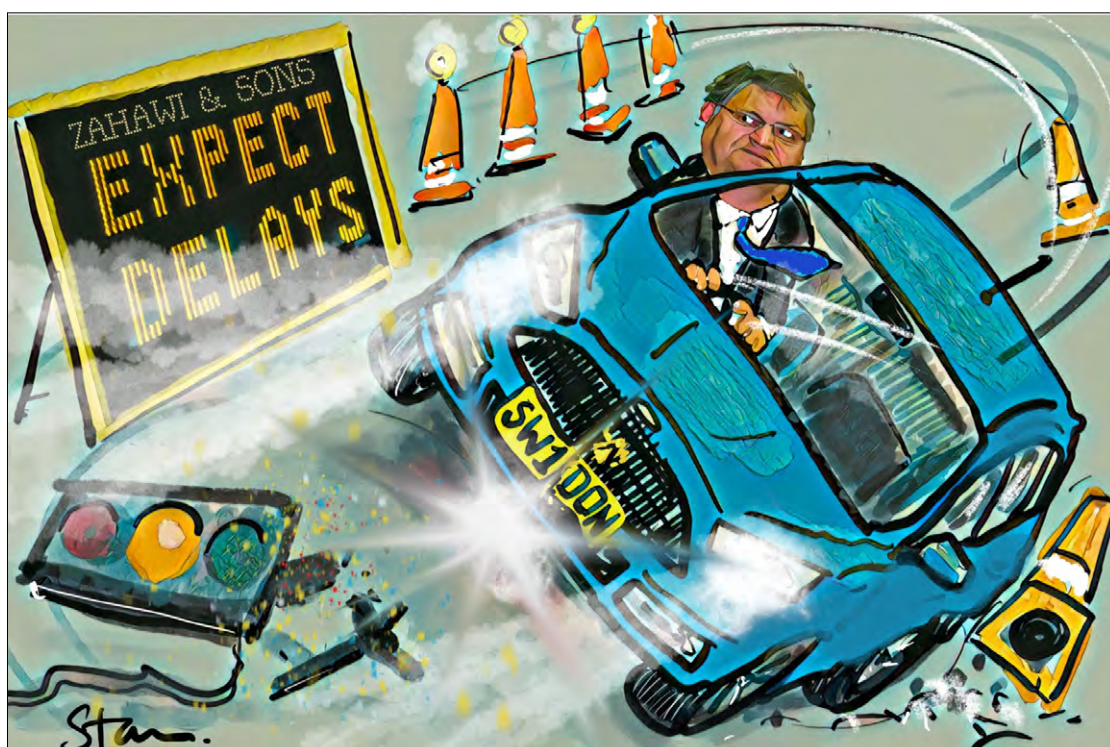
But the white paper represents an opportunity to give the sector some clarity. Avoiding forced academisation, but targeting schools with long-term struggles is the smart move. It also seems more loyal to the aims of the original academies programme.

As Michael Pain puts it, if government want schools to convert off their own back, they need to shift the rhetoric from simply size and scale to winning "hearts and minds".

But as Tom Richmond says, a clear articulation of MAT benefits from government also needs rigorous research to back those claims up. If they can't nail that, it's unlikely leaders and councils will, voluntarily, make the leap.

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Profile

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ

“I’ve never wanted to choose between practice and policy”

The new chief executive of The Centre for Education and Youth, Joe Hallgarten, is interested in the space for schools to innovate. Here he explains why the think tank stays close to practitioners on the ground

The journey to the Centre for Education and Youth – on an incredibly slow bus that stops every 30 seconds to take in more children and let off more grandparents – is pleasingly far from Westminster. Although we’re still in London, there are no shiny buildings around, and actual people seem to live here. In fact, I am peering into a chicken shop,

convinced I’ve reached the right street number for CfEY. I am no less perplexed when I’m pointed a few doors up, and find myself looking into the galley of a ship. Through the glass doors is the belly of a huge 17th-century boat, its oak sides curving up out of sight, containing the entire ground floor.

It turns out CfEY sits above one of

London’s best-known education charities: Literacy Pirates, in Hackney. The nautical theme continues beyond the backstairs, as Joe Hallgarten, the new chief executive of CfEY, leads me upwards into a labyrinthine attic world of alternately coloured steps and tiny rooms with names like “The Galley”. We sit down in a room strewn with nets, buoys and a painted mermaid. CfEY, which

Profile: Joe Hallgarten



Hallgarten in his first teaching job in Manchester



CfEY founder Loic Menzies with members of the team

was founded in 2009, shares the space with Literacy Pirates and works out of a small room next door and with a staff of 15 people.

I should call it a “think and action tank”, because that is what CfEY calls itself. It’s a bit of a mouthful, but given the very communal neighbourhood outside the window, and the fact they’re cohabiting with a hands-on education charity, they do at least seem to be living out their principles. The strapline fitted its founder, the irrepressibly energetic Loic Menzies, who was inextricable from CfEY’s identity: until the pandemic, the organisation was called LKMco, after his initials. A former teacher and youth worker, author and researcher, the combination of practice and policy in CfEY was Menzies’ experience writ large. The think tank does everything from produce reports (its latest national media coverage was on the learning barriers facing pupils in maths) to evaluate programmes run by schools and charities, and even deliver continuous professional development. Hallgarten has big boots to fill.

