

'It's good we moved away from hero heads'



The ECF flaw we 'don't talk enough about'



P13

Trusting Ofsted now will require reform



The former teachers taking over Westminster



P7



THE LEADERS STANDING FOR ACADEMY ADVISER ELECTIONS

EXCLUSIVE Pages 9-12

Do better: Schools urged to up £4.30 apprentice TA wage

- Investigation reveals four in five pay minimum wage - just 7k a year
- Schools accused of 'exploiting system to fill vacancies with cheap labour'
- DfE says 'pay more if you can afford it', as schools miss hiring target

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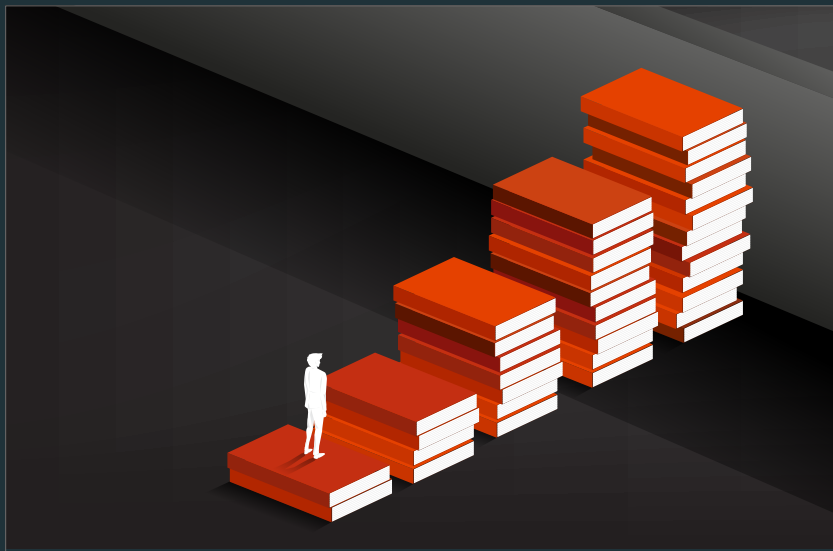
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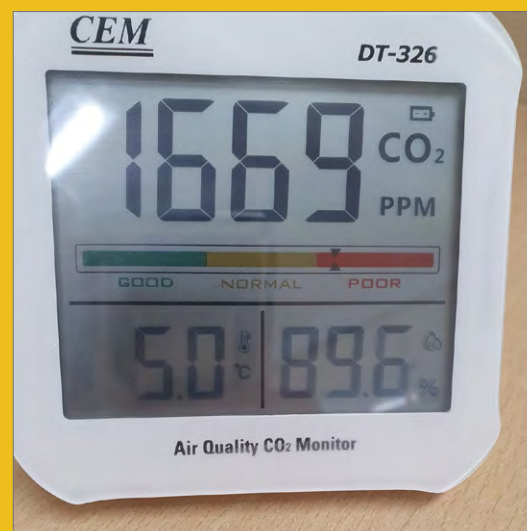
Contents

EDITION 268



Levelling up? Not with our primary libraries

Page 28



Schools register carbon dioxide readings three times above limit

Page 5



Late. Under-dressed. But the DfE turned up for climate education's 50th

Page 26



Teacher training: the uncomfortable truth

Page 27

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NEWS

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DfE appoints just 5 attendance advisers (after years of council cuts)

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

Five government attendance advisers will be deployed across local authorities and multi-academy trusts (MATs) from next week in a bid to reduce pupil absences.

The Department for Education has identified tens of organisations it says would benefit from the experts' advice.

Trusts and councils will be contacted by the DfE and offered the non-mandatory support as part of education secretary Nadhim Zahawi's commitment to make school attendance his top priority.

But it comes after the government scrapped the £600-million-a-year education services grant (ESG) in 2017, which councils used to fund services such as attendance officers.

Kevin Courtney, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the "decimation" of council support services had "far-reaching consequences".

"Schools have had to pick up a lot of this work themselves, often under very challenging funding circumstances of their own and without dedicated staff," he added.

"If there is to be a step-change on the issue of absenteeism then government must take a serious look at the investment which is so obviously needed."

DfE said advisers will draw on their expertise as former headteachers or council leaders, as well as best practices from across the sector, to provide tailored approaches for organisations.

A contract notice published in August revealed the five advisers will be paid up to £500 a day. Appointments have not been finalised yet.

They may advise on how data and partnership working can be improved to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence. Any recommendations will not be mandatory.

DfE would not say exactly how many trusts and councils have been identified for support.

Schools that have been successful in driving down absence have also been identified to share their approach with others.

Schools minister Robin Walker said: "Every lesson that we can prevent a child from missing is another building block to their life chances."

But NAHT's director of policy James Bowen said the government "must be prepared to invest in the support services schools so desperately need" if it wants to tackle the problem.

The Association of Directors of Children's Services' submission to last year's spending review highlights the impact funding cuts have had on schools.

It warns "the ability of schools to provide preventative services and additional support to some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils has been eroded over time".

This is in part due to the removal of the ESG which provided services such as "truancy and education welfare services (EWS)".

Last year Leicester City Council announced it could "no longer fund non-statutory EWS provision as a result of reductions to local authority funding and the ending of the ESG".

However, local authority welfare budgets have long been shrinking as a result of cuts.

Research from the charity School-Home Support (SHS) in 2015 found LA's EWS budgets had been cut by 39 per cent on average in the preceding six years.

During the 2018-19 academic year, 10.9 per cent of all pupils were persistent absentees, down from 11.2 per cent the previous year.

Persistently absent pupils accounted for 39.3 per cent of all absences that year. Yearly statistics have not been produced since this point due to disruption caused by the pandemic.

EBacc requirement for Latin lead schools

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

EXCLUSIVE

Lead schools to develop resources for the new £4 million Latin programme must have at least 40 per cent of pupils entered for the EBacc, or prove they will up numbers.

The Department for Education also says the majority of state-funded schools on the Latin Excellence Programme must be rated either 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Former education secretary Gavin Williamson announced the programme in August, to tackle Latin's "reputation as an elitist subject".

The DfE announced the programme will be led by a "centre of excellence", which will work with up to 40 schools to develop teacher training resources and lesson materials for 11- to 16-year-olds.

Once developed, it will support schools over four years from 2022 to 2026, which will be "evaluated for future years".

The programme will aim to drive up the number of state-secondary school pupils studying Latin outside of the south of England and to more disadvantaged pupils. However the department has yet to announce how many schools the programme will reach.

Schools Week understands that DfE will stipulate that the 40 lead schools must not be below the national average for EBacc entry in 2019 – 40 per cent.

If not, the school must be able to provide reassurance they will improve entry rates over the next few years.

Lead schools will have expertise in teaching Latin to a high standard and will have embedded the language in the curriculum. This can include private and state schools.

A British Council survey suggested Latin is taught in just 2.7 per cent of state schools, compared to 49 per cent of independent schools.

Analysis by Education Datalab shows 61 per cent of secondary schools did not have a 45 per cent or above EBacc entry rate in 2019.

A *Schools Week* investigation last year found at least five DfE initiatives with an EBacc entry quota as part of eligibility criteria.

The contract for the "National Centre of Excellence" to deliver the Latin programme will be awarded in February.

INVESTIGATION

Classroom CO2 levels three times above watchdog guidelines

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

EXCLUSIVE

Classroom carbon dioxide levels are up to three times higher than those recommended by the health and safety watchdog – despite schools following government guidance to increase ventilation.

Some school leaders say the CO2 monitors provided through the Department for Education's £25 million ventilation scheme are having no impact as, once a problem is identified, the advice to open a window does not always work.

Such high levels are not safe if a person with Covid is in the room as the virus is "much more likely to transmit at those levels", one expert said.

'What am I supposed to do?'

It is expected the 300,000 promised monitors have now been delivered to schools.

Guidance states a consistent CO2 concentration of more than 1,500 parts per million (ppm) "is an indicator of poor ventilation".

Less than 800ppm implies a space is well ventilated. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) also recommends rooms are kept below 800ppm.

Vicky Rogers, a year 6 teacher in Hertfordshire, said the CO2 monitor in her classroom regularly showed more than 1,500ppm, despite open windows and doors.

The monitor registered 2,798ppm at its peak – when pupils were discussing work – even though a third of the class was absent with Covid.

The Department for Education advises schools "take action to improve ventilation" when readings are above 1,500, but "there is no need to stop using the room".

Operational guidance for schools advises

opening windows and internal doors to improve natural ventilation, or to make use of mechanical ventilation systems.

"I've got my doors and window open, so what am I supposed to do when it tells me [CO2] levels are poor?", Rogers said.

'Most of them are off now'

A primary head from Wolverhampton, who wished to remain anonymous, admitted "most" of the CO2 monitors in their school were turned off after they registered levels above 1,500.

One classroom recorded 1,669ppm, despite temperatures dropping to 5C because of open windows and doors (see image).

The head now closes windows because it left pupils "freezing and miserable". HSE recommends minimum workplace temperatures of 16C.

The DfE says schools should "balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature".

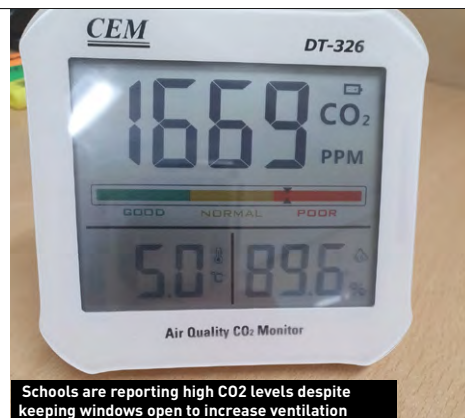
A school business manager from a large secondary in Surrey is forecasting "at least a £40,000 increase in energy costs" because of heat escaping through open windows.

The Wolverhampton head said the monitors were a "great gimmick", but "in terms of impact, they're nothing. All they do is tell you to do something that you're already doing."

Schools Week spoke to staff at five schools who had recorded at least "poor" CO2 levels. Many more have also posted high readings on social media.

Dr Deepti Gurdasani, an epidemiologist at Queen Mary, University of London, warned the 1,500 threshold was "not safe. If there is a person with Covid in the room it's much more likely to transmit at those levels."

Recent Office for National Statistics figures suggest about one in 28 school age children currently has Covid.



Schools are reporting high CO2 levels despite keeping windows open to increase ventilation

'Next logical step is to filter the air'

But Dr Matt Butler, from the Fresh Air NHS campaign group set up to improve ventilation, said high CO2 did not mean high risk of Covid.

"What it means is you're breathing in a lot of other people's air, so what you then need to do is either reduce the CO2 or filter the air."

A Teacher Tapp survey found just 10 per cent of secondary school classrooms are air-conditioned, falling to 7 per cent in primaries.

Butler said the "next logical step" was the use of HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filters that clean the air.

The government last week pledged 1,000 air cleaning units for alternative provision and SEND settings, although no date was given for the roll-out.

Mainstream schools will have to purchase devices through an online "marketplace" from December. Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of Schools and College Leaders (ASCL), said units "should be funded for all schools".

A £1.75 million government-funded school trial to test the feasibility and effectiveness of the filters and ultraviolet lights to stop the spread of Covid was announced in August.

Professor Mark Mon-Williams, who is leading the project, said while filters were "relatively straightforward to place in schools", UV devices involved "making building alterations".

"I expect to have a picture on the effectiveness of the devices during the first half of next year," he said.

A DfE spokesperson said schools are "generally finding the monitors to be a helpful tool to manage ventilation".



NEWS

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Universities told to run more summer schools and tutoring

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Universities must improve their outreach plans and work more closely with schools if they want to charge higher fees, ministers have said.

Michelle Donelan, the universities minister, this week told institutions to rewrite their access and participation plans to improve outcomes for poorer students, work more with schools to raise standards and cut "complexity and bureaucracy".

This work will be spearheaded by John Blake, the new director for fair access and participation at the Office for Students (OfS). Blake is currently head of public affairs at Ark Schools and a former head of education at Policy Exchange.

The government confirmed universities will need to get their new plans signed off by Blake to be allowed to charge higher fees. The OfS already has powers to limit fees for universities that do not meet certain conditions.

Addressing an event in London, Donelan said universities needed to go further than just accepting local students.

"We need you to actively work with and support your local schools to raise aspiration and attainment so that local students who arrive every year have the abilities, the skills and the confidence they need to excel in your courses."

According to the information pack published when the role was advertised earlier this year, Blake's new job has an annual salary of £130,000. The appointment is for a four-year term "with the option of this being extended".

He will replace Chris Millward, who is leaving in December.



John Blake



It will not be the first time Blake has worked closely with the government. He sat on advisory groups on initial teacher training and national professional qualifications.

Curriculum support also expected

Donelan has also told universities to set new targets to reduce drop-out rates. They must also improve progression into "high-paid, high-skilled jobs".

She also suggested that universities could run summer schools, support curriculum development, or offer students or lecturers to tutor pupils.

But institutions will still be able to set their own targets in their plans, "taking into account their own specific circumstances, challenges and mission".

They will also be told to cut out "complexity and bureaucracy from access and participation plans, giving universities more time to focus on disadvantaged learners".

It comes as a research report by the Sutton Trust and Institute for Fiscal Studies found

that gaps in access were "hugely variable", depending on university selectivity. Low-income students are far less likely to attend "top" universities.

The research, based on a cohort of students now in their mid-30s, also found that the best-performing universities in terms of labour market success admitted few pupils who had been eligible for free school meals.

Universities with the highest free school meals access rates had below-average success.

The average mobility rate – the proportion of students from low-income backgrounds among the top 20 per cent of earners by age 30 – is just 1.3 per cent across all universities.

This is "well below" researchers' benchmark rate of 4.4 per cent, which would grant equal access to university for all income groups.

Calls for national strategy to 'join up efforts'

Universities welcomed Blake's appointment, but pointed out they already spent substantial sums on outreach. The Russell Group, which represents 24 of England's most successful universities, said its members were already due to spend on average £11 million each on access and participation programmes in the next five years.

Its universities work with about 8,000 schools each year, including on mentoring and summer schools.

Professor Steve West, the vice-chancellor of UWE Bristol and president of Universities UK, said the move would "build on the progress the sector has made by identifying areas for further improvement within access and participation plans".

But Dr Tim Bradshaw, the Russell Group chief executive, said that breaking down barriers created by educational inequality was "not a job for universities alone".

He called for a "new national strategy to join up efforts by schools, businesses, government and others to address disadvantage throughout the education system".

NEWS

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The Westminster teacher takeover

The appointment of John Blake to oversee reforms to university outreach work marks another high-profile government post filled by a former teacher over the past year.

Most of the appointees previously held senior roles in academies or free schools, reforms they have been

vocal proponents for.

Experts believe one of the appointments - Mark Lehain - is the first former teacher to become a special adviser to an education secretary for at least 15 years. *Schools Week* looks at the key roles now filled by former teachers.

JOHN BLAKE

DIRECTOR FOR FAIR ACCESS, OFFICE FOR STUDENTS

BACKGROUND: A history subject leader who led the education department at the Policy Exchange think tank before becoming head of public affairs at Ark academy trust.

REPLACING: Chris Millward, a former higher education funding policy director.



RACHEL DE SOUZA

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

BACKGROUND: Former headteacher and chief executive, Inspiration academy trust.

REPLACED: Anne Longfield, a former children's charity chief.



KATHARINE BIRBALSINGH

SOCIAL MOBILITY COMMISSIONER

BACKGROUND: Founder and head of the Michaela Community School free school, north London.

PREVIOUS POST HOLDER: Dame Martina Milburn, charity chief.



MARK LEHAIN

SPECIAL ADVISER TO EDUCATION SECRETARY

BACKGROUND: Maths teacher who became founding principal of Bedford Free School. More recently worked for campaign groups, including Parents and Teachers for Excellence.

PREVIOUS POST HOLDER: Innes Taylor, a former political policy chief.



DAVID THOMAS

POLICY ADVISER TO EDUCATION SECRETARY

BACKGROUND: Maths teacher who held leadership roles in two academy trusts, and remains regional director at Astrea. Also co-founded Oak National Academy.

PREVIOUS POST HOLDER: Chris Paterson, think tank researcher.



JO SAXTON

CHIEF REGULATOR OFQUAL

BACKGROUND: Taught at universities and in primaries. Did school curriculum consultancy before leading two academy trusts. Most recently served as policy adviser to Gavin Williamson.

PREVIOUS POST HOLDER: Simon Lebus, exams company chief.





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RSC ADVISER ELECTIONS

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Fresh faces likely as voting opens for academy advisory boards

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

EXCLUSIVE

School leaders are vowing to champion smaller trusts and challenge the status quo as they vie for election to increasingly contested academy sector adviser posts.

Polls opened this week to elect 32 leaders to join the eight boards which advise and challenge England's regional schools commissioners.

A total of 164 candidates are standing, up from 135 at the last election in 2017.

Alice Gregson, chief operating officer at MAT support firm Forum Strategy, welcomed the higher number running, "especially at such challenging times".

Four-fifths are multi-academy trust chief executives. Rules on candidates having headship experience were relaxed this year, with the groups renamed from "headteacher boards" to "advisory boards".