Luckily, he seems just as restlessly energetic as Menzies, and as deeply



Working with the RSA in Thailand

“The government and Ofsted need to do more to be space creators on the curriculum in schools”

rooted in practice and policy. He has always worked with young people, first as a teenager teaching bible stories in his synagogue in London, and on outdoor camps when a politics student at Manchester University. Inequality bothered him: he’d witnessed racist abuse at school and joined a theatre group performing anti-racism plays to primary schools. Here, his mum has influenced him: she was a further education teacher of English for refugees.

Having wanted to be a poet when a child and then a journalist later, Hallgarten says he was taken down an academic, rather than creative, path at school, somewhat to his regret. After university he studied a primary PGCE in Bradford, then taught for a year in Manchester and four years in London. “I loved so much of it. It helped me understand the world better – just meeting and connecting, especially with parents with an incredible variety of needs and talents.”

Only when literacy hour was introduced in 1998 by New Labour did Hallgarten leave

the classroom. “I really loved the autonomy and responsibility of teaching,” he says. “But some of it was becoming too prescriptive, and the space for more exploratory stuff became diminished.”

Since then, Hallgarten has spent considerable time thinking about autonomy, the arts and the curriculum in schools. He became an education researcher at the IPPR think tank, and wrote about the burden of accountability and league tables (“I wanted to call it “20,000 league tables under the sea” – you can tell I’m a frustrated journalist”, he grins). But he left after “wanting to do something more practical and work directly with schools”.

Moving to the RSA’s action and research centre, he co-authored a report in 2014, after the “frenetic activity” under Michael Gove, which argued for schools to be left alone to get creative. The report, called *Schools with Soul*, notes: “Despite an apparent increase in school autonomy over the last few decades [...] it has been increasingly difficult for schools to think

Profile: Joe Hallgarten

about anything other than short-term gains to short-term outcomes.”

He puts his thinking like this. “The government wanted schools to be more autonomous and the mission had been lost – and continues to be lost.” The problem is that “governments have always been confused about whether autonomy is a reward for success, or a route to success.” Whereas autonomy was the buzzword in 2010, now it is “collaboration”, notes Hallgarten. English governments are never quite clear just how much freedom they want schools to have, it seems.

An area in which space to innovate has been squeezed out is the curriculum, continues Hallgarten. “There should be a national curriculum, of course there should. But every single government from the moment the national curriculum was introduced in 1988 has said the national curriculum should not be everything a school does.” Lord Kenneth Baker believed it should be about 40 per cent of what a school does, Gove believed about 50 per cent, according to Hallgarten. “Right now, we’re probably at about 100 per cent,” he says, including in academies which aren’t obliged to follow the national curriculum. Schools need to be able to feel they have the space to really innovate and explore, far beyond the bounds of a national-curriculum-style timetable.

“If I was a primary head, I’d make sure kids did loads of dance, for instance, and I would teach drawing in the same way we teach handwriting, in a systematic way.” Hallgarten emphasises he doesn’t believe all schools should do this, only that space to innovate is tight, particularly for the arts. “Most primary schools don’t have funding for a specialist arts teacher, whereas they will for English and maths. They are missing out on expert pedagogy.”

After a brief stint as an advisor to the strategy and innovation unit for the government in 2004, and later to Gordon Brown’s strategy unit, Hallgarten moved to a role he says suited him better: as director of learning for Creative Partnerships. The government programme engaged artists with pupils, following Sir Ken Robinson’s 1999 report on creative and cultural education. He stayed for seven years.



“Almost everyone here has been a teacher, youth worker or social worker”

Today, Hallgarten muses, “my feeling is the government and Ofsted need to do more to be space creators on the curriculum in schools”.

Now, Hallgarten is “still in listening and thinking mode” at CfEY, saying he wants to look at whether CfEY can do more evaluation of international education programmes, following global initiatives he worked on for the RSA across Africa and the Middle East. But for the UK, the think tank seems particularly well placed to dig into the grassroots of innovative practice in schools.

Hallgarten makes the point that in the early 2000s, think tanks like the IPPR, RSA and Demos were producing big ideas around education as part of their wider, cross-sector policy work. “But

they’re quieter on education now, and more education-specific think tanks have bubbled up.” Today’s best-known think tanks, like the Education Policy Institute and FFT Education Datalab, focus on data and macro analysis, rather than the more grassroots, case-study-rich work CfEY specialises in.

It means Hallgarten is “interested in CfEY itself as an organisational model, and whether we can work with other education think tanks... Almost everyone here has been a teacher, social worker or youth worker,” he continues, and because CfEY helps both charities and schools design and evaluate their programmes, “we’re really connected with practitioners in different sectors on the ground.”