The West Midlands is most contested, with 29 candidates for the four available spots. Lancashire and West Yorkshire is least competitive, with 15 applicants.

All change for advisers

Fresh faces are guaranteed on almost every board, with 20 of 27 current advisers stepping down.

Caroline Derbyshire, a soon-to-depart adviser who leads Saffron Academy Trust, said it was wrong to "hog that opportunity".

The exception is the West Midlands, where all four serving advisers are running, including



"superhead" Dame Maureen Brennan.

One school leadership expert voiced "concern" about Brennan's candidature, as she faced disciplinary action for failing to keep accurate attendance registers as a head in the 2000s. But regulators spared the now-chief executive of Matrix Academy Trust a ban because of her remorse and "exceptional achievements".

Brennan told Schools Week re-election would be a "privilege" after 45 years serving education locally.

Another candidate who similarly overcame controversy is David Coaché, executive head of the two-school Bengeworth Trust. The trust's chair called him a "stronger, wiser, more empathetic and respected leader" after a 2019 drink-driving conviction.

Coaché said it was an "enormously regrettable" mistake in an exemplary career. He said boards should reflect the "broad church" of school leaders rather than the "same faces", limiting the risk that successful, prominent trusts get "all the decisions

in their favour".

Eight candidates mention their OBEs or other honours.

Applicants also include a former regional schools commissioner, Tim Coulson.

CEOs seize opportunity

Analysis by Schools Week suggests 84 per cent of candidates are chief executives or hold equivalent roles leading multi-academy trusts.

Only seven per cent are heads or CEOs of standalone trusts, which make up 12 per cent of academies. The remaining nine per cent are heads or executive heads within multi-academy trusts who are not also CEOs, though several hold additional trust roles.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of school leaders' union ASCL, warned the reforms could risk the boards becoming "increasingly distant" from "boots-on-the-ground" knowledge.

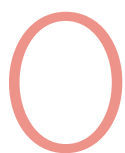
But newly eligible candidate Josh Coleman, boss of East Midlands Academy Trust, said trust CEOs' roles can give them "broader context" for decision-making.

Big trusts duck out

Strikingly absent from candidate lists were leaders or heads from any of the ten largest trusts. None responded to requests for comment. Sector figures said their absence could reflect influence elsewhere already and a wish to avoid conflict of interest.

But many big trusts outside the top ten are fielding candidates – and several others are

MALE CEOS DOMINATE- BUT BIGGEST TRUSTS STEER CLEAR

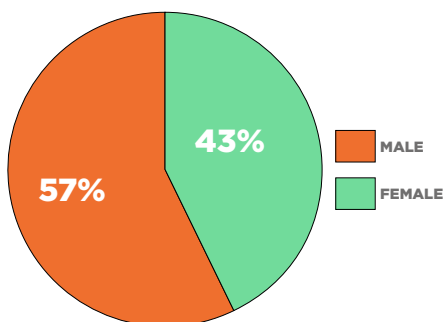


NUMBER OF
CANDIDATES
FROM 10 LARGEST
TRUSTS

74%

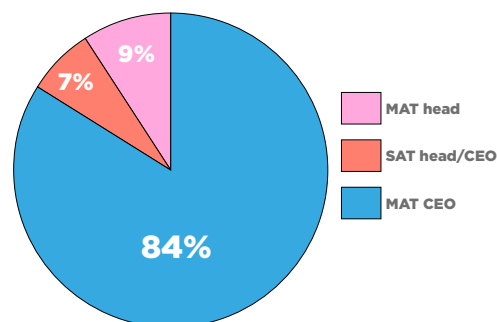
PROPORTION OF CURRENT
ADVISERS STANDING
DOWN

MEN OUTNUMBER WOMEN



GRAND TOTAL 164

MAT CEOs dominate



Continued on next page

RSC ADVISER ELECTIONS

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explicitly running to counteract larger trusts' influence.

Jonny Uttley, chief executive six-school The Education Alliance, said he would "always talk about small trusts and maintained schools" if elected.

Stewart Biddles, chief executive of Riviera Education Trust, said he would represent small MATs when "the message we seem to be hearing is 'bigger is better'".

Mark Thomas, head of standalone Woodland View Primary, said he would bring "the voice of the little guy".

Inclusion and change promised

An analysis of applicant statements also shows others vowed to "champion diverse voices", including Astrea Academy Trust chief executive Rowena Hackwood, citing female MAT leaders in particular.

Anita Johnson said representing ethnic minorities as a "female BAME CEO and headteacher" of the Loxford School Trust was a "driving force" for application.

But boards appear set to become more male. Currently 59 per cent of elected advisors are female, yet only 43 per cent of candidates are.

Gregory said recent Forum research found around 40-46 per cent of CEOs are female, a better proportion than in other industries, but "there is still progress to be made".

Candidates in several regions pledged to represent vulnerable, disadvantaged or SEND pupils, as well as alternative provision and special schools.

Sean Kelly, Raleigh Learning Trust chief executive, called himself an "unapologetic advocate of children with complex needs".

Some promised to hold RSCs to account. "I'm not afraid to stand up for what I feel is right," said Jeremy Rowe, CEO of the Waveney Valley Academy Trust.

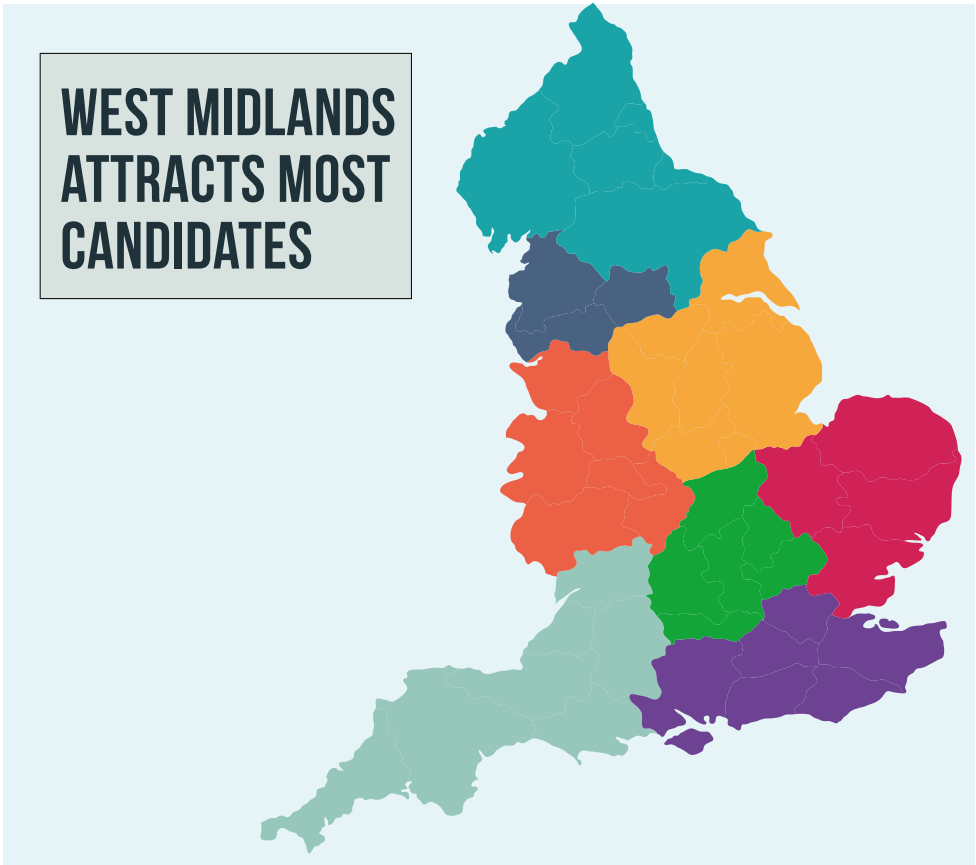
Other candidates even promised to push for change. Coulson said the board should "set an ambition for trust growth over the next three years".

Hackwood and Uttley vowed to challenge MAT competition. Dr Alan Lee, Bedfordshire Schools Trust CEO, said schools needed "more control".

Yet Leora Cruddas, chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, which represents MATs, noted "the regulator makes the decisions", with boards advising.



Tim Coulson



REGION	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES
WEST MIDLANDS	29
NORTH WEST LONDON AND SOUTH CENTRAL ENGLAND	27
EAST OF ENGLAND AND NORTH-EAST LONDON	23
SOUTH EAST ENGLAND AND SOUTH LONDON	18
SOUTH WEST ENGLAND	18
EAST MIDLANDS AND THE HUMBER	17
NORTH OF ENGLAND	17
LANCASHIRE AND WEST YORKSHIRE	15
GRAND TOTAL	164

Experience most cited

Many candidates' statements were dominated by career histories. Schools Week analysis shows "experience" was mentioned 171 times – the third most common word used after "school" and "education".

"Years" was mentioned 144 times, "support" 127 times and "outstanding" 60 times.

The most eye-catching applications included Johnson's, which quoted Winnie the Pooh: "A day without a friend is like a pot without a single drop of honey."

Thomas said dressing up as Hagrid and other characters for school events made him prouder than his 'outstanding' rating.

The DfE had refused to share candidates' statements with anyone but academies themselves, but quickly u-turned, publishing them after Schools Week queried this and

began emailing candidates directly.

Stuart Lock welcomed the move, with the Advantage Schools Trust leader one of several CEOs promising more transparency.

Voting is open for another two weeks. There is one vote per academy, but only the academy head or the trust leader may cast the vote. The process potentially advantages large, geographically concentrated trusts.

Several heads said they had not received ballots on Monday. Officials urged affected schools to contact them.

Many leaders will not vote. One single-academy head said he was unconvinced advisers could protect standalone and maintained schools from the MAT drive. "It's a fait accompli."

Continued on next page

RSC ADVISER ELECTIONS

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW IT ALL WORKS

Regional schools commissioners were introduced in 2014 to oversee the fast-growing academy sector of schools outside local authority control.

RSCs have a remit to academise struggling maintained schools, rebroker struggling academies, intervene in struggling trusts and approve voluntary conversions, mergers and trust expansion plans.

Each RSC manages a different region, and can appoint and co-opt up to four advisers. But they also have four elected advisers,

serving three-year terms.

These advisory boards, previously called headteacher boards, should provide a "check and balance" on RSC decisions. If most advisers oppose an RSC's view, issues are escalated to ministers.

New elections for these roles are now underway, after being delayed last year over Covid.

Leaders are elected under a first-past-the-post, "one academy, one vote" system. The DfE says heads and senior school and trust

leaders should "agree amongst themselves" who votes. Each academy can pick four candidates.

Each board must have at least one adviser with primary and one secondary "expertise", and no more than one representative of a trust.

The boards were initially only open to heads and former heads of well-rated academies. But this year has seen eligibility widened to include trust senior executive leaders.

South East England and South London

ANDREW CARTER	SOUTH FARNHAM EDUCATIONAL TRUST
CASSIE BUCHANAN	THE CHARTER SCHOOLS EDUCATIONAL TRUST
JACK MAYHEW	ATHENA-GEP
JOHN PRIOR	ORCHARD HILL COLLEGE ACADEMY TRUST (OHCAT)
NICK OSBORNE	MARITIME ACADEMY TRUST
MATTHEW WRIGHT	CHARACTER EDUCATION TRUST
MARIE SWEETLOVE	FORTIS TRUST
JONATHAN MORRIS	SUSSEX LEARNING TRUST
TRACEY SAVAGE	SANDWICH TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL
SUE SAMSON	UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
EMMA BRADSHAW	ALTERNATIVE LEARNING TRUST
DAVID HARRIS	ENGAGE ENRICH EXCEL ACADEMIES
DAVID BOYLE	DUNRAVEN EDUCATIONAL TRUST
REBECCA PLASKITT	TANDRIDGE LEARNING TRUST
SU WHELAN	HISP
JANE FLETCHER	ALDRIDGE EDUCATION
BRETT FREEMAN	WOKING COLLEGE
CLAIRE LOWE	INSPIRE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

South West England

CRAIG JONES	CABOT LEARNING FEDERATION
STEWART BIDDLES	RIVIERA EDUCATION TRUST
STEVE SAVORY	GLOUCESTERSHIRE LEARNING ALLIANCE
DEAN ASHTON	REACH SOUTH ACADEMY TRUST
DAN MORROW	DARTMOOR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
SIMON HAGUE	CROFTY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
LES HALL	LEADING EDGE ACADEMIES PARTNERSHIP
NEIL BLUNDELL	CATHEDRAL SCHOOLS TRUST
KATE LANGLEY	GOTHERINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL
MARK DAVIES	TRUST IN LEARNING (ACADEMIES)
JACKIE SMITH	BRUNEL SEN MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
EMMA KERR	LAUNCESTON COLLEGE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
ROBERT GASSON	WAVE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
ANDREA ARLIDGE	FUTURA LEARNING PARTNERSHIP
JENNIFER BLUNDEN OBE	TRURO AND PENWITH ACADEMY TRUST
ROBERT FARMER	HAMWIC EDUCATION TRUST
JOHN ABBOTT	RICHARD HUISH TRUST
RACHEL HOWIE	DIOCESE OF GLOUCESTER ACADEMIES TRUST

East Midlands and the Humber

ROWENA HACKWOOD	ASTREA ACADEMY TRUST
CHRIS WHEATLEY	FLYING HIGH TRUST
KERRIE HENTON	STONE SOUP LEARNS
SIAN HAMPTON	ARCHWAY LEARNING TRUST
SEAN KELLY	RALEIGH LEARNING TRUST
NEIL LOCKYER	ST THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
TIM SUTCLIFFE	SYMPHONY LEARNING TRUST
PAUL HEERY	THE WHITE HILLS PARK TRUST
JULIAN SCHOLEFIELD	ESTEEM MULT-ACADEMY TRUST
GARETH NELMES	BRADGATE EDUCATION PARTNESHIP
SUE BRIDGES	CASCADE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
SIMON ALEXANDER WITHAM	VENN ACADEMY TRUST
TOM BANHAM	HCAT
MARK MALLENDER	DERBY DIOCESAN ACADEMY TRUST (DDAT)
JONNY UTTLEY	THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE
ANGELA SPENCER	ST MARGARET CLITHEROW CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST
JOHN MORRISON	LINCOLN UTC

North of England

KELVIN SIMPSON	ADVANCE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP
MAURA REGAN	BISHOP HOGARTH CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST
JO HEATON OBE	NORTHERN LIGHTS LEARNING TRUST
PAUL RICKEARD	DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE DIOCESAN LEARNING TRUST
JULIA ARMSTRONG	PRINCE REGENT STREET TRUST
JOANNA BAILEY	TEES VALLEY COLLABORATIVE TRUST
COLIN LOFTHOUSE	SMART MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
JONATHAN JOHNSON	WEST LAKES MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
CHRISTINA JONES	RIVER TEES MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
NIGEL ASHLEY	ELEVATE MAT
ANDY BROWN OBE	AD ASTRA ACADEMY TRUST
ANITA BATH	BISHOP BEWICK CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST
ALEX HOOK	NORTH EAST LEARNING TRUST - NELT
DEBI BAILEY	NEAT ACADEMY TRUST
DAME NICOLA STEPHENSON	VALOUR MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
JENN PLEWS	NORTHERN STAR ACADEMIES TRUST
NICK BLACKBURN	LINGFIELD EDUCATION TRUST

RSC ADVISER ELECTIONS

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West Midlands

SINEAD SMITH	HOLY SPIRIT MULTI ACADEMY COMPANY
DANIEL ADAM THOMAS	THE LEARNING FOR LIFE PARTNERSHIP
JAYNE BARTLETT	E-ACT
SARAH FINCH	MARCHES ACADEMY TRUST
MARK KENT	POTTERIES EDUCATIONAL TRUST
ANNETTE WILLIAMS	WEAVER TRUST
NICOLA JANE RAGGETT	KINGS NORTON GIRLS' SCHOOL
MARGARET YATES	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC COLLEGIATE MULTI-ACADEMY
MICHAEL THOMAS DONOGHUE	JOHN TAYLOR MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
CHARLENE GETHIN	THE STAFFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
KATE TAGUE	WMG ACADEMY FOR YOUNG ENGINEERS TRUST
MICHAEL COWLAND	THE DIOCESE OF COVENTRY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
NEIL WALLACE	STRATFORD UPON AVON SCHOOL
JARED ECCLES	THE MOORLANDS PRIMARY FEDERATION
MARTIN MURPHY	ARDEN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
RUBINA DARR	CROMWELL LEARNING COMMUNITY MAT
MATTHEW SNELSON	THE SIR JOHN BRUNNER FOUNDATION
SHARRON PHILPOT	VICTORIA ACADEMIES TRUST
IAN NURSER	EMPOWER TRUST
DAFYDD LAWDAY	MERCIAN EDUCATIONAL TRUST
DAVID COACHÉ	BENGWORTH MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
SUSAN WEDGWOOD	ST CHAD'S ACADEMIES TRUST
SARAH FINDLAY-COBB	LANDAU FORTE CHARITABLE TRUST
DAME MO BRENNAN	MATRIX ACADEMY TRUST
JULIE GREENWOOD	LEIGH TRUST
IAN BEARDMORE	NEWMAN CATHOLIC COLLEGIATE
GUY SHEARS	CENTRAL REGION SCHOOLS TRUST
JENNIFER CLEGG	E-ACT
NIC BRINDLE	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SCHOOLS TRUST