From its small, nautical-themed rooms, perhaps CfEY can in its second decade be a complementary contrast to the more data-heavy, purely schools-focused work of bigger think tanks. It just needs to make sure it gets heard.

“I’ve never really wanted to choose between policy and practice, and between school-focused work and a broader focus on young people,” concludes Hallgarten, smiling. “And CfEY doesn’t have to make that choice.”

Opinion

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Boris Johnson's plans to drive teachers into challenging schools with £3,000 won't work, writes Ben Newmark. There are better ways to fuel their improvement

Boris Johnson believes the shortage of good maths and physics teachers is like Britain's shortage of petrol; there's enough, but not in the right places. Like extending visas to foreign lorry drivers, his solution is a simple one: £3,000 a year for five years to incentivise good maths and physics teachers to teach in the places they are needed most.

This seems sensible. After all, working in a challenging school is usually more difficult than working in a less challenging school. If we pay people more to work in them, we should get more applicants.

But just like the emergency visa scheme, which saw only 27 fuel tanker drivers apply from the entire EU, we've seen plans like this fail embarrassingly before. In 2015, the National Teaching Service set out to deploy 1,500 outstanding leaders and teachers "to the schools that need them most" by 2020. It folded the next year, having appointed 54 candidates from 114 applicants.

Those with experience of working in challenging schools know paying more money to individuals regardless of how talented they are doesn't work very well at scale. They also know why.

For this policy to increase raw recruitment numbers of supposedly good teachers in needy areas, £3,000 a year – while certainly not a trivial amount – is probably not enough. Where people choose to live and work is not only based on how much they earn. People live in areas where they have networks of friends and



**BEN
NEWMARK**

Vice principal,
David Ross Education Trust

Teacher shortages won't be solved with financial incentives

family and where they can best live lifestyles most attractive to them.

For most people, £3,000 a year will not go far enough to outweigh other considerations – such as relocation costs – especially factored against the financial reward of promotion or extra responsibility. (For a good maths or physics teacher, both are probable

physics teachers who do take up this offer are likely to be too few and too isolated to make much of a difference, even if they are genuinely better than the teachers who are already in those schools.

Effective teachers and leaders know their ability to have impact is at least to some extent limited

“Where people choose to live and work is not only based on how much they earn

very early.)

It's also worth noting that money-motivated maths and physics graduates have a lot of options that pay much more than teaching ever can. Which means those maths and

by the team that works around them. Regardless of how good they are, a teacher in a context where poor behaviour is common will be less effective than they would be in a school with a culture of



hard work and a tradition of high achievement and aspiration.

And all this is before we've even begun thinking about how you select these teachers. Do we do this by qualification? By experience? By results? All these are flawed indicators. Advanced academic qualifications are poor proxies for teaching ability. Experience is often not portable from one context to another. Results are very much dependent on school culture, and years of them are needed to get any degree of certainty, ruling out some potentially excellent early-career candidates.

But more importantly, the scheme just misses the point. The problems faced by schools in our most challenging areas are not linked to how much teachers earn. They are concerned with just how much more there is to do and how much more stressful it is to do it. Even the best teachers can't make extra hours in a day, and nor are they immune to the physical and mental effects of working in high-stress environments.

A much better bet would be to overstaff schools in disadvantaged areas and decrease contact time. This would reduce workload and stress, which is probably what the majority find most off-putting. Happier, more relaxed teachers with more time to plan and support are most likely to have a direct impact on the children who attend these schools; and they're much more likely to stay beyond the expiry of financial incentives.

Unfortunately, doing this properly would cost a lot more than the £60 million earmarked for this scheme. If Johnson was serious about "levelling up", he'd think it was worth it.

Perhaps he isn't.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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JOY MBAKWE
Head of English, Lilian Baylis
Technology school

Tackling racism and rape culture is curriculum work

With time and training every teacher can start tackling oppressive narratives in their classroom, writes Joy Mbakwe. And once they do, they never go back

By virtue of my existence as a Black woman in the English classroom, I've always shown a particular attentiveness to the silenced and often missing voices in the tales I've shared with my students. It wasn't born out of a conscious decision to lend my voice to the voiceless. Rather, their existence – or lack thereof in the classroom – spoke profoundly to me in ways that I could not ignore.

For example, while some of my colleagues may have been able to focus solely on Lennie and George's fruitless pursuit of the American dream in *Of Mice and Men*, I have never been able to teach the text without drawing attention to Crooks' isolating and harrowing experience as a Black man in the 1930s.

Other colleagues, perhaps more aware of the inherent complicity in bypassing such glaringly obvious racism, may have been tempted to root and limit Crooks' grievous experience to the horrors of that period. I, however, have always felt compelled to raise students'

awareness of the residual effects of slavery in America, which permeate both Steinbeck's tale and modern-day society.

The facets of my identity ensured that my eyes were open to both the experiences of Black characters and the representations of women. My Year 9 classes would also come to

an opportunity to teach about the pervasive nature of rape culture. He may have described her in a way that was suggestive, seductive and even perhaps tempting, she was in no way deserving of a brutal death at the hands of Lennie.

I have come to realise that this is not an approach that all teachers take when exploring literature, not even all teachers who share aspects of my identity. A marked shift in my own teaching practice after the murder of George Floyd made me realise that it was the result of a learned criticality. My Blackness and my womanhood didn't automatically result in my anti-oppressive pedagogy; they simply made it easier to access the knowledge required to understand and nurture it.

So when that historic moment in May last year coincided with

“ Once our team were awake to it, there was no returning to their complicity

honour Curley's wife. We recognised her identity as dichotomous: undeniably strong and forthright, yet completely dependent on the presence of a man. Steinbeck's controversial portrayal offered

my promotion to head of English, my beliefs about the power of curriculum and what it should seek to achieve in the lives of the pupils it serves also shifted.

Through departmental training, I



was able to spread this burgeoning message of anti-racism, and once our team became awake to it, there was no returning to the complicity of sharing tales and failing to acknowledge the ways they uphold oppressive structures. A whole-school commitment to anti-racism by the senior leadership team means that what might have otherwise become a closeted attempt to create real change in our singular classrooms became a widespread experience for all black students in our school. They are included, seen and explicitly spoken to in the classroom.

Ask yourself: who is the curriculum for? Who does it serve? What do we want it to accomplish? Your response to these questions will determine your readiness and commitment to this work. There are programmes to help you on this journey. We use the Lit In Colour resources developed by Pearson and Penguin Random House, for example. But in the end, the work of anti-racism is deeply personal, confrontational and unyielding.

It requires teachers who may have once resolved to be colourblind to acknowledge the systemic barriers that exist for their Black students. And, if they don't have any Black students, to ask themselves whether Black voices are ever heard in their classrooms.

It's difficult work, but it is necessary work. We've inherited a society that is more equal than the one our predecessors experienced, and we did so at least in part because of our teachers. But we are not yet in a just society. We can't yet say we have reached equality. But is it our destination? We must ask ourselves such pressing questions in our classrooms if we are ever to get there.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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BRIGID WELLS
Clinical director,
Space to Thrive

Stressed teachers can't fight a child mental health crisis

A childhood mental health crisis is upon us, writes Brigid Wells, and having over-worked teachers on the front line undermines solutions we know to be effective

Recent figures show that one in six school-aged children suffer from mental health problems, up from one in nine pre-pandemic. In addition, the Royal College of Psychiatrists published a shocking analysis earlier in the year, showing that almost 400,000 children actively sought help for mental health issues during the first two lockdowns, double the amount seen pre-Covid.

And sharpening the picture of inequality that emerged as schools dealt with the consequences of closures, a Centre for Mental Health study found that children from the poorest 20 per cent of households are four times more likely to have serious mental health difficulties by the age of 11 compared to those from the wealthiest 20 per cent.

These numbers don't lie. We are on the verge – if not in – a childhood mental health crisis. And not only is it affecting young people and their families unequally, but it threatens to drive that inequality for generations to come. Policies to tackle attainment

gaps that don't prioritise this widening mental health gap are likely to waste time and resource.

The Department for Education is already on the case, exploring the potential of mindfulness in schools with a study led by the Anna

This initiative is a great start to helping our children to develop an awareness of their mental activity and to regulate their emotions. And it's needed. Schools may be back to providing a stable environment, but young people are still making sense of the experience of the past 18 months, and many will be aware of ongoing instability.

At our specialist residential care setting, we're seeing children and young people for whom the pandemic has represented extreme unpredictability. Among the events that impacted on them most were school closures. What had been predictable and consistent changed dramatically, and many are hyper-vigilant in the belief that it might

“ We can't expect of young people what we don't expect of ourselves

Freud National Centre for Children and Families in partnership with University College London. It's in its second wave and currently recruiting more primary and secondary schools.

The trials are designed to explore the impact of different approaches at school, in recognition of the significant time children spend there and the important role teachers can play in recognising changes in pupils' behaviour or mood.

happen again. And why wouldn't it? Nobody believed it would happen to begin with.

Being stuck in that moment of helplessness is what we call trauma. It causes us to feel isolated, disconnected from our own experience and from others. And it isn't always obvious. The dramatic helplessness that the international response to Covid caused – with uncertainty, social

isolation and restricted movement or choices – triggered historic trauma memories for many silently suffering individuals.

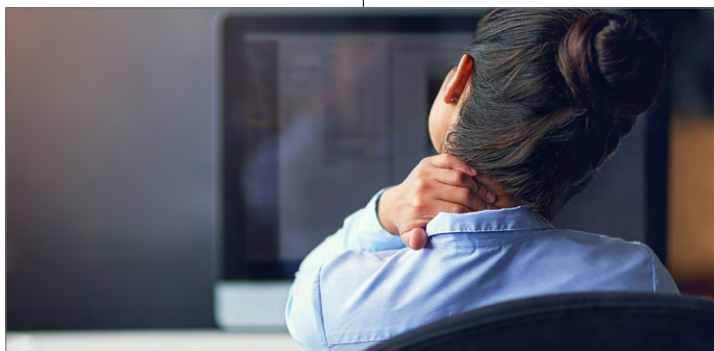
Thankfully, certain practices can serve as an antidote to the impact of trauma. Whether an individual's response is fight, flight, fawn, freeze, hyper-vigilance, numbing, withdrawing, pushing feelings down or depression (and chances are there are students reacting in all of these ways across your school) the simple act of mindfully attending to and normalising these reactions can help them to feel safe and seen.