North West London and South Central England

MARINO CHARALAMBOUS	NORTH STAR COMMUNITY TRUST
DR ANDREW CAMPBELL	BROOKE WESTON TRUST
MATTHEW KLEINER-MANN	IVY LEARNING TRUST
SUSAN DOUGLAS CBE	EDEN ACADEMY TRUST
ALICE HUDSON	TWYFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMIES TRUST
MARK THOMAS	WOODLAND VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL
RICHARD EVANS	VALE ACADEMY TRUST
ROZALYN THOMSON	GREAT LEARNERS TRUST
JAMIE CLARKE	TOVE LEARNING TRUST
ANNABEL KAY	THE WARRINER MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
JOSHUA COLEMAN	EAST MIDLANDS ACADEMY TRUST
SANDRA APPLEBY	DAVID ROSS EDUCATION TRUST
DR ALAN LEE	BEDFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS TRUST
CATH KITCHEN	THE SKYLARK PARTNERSHIP
SUE COLLINGS	RIDGEWAY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP
SARAH TURNER	ELT PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY ENFIELD LEARNING TRUST)
ANN MARIE MULKERINS	MIDDLESEX LEARNING TRUST
SARAH BENNETT	INSPIRING FUTURES THROUGH LEARNING
GINNY RHODES	THE CIRCLE TRUST
CHRIS HILL	NENE EDUCATION TRUST
JOSEPHINE VALENTINE	DANES EDUCATIONAL TRUST
MATTHEW GAUTHIER	SCHOLARS' EDUCATION TRUST
DR PENNY BARRATT OBE	THE BRIDGE LONDON TRUST
STUART LOCK	ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS
ANDY SQUIRES	THE DENBIGH ALLIANCE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
ANDREW WILCOCK	VERITAS EDUCATIONAL TRUST
ANTONY WITHEYMAN	INNOVATE MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

East of England and North-East London

BRIAN CONWAY	ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC MAT
DARREN WOOLLARD	LEARNING IN HARMONY TRUST
JAMES BIDDULPH	UTS CAMBRIDGE
LAWRENCE CHAPMAN	SENDAT (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES ACADEMIES TRUST)
PAUL HARRIS	THE TAPSCOTT LEARNING TRUST
GARETH STEVENS	THE INSPIRATION TRUST
MARK GREATREX	BELLEVUE PLACE EDUCATION TRUST
RUTH BROCK	SECAT (SOUTHEND EAST COMMUNITY ACADEMY TRUST)
ADRIAN BALL	DIOCESE OF ELY MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
SARAH SKINNER	SOUTH SUFFOLK LEARNING TRUST (SSLT)
NIKOS SAVVAS	SUFFOLK ACADEMIES TRUST
SUSANNAH EDMOND-BAKER	ATTAIN ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP
MARK FARMER	BRIDGE ACADEMY TRUST
LYNSEY HOLZER	EVOLUTION ACADEMY TRUST
TIM COULSON	UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP
CLARE FLINTOFF	ASSET EDUCATION
NEIL GALLAGHER	THE SIGMA TRUST
LUCY SCOTT	EASTERN LEARNING ALLIANCE
ANITA JOHNSON	LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST
TONY PARFETT	CATALYST ACADEMIES TRUST
RICHARD POTTER	ALPHA TRUST
SIMON ELLIOTT	COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TRUST
JEREMY ROWE	WAVENEY VALLEY ACADEMIES TRUST

Lancashire and West Yorkshire

TANIA LEWYCKYJ	THE BISHOP FRASER TRUST
NEVILLE BEISCHER	FLAGSHIP LEARNING TRUST
CAROL MCLACHLAN	VISION TRUST
RICHARD CHARLES RONKSLEY	ALTUS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP
MARK WILSON	WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST
JOHN TARBOX	THE PENNINE TRUST
JOHN MCNALLY	SHARE MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
CAROL DEWHURST OBE	BRADFORD DIOCESAN ACADEMIES TRUST
BRENDAN LOUGHRAN	GREAT ACADEMIES EDUCATION TRUST
KASH RAFIQ	SOUTH PENNINE ACADEMIES
MICHAEL GOSLING	TRINITY MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST
ADRIAN KNEESHAW	CARLTON ACADEMY TRUST
JAMES KEULEMANS	CLITHEROE ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL TRUST
NICOLA BEAUMONT	LINDLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL
KAREN BURNS	VICTORIOUS ACADEMIES TRUST

HOW TO VOTE

Visit <https://hub.ukvote.uk/dfe/> to vote. Each academy should receive a login by email and post - email enquiries@uk-engage.org if not.

TIMELINE

Voting closes at 5pm on Friday 10 December, with results in late January.

NEWS

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Staff have to 'drop something' to fit in ECF, provider admits

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Teacher trainers gathered this week for the annual conference of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers. Here's what we learned...

ECF comes 'at the expense' of other activities

Teachers will have to prioritise their professional development "at the expense" of other activities in schools, a provider of the government's new early career framework (ECF) has warned.

Faye Craster, Teach First's director of teacher development, said one of the "challenges" for the ECF was the "step change for the expectations" of new teachers and mentors on the "commitment to professional development."

The ECF is a two-year package of induction for new teachers, which was introduced in pilot areas last year and rolled out nationwide this September.

Under the framework, teachers are supposed to get a five per cent timetable reduction in their second year in the classroom for development, and more experienced staff should be freed up to be mentors.

But Craster warned this week that this "has to be at the expense of something else".

"I don't think we talk about this enough. What is this 'something else' that has to drop to allow our early career teachers and mentors to focus on their development?"

Nicky Platt, lead education advisor at the Education Development Trust, another ECF provider, said a "big" challenge was mentor workload and the "sheer bandwidth" required to engage properly.

Craster warned that in small schools, most teachers either already had responsibilities or were new to the job.

"We have data coming back from mentors who are on senior leadership teams, are also induction tutors, have a teaching and learning responsibility."

This week, 97 per cent of 160 initial teacher training providers said they were concerned about the time and capacity for mentoring in schools.

£4.30 TA apprentices: Exploitation or opportunity?

The government's review of the initial teacher



training market is not an attempt to push smaller providers out of the sector, a Department for Education official has said.

Under the controversial plans, the DfE wants all providers to re-accredit against new quality requirements. This prompted concerns some school-centred initial teacher trainers and universities could be pushed out of the market.

But Ruth Talbot, DfE's deputy director of Train to Teach, told NASBTT's conference the review was "not about size, it's not about scale, this is about quality".

"There is no preference for one type of provider over another. It's about none of those things.

"If your provision is capable of delivering the quality vision set out in the review, then that's the thing to ask yourself."

She also said there was "no prescribed number of providers" being discussed.

The government is expected to respond to its consultation in the coming weeks.

Providers 'alarmingly' teach 'specific pedagogies'

A senior Ofsted inspector warned that some ITT providers inspected under the new framework were "misinforming trainees" by covering only specific pedagogies.

The watchdog started inspecting ITT provision under a new framework this year, resulting in two-thirds of school-age providers inspected so far being downgraded.

Helen Matthews told the NASBTT conference that "rather alarmingly", there were "less than good" providers "selling specific pedagogies" as the "be all and end all, the gold standard.

"Rather than actually teaching trainees that there are lots of pedagogies out there... what

we found sometimes, which was actually quite alarming, is where partnerships had chosen a particular pedagogy.

"I use Bloom's [taxonomy] as an example – and basically they were selling this to their trainees so that everything the trainees did... had to be around the pedagogy of Bloom's."

Bloom's taxonomy is an educational theory that looks at cognitive, affective and sensory learning. However, experts have questioned whether was even a pedagogy.

Matthews added: "That clearly is misinforming trainees, and many of you will know that a lot of Bloom's theories have been discredited." She did not name the providers in question.

Bursaries impact diversity

Higher teacher training bursaries increase the chances of men and career changers applying, while appearing to decrease the proportion of black and Asian applicants, new research shows.

NASBTT and the National Foundation for Education Research found that a £10,000 increase in a bursary was associated with a 29 per cent increase in applications overall.

The bursary rise is also associated with a two percentage point increase in the proportion of applicants who are age 40 and over, and of male applicants.

London-based applicants are less responsive to bursaries than other regions. The £10,000 bursary increase was also associated with a one percentage point increase in the proportion of white applicants.

Researchers estimate a "small but statistically significant" association between a bursary increase and a drop in the proportion of applicants who are black and Asian.