From challenging that sense of isolation, mindfulness can then help to move children out from this “urgent” reaction into a more mature, steady reflection. Over time, this allows them to feel more self-trusting and more confident. It also builds their capacity to tolerate uncomfortable feelings and to feel more relaxed and alert.

Conscious training to be more mindful can start at any age. But we can't expect of young people what we don't expect of ourselves. That's why, at the Forge, every member of the community actively engages in awareness-based exercises. We encourage each other to put words to feelings, to ask for help if we need it and to think about our future hopes (whether that's in ten years or just ten minutes).

So given the impact of the pandemic on school leaders and teachers, well documented in these pages, the DfE may find the best way to ensure mindfulness is delivered effectively in schools is to make time for them to slow down.

It might seem counter-intuitive, but the pressure to catch up could in fact make it more difficult to attain that goal.



Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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School leaders and teachers looking for tips to improve maths teaching would do better to follow the national curriculum's principles, write Jenni Back and Anne Watson

Ofsted wants to reduce gaps in achievement by appealing to research. To that end, it has conducted seven curriculum research reviews. Teachers and school leaders will be reading these to find out how they should teach to satisfy inspectors. Unfortunately, its maths review – published to immediate calls for its withdrawal – ignores swathes of evidence and could lead to poor practice.

The impression given in the review is that memorising facts and procedures, followed by application exercises, is the watchdog's evidence-based preferred way of teaching. But that is what mathematics teaching has been like in most parts of the world for decades – and it does not work.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should become competent in problem solving, reasoning and fluency, but Ofsted does not acknowledge the extent of research about these aspects of mathematics. They ignore findings stretching back over the past 60 years that focus on educating learners to do the thinking required to solve unfamiliar problems.

Adaptable and innovative thinking is required in digital, engineering, scientific and commercial endeavours. Ofsted refers to “solving types of problems” but its review fails to address research that shows deeper understanding can develop through tackling non-routine problems that expose structure, and hence contribute to learning. Learners who only practise solving known types of problems tend to develop only

JENNI BACK

Research associate,
University of Leicester

ANNE WATSON

Professor of
mathematics
education, University
of Oxford



Ofsted's maths research review could lead to poorer teaching

superficial knowledge.

Ofsted's review is also ill-informed about the meaning of “concept” in mathematics. It portrays a concept as static knowledge. Yet in mathematics education, conceptual learning is known to be dynamic.

Consider “square”. The first time

reference to a 2007 article by

Miller and Hudson, but this article focuses on “I know why”, advocating exploration with concrete contexts, materials, apparatus, representations. In it, formalisation of facts and procedures is a final step, not a precursor.

“Three of the over-simplifications are particularly egregious

a child hears this they are probably looking at a plastic shape and their conceptual understanding coheres around such objects. Fast forward several years, and 9 is taught as the square of 3. Later, “negative 1” is the abstract square of an imaginary number. The concept is frequently revisited and adapted, and each use of the word builds on what has gone before. The concept is not static, but restructured and reconnected many times on the learning journey.

Ofsted sees concepts as second-order knowledge arising from learning factual, procedural and “conditional” knowledge. They identify conditional knowledge with the stem “I know when...”. They support this limited view with

So while Ofsted recognises that bridging between meanings is important, its emphasis on rehearsal of facts, procedures and strategies inexplicably ignores the importance of this range of multi-sensory exploration.

For example, for Ofsted the addition concept arises from learning number bonds (facts) and column addition (procedure). Rather, the mathematical concept of addition depends initially on pre-numerical concepts of adding to and taking away from quantities of stuff. Formalisation, including number bonds and column addition, comes later through the use of language and conventional representations, but the fundamental concepts



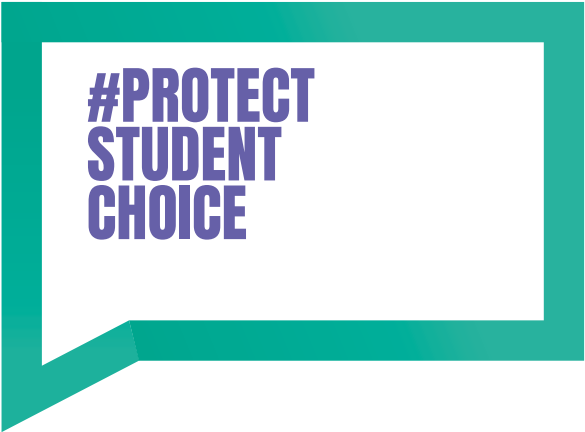
are already there, ready to be expressed by counting, measuring and then symbols.