NEWS



Council has right to see home-educated pupils' work

SAMANTHA BOOTH
@SAMANTHAJBOTH

A council was within its rights to ask for examples of work to ensure a child's home education was suitable, according to a landmark High Court ruling.

A parent launched a judicial review against Portsmouth City Council, saying it had been "unreasonable" in its demands before it issued a school attendance order.

The parent had sent a "detailed" outline of their three children's home education. But in August last year the council asked to see examples of the children's work.

The parent argued that this put the "burden of proof" on parents that children were receiving a suitable education, despite "no legal requirements" for them to mark or formally assess work.

But Justice Peter Lane backed the council, saying it was not "necessarily compelled to accept merely assertive statements by the parent."

"Without intending to be prescriptive, what may be needed in such cases could well involve a meeting with the child and/or an examination of the child's work, whether or not this work has been marked by the parent."

After the case, council barrister Paul Greatorex said that while "a lot of local authorities have accepted reports historically ... it will be interesting to see if this decision leads to a change in practice."

The decision comes as the number of children withdrawn from school for elective home education (EHE) soared 34 per cent last year.

Analysis by the Association of Directors of Children's Services estimated that 115,542 pupils were home-educated at some point during the 2020-21 academic year, up from 86,335 in 2019-20.

Mike Stoneham, Portsmouth's deputy director of education, said there had been a "significant rise" in EHE, with "numerous cases of unsuitable education".

Parents had to ensure their child received

education that was efficient, full-time and suitable, while local authorities had a duty to monitor.

Judge Lane said the parent's report was "wholly assertive in nature" and contained "nothing by the way of actual work produced by the children".

He said not teaching the curriculum or marking work did not "absolve" parents from showing their home education was suitable.

A spokesperson for Portsmouth Home Education, a parents' group, said demands for work were "nonsensical".

"Learning might be undertaken through conversation or on educational trips. It's difficult to 'prove' that learning happened in those moments and some trust needs to be applied."

David Wolfe QC, who represented the parent, told *Schools Week* the case should not be "a green light" for councils to become more prescriptive.

Suzy Horton, Portsmouth's children's chief, said the ruling vindicated its approach. She promised to give parents "further opportunity to work with us to demonstrate that a suitable education is taking place".

Portsmouth Home Education is considering its next legal steps.

The Department for Education issued non-statutory guidance for local authorities and parents on home education in 2019.

Sir Alan Wood, who has led multiple government safeguarding reviews, said guidance should be clarified to make clear that enough information, including examples of progress and work, be provided by parents.

The DfE said it would review guidance, but signalled there were no immediate plans for any amendments.

The government is yet to respond to its own consultation on plans for a national register on home-educated children, despite it closing more than two years ago.

It has also ruled out producing a centralised definition of "suitable" home education, saying it would not be in the sector's interests.

Legal action over mandatory attendance

SAMANTHA BOOTH
@SAMANTHAJBOTH

A council in the West Midlands is facing legal action over claims children in clinically vulnerable families must attend school or face a fine.

The Good Law Project is supporting a mother who has a serious medical condition and is on immunosuppressant drugs, while her youngest child has a rare form of epilepsy that is triggered by illness.

Her two eldest children have gone into school whenever Covid case numbers have been low, but have stayed home when risks have risen.

The Good Law Project says until recently, the children's headteachers supported this, but now Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council is "demanding" all children are back in the classroom. The family has been told they could face a fine or prosecution, the project said.

The Department for Education's guidance says a child should "follow the advice of their specialist" if told to isolate or reduce their social contact because of their medical condition or treatment, rather than because of the pandemic.

In an email to heads last month, it added: "Schools should consider all applications for leave of absence on an individual basis, taking into account the specific facts and circumstances, and relevant background context behind the request."

In a pre-action letter, lawyers claim Solihull is breaching human rights and equality laws. The council also had "no power" to "tell headteachers what to do".

The DfE said that headteachers could grant leaves of absence for pupils in exceptional circumstances.

"Now every child aged 12 and over with specific underlying health conditions has been offered the vaccine, it is right that all children are supported to return to class with additional measures such as regular testing in place."

A council spokesperson said it was considering the letter.

NEWS

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Investigate academies' 'substantial reserves', DfE told

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

A spending watchdog has told the government to investigate academy trusts building up "substantial reserves" while the number of local authority schools in deficit has doubled.

However, a report by the National Audit Office (NAO) yesterday found mainstream school finances had "held up well" in recent years, despite cuts and other funding pressures.

About nine in ten reported having cash left over in their 2019-20 accounts.

But of those not doing well, the picture is bleak, with a doubling of the number in deficit. Meanwhile, councils' core school funding deficits have surged from £11 million to £675 million in five years.

The NAO noted figures would not fully capture Covid's impact, however. The school leaders' union NAHT also warned many schools were obliged to balance their books, and surpluses might have required cutbacks.

Quarter of standalone trusts did not spend 20 per cent of income ...

One in four standalone trusts and one in five multi-academy trusts ended last year with 20 per cent of their annual income unspent, according to the NAO.

Just one in 20 maintained schools recorded similarly large surpluses.

The NAO said a "sizeable minority of academy trusts are building up sizeable reserves, meaning they are spending less than their annual income on their pupils".

The report recommended that the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) investigate to "develop its understanding of why trusts are acting in this way, seek assurance that levels of reserves are acceptable, and take action where it has concerns that this is not the case".

A Schools Week investigation in March revealed the biggest multi-academy trusts had managed to ride out Covid's toll on their finances – using savings, donations and reserves to pump millions into catch-up schemes and laptops.

We also reported last month how a handful of trusts were making six-figure sums by using wealth managers, stocks and other investment strategies to generate cash from their reserves.

Ministers have now told trusts to tap large



reserves to cover repairs.

The NAO's figures also reveal the number of trusts in deficit shrank from 7 per cent in 2017-18, to 4 per cent last year.

... but councils in trouble

By contrast, the number of maintained schools outstanding income had more than doubled in five years to 11 per cent

For maintained secondaries, the average cumulative deficit is now £669,000.

The NAO said secondaries were under particular pressure as sixth-form funding had been slashed while councils had protected primary funding more.

The National Education Union said the situation of sixth-form colleges was "truly dire", forcing closures and mergers.

Geographic divides are also clear. While 14 areas had no school in deficit, another 26 had more than a fifth outstanding their income last year. NAO analysis "did not indicate a link" between such figures and deprivation.

Councils' education finances overall have also deteriorated nationwide, following rising special education needs and disabilities spending pressures.

Ninety-four authorities overspent their main funding pot, the dedicated schools grant, last year,

up from just five in 2014-15.

Local authorities in deficit spent £675 million more than they received last year, compared with an £11 million overspend five years ago.

The NAO urged officials to research how schools had responded to mounting financial pressures, such as slashing staffing or SEND support, and why secondaries faced challenges.

DfE bad loans and cost-cutting under scrutiny

The watchdog noted the ESFA, which funds academies, has handed trusts in financial trouble £45 million in grants and £79 million in loans since 2014.

But it does not expect to recover more than a third of the loans, according to the NAO.

The number of trusts whose finances are of "significant concern" to regulators has dropped from 66 in 2017 to 53 last year, however.

Meanwhile the watchdog praised the DfE's "sensible" and "well-received" efforts to find savings in schools, including benchmarking tools.

The school resource management advisers programme identified potential savings worth £303 million from 979 visits up to March this year.

But only 313 schools and trusts updated regulators as requested six months later, and only £16.9 million savings had been made so far.

Government figures show school cost pressures exceeded funding increases by £2.2 billion between 2015-16 and last year.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said "sensible programmes" have helped schools to meet savings, but until the DfE "improves the reliability of its data, it will not be able to make fully informed decisions about the support it offers to schools".

A spokesperson said core schools funding would rise by £4.7 billion by 2025, with secondaries receiving £160 more per pupil next year as part of "ambitious education recovery plans".

NAO RECOMMENDATIONS ON SCHOOL FINANCES

- ASSESS IMPACT OF SCHOOL COST-CUTTING FOLLOWING FUNDING SQUEEZE
- FIND OUT WHY LOCAL AUTHORITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE UNDER PARTICULAR PRESSURE
- INVESTIGATE ACADEMY TRUSTS BUILDING UP "SUBSTANTIAL RESERVES"
- DEVELOP BETTER SYSTEMS TO MONITOR DfE SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT

LONG READ

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£4.30 apprentice TAs: Exploitation or opportunity?

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Many multi-academy trusts and local authority-maintained schools are paying teaching assistant apprentices the minimum legal amount - or about £7,000 a year. Freddie Whittaker reports

Schools are employing apprentice teaching assistants for as little as £4.30 an hour, prompting concerns that some could be "exploiting" the apprenticeships system for cheap labour.