There are still more ways that this Ofsted review oversimplifies the complexity of mathematics teaching and learning. But these three – excluding dynamic conceptual understanding, excluding exploration and non-routine situations and excluding research that challenges their preferred model – are particularly egregious.

The “example, exercise, practice, revise” model is tried and tested, and the fact is that wherever and whenever it has been tried and tested, it has failed to generate strong mathematical capability for all. So we urge teachers and leaders to maintain the statutory aims of the national curriculum.

These include knowing facts and procedures, but focus on sense-making and “knowing why”.

In doing so, the research will be on their side. To empower students as mathematical problem-solvers, teachers need to build on and adapt the conceptual knowledge they already have. And to achieve that, facts and procedures are not the main event but merely supporting tools.



**#PROTECT
STUDENT
CHOICE**

DON'T SCRAP BTECS

The **#ProtectStudentChoice** campaign coalition of 21 organisations that represent and support staff and students in schools, colleges and universities is deeply concerned about the Government's recent review of Level 3 BTECs and other applied general qualifications in England. We urgently need your support to protect the future of BTECs and other applied general qualifications:

- **Sign our petition on the Parliament website and share with your colleagues, governors, students and parents – petition.parliament.uk/petitions/592642**
- **Write to your local MPs to secure their support**
- **Tweet support for the campaign [#ProtectStudentChoice](https://twitter.com/ProtectStudentChoice)**



FEWEEK



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Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



The Great Education Robbery: How the Government Took our Schools and Gave Them to Big Business

Author: Nigel Gann

Publisher: Austin Macauley Publishers

Reviewer: Dan Morrow, CEO, Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

As titles go, *The Great Education Robbery* is about as emotive as they come. And yet, you won't find some crank conspiracy in these pages but a carefully unfolding analysis of the academisation programme at a micro and a macro level. In fact, the argument Gann posits – that the policy is fundamentally against the principles of democratic accountability – is wholly compelling.

"But," I hear you cry, "you're a MAT CEO. Are you not democratically accountable?". Well, I like to think I am. At least, I try to make myself as accountable to my communities as I can. But that doesn't negate Gann's wider point. To be properly democratic, my accountability shouldn't depend on my viewpoint.

Taking as his ideological basis the Education Act of 1988, he argues both passionately and convincingly that the move away from community and local authority leadership of schools represents a fundamental and indeed fatal shift towards the corporatisation of schools.

He goes on to show that this move was a structured and intentional plan to create a new education leadership class of very wealthy and politically connected business owners. This new 'blob' has turned a public good into private profit, and used the shocks of Brexit and the pandemic to secure a hold on the market in government contracts.

"But hold on," I hear you cry again, "are you a wealthy crony?". Well, no. But frankly, some are. And the fact that some trusts are even to be passed

down generationally on a somewhat feudal hereditary principle seems to prove Gann's point. It won't happen in my trust on my watch, but some future CEO and board of trustees could follow that path.

So this is powerful stuff. And Gann's structure around what he calls the "seven deadly sins" of corporatised schools makes for quite the exposé on the de-democratisation of our education system and how the gains made since the Victorian era are being subverted.

But there is a fundamental flaw. Permeating the book is a sense of some halcyon "once upon a time" when democratic accountability through local government delivered a just and effective school system. Many will baulk at that.

And Gann pays little heed to the number of trusts and other informal partnerships between academies that have embraced civic leadership as the basis of their co-operation and operation. His idealism leads him to succumb to the temptation of equating legalistic structures with the effectiveness of their application. It wasn't the case for local authorities and it isn't for academies either. And I say this as someone who organised the resistance against the conversion of my own school over a decade ago, precisely for the reasons that Gann notes.

To an extent then, *The Great Education Robbery* speaks to a system that was, rather than the one that is. In terms of the ethics and leadership of the sector, what David Carter would call the MAT 2.0 system is already being enacted. And the work of the Confederation of School Trusts and other sector bodies has done much to redress gaps and to promote a better balance between democratic accountability and

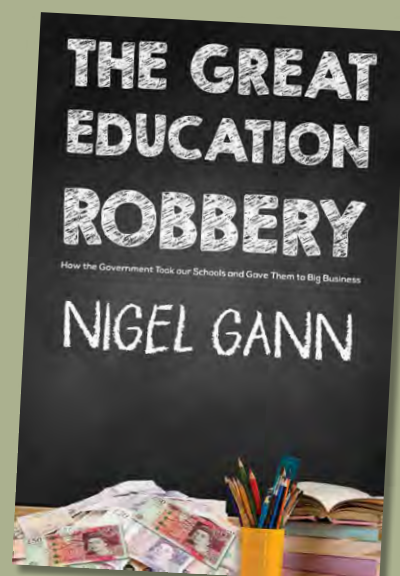
professional accountability, both of which are vital.

Gann also overlooks the sector's response to the pandemic, which was characterised by previously unimaginable sector-wide collaboration. Academy trusts gave and continue to give support to colleagues in stand-alone academies and local authority schools alike, and there is no sense that this culture is going anywhere.

These criticisms aside, this book is an important reminder of our public duty. Reading it has led me to redouble our own efforts to ensure our practices are truly anchored in the Nolan principles.

It's also a signpost to a better system, in which localism is not about ticking a box but ensuring the work we do is centred around all those we serve – not just those on our roll.

But mostly, it's a cautionary tale about what could happen to our system if we don't strike a balance between acting locally, and thinking globally.



Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is **Naureen Khalid, chair of governors and trustee, Connect Schools Academy Trust**

@5Naureen

The People Principle

@SaysMiss

In this blog, Kat Howard reflects on decision-making in people-orientated organisations. She argues that as people are at the heart of what happens in schools, planning and effectively implementing change requires all stakeholders to be invested in the outcome and the process.

But Howard goes on to reflect that placing people at the heart of our decisions is more likely to lead to making mistakes. That's because the effects of our decisions often go unseen. We learn of them through our interactions with people, who bring their biases to bear.

Then there are our own biases; Our beliefs and our previous experiences shape how we respond to events. And all these decisions are being judged against a metric of consistency that may not even be very consistent itself. All of which adds up to a simple truth: people-centred decisions are subjective. Which means accountability is first and foremost highly personal.

Howard concludes that, rather than beating themselves up about their decision-making, they should instead focus their leadership improvement on the way

TOP BLOGS of the week



in which decisions are "engaged with, considered, implemented and returned to as an example".

A wise argument for creating a positive culture of feedback.

Taking feedback well

@joe_kirby

And on that note, this blog sees Joe Kirby consider exactly that. His starting point is that in order to be of use, feedback needs to be honest. And this can be difficult if staff feel they are jeopardising their livelihood by saying what they think and feel.

Kirby uses the mnemonic RESET to describe five things to keep in mind to receive feedback well. Leaders should Reassure staff that feedback is welcome, Enquire to learn more, Summarise to ensure they've understood the feedback, Encourage staff to continue giving feedback and Thank them for their honesty. Not all five are necessary, and they don't always have to be in that order, Kirby explains, but this technique will help avoid counter-productive defensive reactions.

Kirby goes on to discuss two ideas he has learned from the authors of the book *Thanks for the Feedback*. The first is giving yourself a "second score", ie a score for how you received the first score, the feedback itself. The second is to draw boundaries to filter out unhelpful feedback.

All of which makes for a very useful blog for all school leaders – from head of department to headteacher, and right through to the chair of governors.

Happiness is not success: a personal journey in mental wellbeing

Ben Sprague for @AiimiLtd

Finally, creating a positive and honest feedback culture isn't just a matter of school improvement and effectiveness. Last week saw World Mental Health Day, a reminder that mental health is still stigmatised and requires all of us to be part of improving the way we care too.

This blog by Ben Sprague is the kind of brave personal account that helps to normalise talking about the subject. He explains that from the outside he appeared successful. He had a beautiful family, friends, a good job and a lovely house. But something didn't feel right to him. He started getting increasingly worried and stressed. He thought it was his problem and tried to hide how he was feeling. Then one night, something snapped and he drank until he blacked out.

With his wife's support, he went to counselling, which helped him realise that he had seen happiness as a prize that he could get only when he was successful at school, on his career path, as a husband and parent, etc.

Sprague concludes with the sentiment that he wants his children to know that "being honest about who you are and how you feel is a great thing". As school leaders, we should want that for all our pupils, and all our staff too.

So it is our responsibility to foster a culture where that can happen. We are, after all, people-orientated. And it's OK sometimes for people to not be OK. What matters is what we do about it.

Support is available for readers affected by the issues discussed in this blog. Talk to [Mind](#), [Samaritans](#) or [Time to Change](#)

Research



The NFER will review a research development each half term.
Contact @TheNFER if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

How has the pandemic impacted special schools and their families?

Caroline Sharp, Research director, NFER and Amy Skipp, Research consultant, ASK Research

Throughout the pandemic we've been monitoring what's been happening in special schools and colleges and with the families of pupils who attend them. In our study, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, we twice surveyed senior leaders in 11 per cent of special settings in England and conducted follow-up interviews with 40 of them. We also interviewed 40 parents.

Our survey found that, compared with their mainstream peers, the impact of Covid has been greater for pupils attending special schools – and not just in terms of lost learning time. The findings make a strong case for the new DfE team to work with the Treasury to secure more funding, now and in the longer-term, for the SEND sector.

In May 2021, we asked headteachers where their pupils' learning stood, compared to where they would have expected it to be, had it not been for the pandemic. They reported that overall, pupils were around four months behind in literacy and numeracy skills. This compares to an estimate of two-and-a-half to three months behind expectations reported in mainstream settings.

As with studies of the pandemic's effects on mainstream schools, pupils in the areas of highest free school meal eligibility were furthest behind.

But unlike mainstream settings, all pupils in special settings have an education health and care plan (EHCP). That means their wider development is also monitored at school. Our survey therefore asked headteachers about the effects on other aspects of pupils' development.