A *Schools Week* investigation has found that some of the country's most prominent multi-academy trusts are among those advertising vacancies that pay the minimum legal amount to teaching assistant apprentices. However, the practice is widespread: dozens of local authority-maintained schools are also advertising roles at this rate.

The government told *Schools Week* that while it was not responsible for pay, it "encourages employers to pay more when they can afford to do so".

The apprentice minimum wage is £4.30 an hour for under-19s or older apprentices in their first year. It is due to rise to £4.81 next year. Over-19s not in their first year must be paid at least the national minimum wage for their age group.

'It's exploitative and needs ministerial attention'

It is legal to pay an apprentice the minimum rate. But unions fear the low pay – equivalent to just under £7,000 a year for someone working 40 hours a week on a term-time-only contract – risks becoming exploitative.

However, schools and trusts that employ apprentices have defended the programme, which they say can help those without the necessary skills and experience to become teaching assistants.

Analysis of 227 teaching assistant (TA)



vacancies on the government's Find an Apprenticeship platform found that 183, or about 80 per cent, offered the minimum rate.

The average hourly wage of all the vacancies analysed was £4.64, much less than apprentices more generally are paid. The average hourly wage of level 2 and 3 apprentices nationally was £7.70 in 2018-19, the latest year for which data is available.

Jo Parry, a national officer at UNISON, said schools "shouldn't be filling vacancies at such exploitative pay rates", and warned that apprentices were "still learning and should be supported, not used as cheap labour".

Avril Chambers, a national officer at the

GMB union, said apprenticeships could be a valuable route into the profession, "but all too often teaching assistant apprenticeships are exploited as a form of cheap labour".

She said the GMB was "even aware of cases where minimum wage TA apprenticeships have been advertised at trusts that have cut teaching assistant posts".

'A lot of time and support from staff'

At Great Ouseburn Primary School, a local authority-maintained school in York, younger apprentices start on £4.30. But their wage goes up to £6.90 after six months, and to the national minimum wage rate after 12 months.

Schools still far behind apprentice hiring target

Schools are given incentives to offer apprenticeships. First, all schools and trusts with a pay bill of more than £3 million have to pay into the apprenticeship levy, from which they can then draw down funds to train apprentices.

And from March 2018, schools with more than 250 employees have been expected to recruit 2.3 per cent of their workforce as apprentices every year.

Government data shows apprenticeship starts in the education and training sector have increased from 5,610 in 2017-18 to 8,490 in 2020-21, a rise of more than 50 per cent. Of the starts in 2020-21, the DfE estimates about 6,400 were in schools.

However, the department reported this week that schools have averaged a hiring rate of just 1 per cent since 2017.

LONG READ

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Nick Oswald, the school's head, said the scheme was used either to offer young people still living at home the chance to study an alternative to A-levels, or to help career-changers join education without having to pay for a qualification.

He admitted the pay was "not mega bucks by any means, but I think the important thing is it is a training role".

"We put a lot of time and effort into getting them trained up. If you just see it as a job, yes it's appallingly-paid and no one should be paid that much. But they're getting a lot of time and support and expertise from staff in school alongside that."

Academy trusts seeking apprentice TAs for £4.30 an hour include the David Ross Education Trust (DRET), the Gorse Academies Trust and Ormiston. DRET and Ormiston have in recent years considered support staff redundancies, and Ormiston finished the last year with a surplus of £37.9 million.

The three trusts all operate mostly in the north of England, although dozens of schools in the south also advertised roles at the minimum rate.

Most apprentices get offered jobs

A spokesperson for DRET said the apprenticeship route was used to bring "those with no relevant work experience into the profession and to grow our own talent".

"In the vast majority of cases, these apprentices become fully qualified teaching assistants with us who then move on to the regular payscales."

According to the National Careers Service, the average starting salary for a new non-apprentice TA is £12,621.

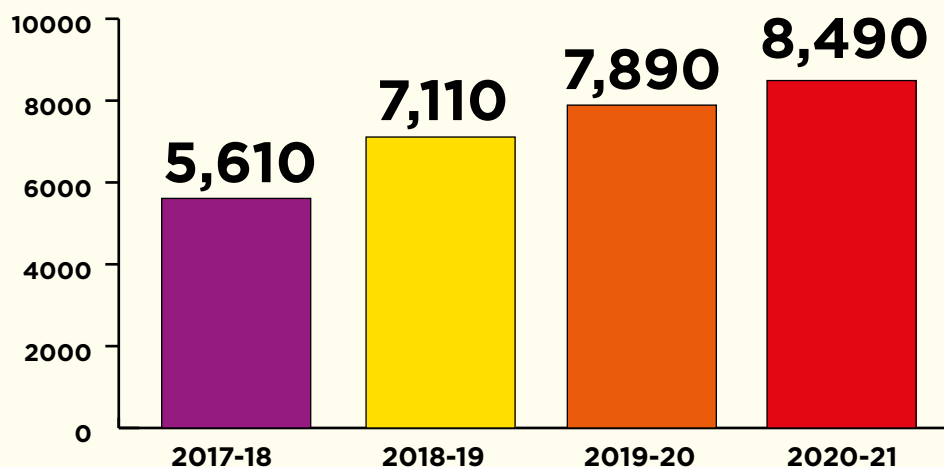
A Gorse spokesperson said the trust provided apprentices with "excellent training and offering permanent roles to the vast majority".

They explained apprentices were "paid less than our non-apprentice teaching assistants, who all have previous experience, a qualification or both, and carry out their work without the need for supervision".

Ormiston told *Schools Week* the scheme gave learners "an opportunity to receive comprehensive training and obtain their qualification, while getting first-hand experience of working with young people".

The trust also said it was "making an active effort as a trust to ensure our apprenticeship

Apprenticeship starts, education and training sector



offer is as strong as possible, including having salaries that reflect the immense contribution of all our colleagues".

Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said it "speaks to deep-rooted problems in recruitment and retention as well as long-standing funding challenges within the sector, that schools are now driven to using apprenticeships to fill vacancies".

Apprentice schemes "have their place", she said, but her union was "concerned that this does not tip into exploitation or fail to lead to permanent positions".

There may be awkward questions for bigger academy trusts, whose chief executives tend to have larger salaries.

For example, Gorse chief executive Sir John Townsley's pay rose to at least £220,000 last year after a £30,000 pay hike. Ormiston's highest-paid employee earns between £200,001 and £210,000.

A study in 2017 found 75 per cent of TA apprenticeship vacancies were at the legal minimum wage - suggesting schools' use of the lowest wage has got worse in four years.

Paying more 'shows commitment to local community'

But some employers pay a lot more than the minimum for TA apprentices.

Ringwood School, in Hampshire, is advertising a role for £11.48 an hour. The school declined to comment.

Schools Week found other examples of schools offering more than the adult minimum wage.

Harris Academy Ockendon recently

advertised a position that will pay £6.56 an hour for 18 to 20-year-olds, £8.36 for 21 and 22-year-olds and £8.91 to over-23s.

George McMillan, the school's executive principal, said the apprenticeship programme allowed for the recruitment of school leavers and graduates "who don't have the skills or confidence to become a TA but are attracted to the apprentice route as they get high-quality training and a qualification".

He added that the pay was higher than government guidelines "and we hope that, as well as being fair, this will help attract the best quality candidates".

The Tandridge Learning Trust recently advertised for an apprentice TA with a starting salary of £12,766.

Judith Standen, the trust's HR manager, said that offering the option of earning a salary while training "makes joining us an attractive proposition for those who might otherwise not be able to access such training".

"We sometimes find that apprenticeships attract colleagues who are changing career paths to accommodate personal circumstances or realise new ambitions. Providing a fair salary enables the realisation of these aims."

She said that by offering more than the minimum wage, the trust demonstrated "our commitment to support our local community and to attract the best talent possible in the current employment market".

The government said the apprentice minimum wage was "designed and set at a rate that acknowledges the particular costs for employers and benefits for young people involved in the provision of apprenticeships".

NEWS

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Colin Hall

Holland Park told to toe the line on executive pay

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Holland Park School has been told to rein in the salaries of its highly paid school leaders and to join a multi-academy trust.

Allegations of a "toxic" working culture and "public shaming" of students at the west London school prompted a council safeguarding investigation.

Its head, Colin Hall, is the fourth highest paid academy boss in England, earning at least £280,000 last year, despite running just one school. His pay has risen from at least £180,000 in 2013-14.

The 'outstanding' school also pays an "academy head", David Chappell, at least £190,000, with another leader on at least £160,000.

In a financial notice to improve published on Friday, the Education and Skills Funding Agency said there were "concerns relating to the governance and oversight of financial management at the board", before new trustees took up their posts.