They reported that overall, pupils were around four months behind where they would have expected



them to be in terms of their social and communications skills, developing independence and life skills, and their health and physical development.

Worryingly, headteachers reported that pupils were also around four months behind in their behaviour and self-regulation, and five months behind in terms of their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

One possible explanation for this was the government's suspension of the legal requirement to provide health and care input that comes with an EHCP. Of course, even without that suspension, there has been severe disruption to these services throughout the pandemic.

We found that during the winter lockdown, 47 per cent of pupils attending special schools were not receiving their full health and therapy support, and 46 per cent of pupils were not receiving their full social care support (including respite care). And by the end of last academic year, over one-third of pupils in school had not had their therapeutic or care services returned.

Participants in our study were concerned about how quickly and how fully these services would recover, not just for their current students, but because they are also expecting to deal with an influx of new referrals

coming their way.

Special schools remained open throughout the lockdowns, but the reality is that many pupils were unable to attend and were at home for the duration. Our interviews with parents revealed the challenges of having a child with complex needs at home 24/7 and its effects on wider family wellbeing, including that of their siblings. In extreme cases, the absence of schools' vital input led to parental marriage breakdowns and separations.

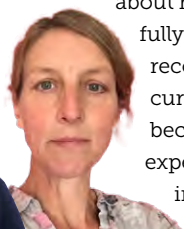
A common refrain among school leaders was that although the government provided some recovery funding, this was insufficient. Policymakers, it was generally felt, had a limited understanding of the needs of the SEND sector and families. Many worried that the experience of the pandemic would result in staff leaving the profession, taking their highly specialised skills with them and making it all the harder to meet students' increased needs.

Special schools have been disproportionately hit by the pandemic. That Nadhim Zahawi has previously held the DfE SEND brief gives hope that we will see a clearer acknowledgement of the current and longstanding issues they face.

But that will be cold comfort for the pupils who attend them, and for their families, who have also been hit hard, unless that understanding is accompanied by the funding to address the problem. The sector's eyes will be on the Chancellor's new social care levy for that.



Caroline Sharp



Amy Skipp

Week in

Westminster

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

SATURDAY

Nadhim Zahawi was full of praise for the school leadership profession when he addressed the NAHT conference on Saturday.

He even thanked people watching "over the airwaves", in recognition of the fact the union was broadcasting its conference via its Facebook page.

Alas, there were no viewers at home – because his own team ordered the union not to show it. D'oh!

The education secretary had quite the entourage when he arrived at London's County Hall on Saturday, but his bag-carriers seemed a little confused by the layout of the venue.



After Zahawi finished addressing heads he was whisked off to meet some members. But instead of leaving via the nearest door, we're told some of his team proceeded to march past the front of the main stage, just as the NAHT president was trying to bring the conference to order.

Aren't special advisers supposed to *avoid* the limelight?

MONDAY:

The reintroduction of SATs this year hasn't gone down well with everybody. But eagle-eyed schools bods on Twitter spotted a get-out-jail-free card in the latest government guidance.

It states pupils should not take the tests if "they have not completed the relevant key stage 2 programme of study", which, you could argue, means pretty much the whole year. Current year 6 pupils' last full year in school with no Covid disruption was back in year 3!

WEDNESDAY

Barely a couple of months have gone by since Gavin Williamson found himself in hot water after confusing two black sportsmen. Now one of his Conservative MP colleagues is caught up in a similar row – over comments about Gav's successor.

Tory MP James Gray is reported to have said Nadhim Zahawi and health secretary Sajid Javid, another Asian MP, look alike while at a parliamentary reception.

According to eyewitness accounts, Gray was spoken to by the education secretary after the incident.

THURSDAY

You would think the government would want to trumpet any investment in schools from the rooftops right now.

But the Department for Education managed to bury news of a £5 million boost to a broadband pilot project near the bottom of a press release this week.

After talking about how the government's gigabit broadband project had been rolled out to "thousands" of public buildings in schools, the release went on to talk about its "connect the classroom" pilot, casually mentioning a £30 million investment in over 1,000 schools.

When the pilot was first announced earlier this year, it was a £25 million spend on over 500 schools, so this latest announcement technically doubles its scope! And you all wonder why there's never any good news about the DfE...

It's fair to say the past two years have been a trying time for Ofqual. The regulator has had four chief executives, two chairs, and was blamed in part for the 2020 exams fiasco.

One of the transformations has been in the regulator's communications operation, which was fleshed out at key points to deal with the ongoing fallout from 2020 and the plans for 2021.

Now Ofqual is seeking another press officer to join it for the next stage of its journey. The £31k-a-year role will be based in Coventry.

The job advert states that the return of exams in 2022 is "keenly anticipated and will attract attention from national, specialist and regional media outlets".

That's one way of putting it...





School Business Leader

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- ICT
- Catering

For more information and an application pack, please visit our website www.abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk/recruitment/vacancies.

If you have any queries and to arrange a visit to our school, please contact Mrs Sharon Marsh, School Business Manager by email marss332@abbeycourt.medway.sch.uk



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

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

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

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: rhawkings@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



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



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



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

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