The notice said the school must "produce a plan to bring the setting of executive pay in line" with the academy trust handbook requirements.

The trust should also "consider starting the process for moving the school into a multi-academy trust" and should respond to the allegations from former pupils and staff.

New financial management and monitoring structures should be implemented and with "further actions to strengthen challenge in managing the budget and finances".

In a letter to parents, Jane Farrell, the chair of governors, said the notice related to "breaches of governance and procurement policies in the latter part of the last financial year".

The trust said it could not provide details of the procurement issues for "commercial confidentiality" reasons.

But Farrell did say the "apparent" breaches

took place before most of the current trustees were appointed and "without the full knowledge and understanding of those who remain".

The Department for Education sent in Farrell, a culture change specialist, to replace Anne Marie Carrie who resigned in September.

Four other governors resigned and were replaced by improvement experts.

In August *The Guardian* reported allegations from staff of a "toxic" working environment. More than 100 former students had written an open letter alleging serious failings.

Pastoral care was "inadequate" with "public shaming" of students, the letter reportedly said.

The Royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea launched a three-month "learning review" in September into allegations of safeguarding failures.

Farrell told parents an independent investigation into the complaints – separate to the council's review – had been commissioned. The investigator will report to the board by early January.

The financial notice to improve thanked Farrell for her "positive action" and "cooperation" to "strengthen the board".

The DfE said that a school resource management adviser was looking "in detail" at the trust's financial processes and internal controls. Following the adviser's report, the trust would produce an action plan to address its recommendations.

Farrell told parents the board had started to address the issues. "Our priority will always be the education and wellbeing of young people in our care, the support of our wider school community in this endeavour, and ensuring that public funds are used accordingly."

It was announced in September that Hall would retire at the end of this academic year after 21 years at the school.

A *Schools Week* investigation in 2019 revealed the Holland Park – dubbed the "socialist Eton" – had spent £15,000 on luxury Farrow & Ball paint and £6,000 on Jo Malone scented candles.

E-ACT CEO suspended

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

The chief executive of the E-ACT academy trust has been suspended, *Schools Week* understands.

A message to staff at the trust, which runs 28 schools, states that Jane Millward is "away from work". The reason has not been disclosed.

A statement from the trust said: "We can confirm that Jane Millward is currently away from work."

"In her absence, the day-to-day running of the trust will continue under the leadership of the executive leadership team."

A message from trust chair Lord Knight, a former Labour schools minister, added: "I want to give you my personal reassurance that the running of the trust continues unaffected and that you can continue to do your brilliant work as usual."

"At E-ACT, we have always been committed to providing the very best opportunities to our children and staff, and with your support, will continue to do just that."

Millward was approached for comment via the trust.

The trust's disciplinary policy, published on its website, says that suspension of a staff member is a "neutral act and should only be used to enable a matter to be investigated, or in the interests of protecting children and/or staff while a matter is investigated pending any further action that may be necessary".

"Suspensions are a precautionary measure and should not be regarded as prejudging the matter."

Millward, a former Ofsted inspector, succeeded David Moran who stepped down in 2019.

He took over in 2013 after E-ACT had been issued with a financial notice to improve and banned from taking on new schools.

The finance warning was lifted in 2015, but only after the chain transferred ten of its schools to other sponsors following a damning focused inspection in early 2014.

After a second focused inspection in 2016, Ofsted warned that more than half of the trust's 23 schools were not providing a good standard of education.

EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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A few attendance advisers can't make up for cuts

The government's focus on persistent absence as we begin to emerge from the pandemic is right.

But many school leaders will rightly take issue with a new scheme to send five advisers out to work with local authorities and academy trusts.

Council services that traditionally supported school attendance and other welfare issues have been decimated by funding cuts over the past decade.

A £600 million-a-year education services grant, which councils used to fund services such as attendance officers, was scrapped by this government in 2017.

Do ministers seriously think five advisers can make up for the well-funded, nationwide support that local authorities were able to offer?

It is an example of the impact of austerity coming back to bite the government. While the scheme might make some inroads – and sharing good practice from those schools who have cut down on absence will help – it's a pale imitation of what went before.

Schools can do better on apprenticeship pay

Given the incentives and duties put in place by government, it is both expected and welcome to see schools increasingly looking to apprenticeships.

It undoubtedly has its benefits to schools.

Leaders told us the ability to open up careers in education to those without the necessary skills or experience, and the opportunity to shape junior employees into the members of staff they want them to be, has been invaluable.

But while these are good reasons to run apprenticeship schemes, it's hard to imagine that the cost element – and the minimum wage of £4.30 an hour – isn't at least a part of the decision for some leaders.

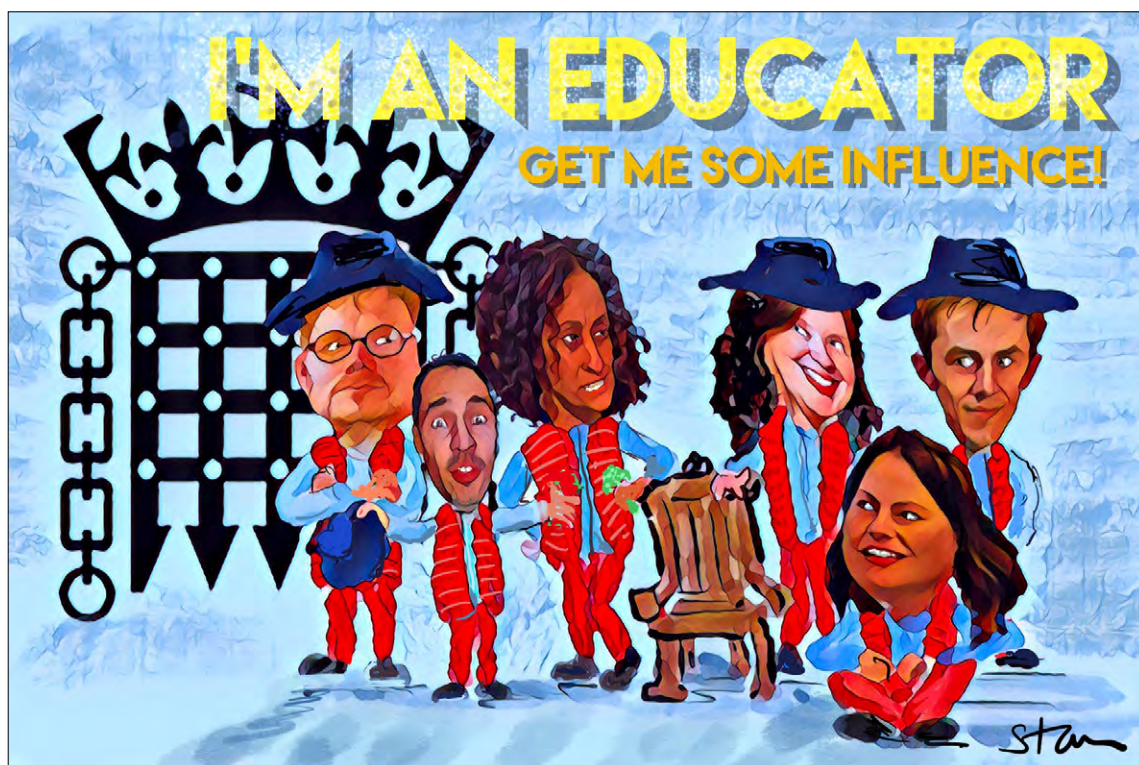
Support staff pay was already often unacceptably low before the growth of apprenticeships, and it is hard to argue that paying any member of school staff £4.30 an hour is ethical, regardless of the additional investment and support required.

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Profile

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‘It’s good we’ve moved away from hero heads, but the system is more centralised’

Steve Munby talks to Jess Staufenberg about why he left the National College for School Leadership and whether we really have a ‘self-improving system’

Talking to Steve Munby is a bit like talking to an embodied, institutional memory of the schools system in England. In 2019 he was as relevant as ever, publishing an education book on leadership to general rave reviews; but he can also quite clearly remember life without Ofsted and GCSEs. Several times in our conversation he grins broadly, announcing that one or

the other of us is “showing our age”, as he mentions things he remembers from the 1970s and 80s that I’ve never even heard of. It gives him an unusually fascinating perspective on where we are now.

It’s been an extraordinary career arc for Munby: from his childhood in Newcastle, he followed his social worker father into the public sector and became a secondary school

teacher in Birmingham and Gateshead from 1978 to 1985.

After seven years in the classroom, he left to advise various local authorities across the north, and from there took on the huge role of chief executive at the National College for School Leadership. These days, he is an education consultant and visiting professor at the Institute of Education, UCL, in London.

Profile: Steve Munby



Munby at his leaving do in 1989

“The system is very narrow, and much narrower than it was”

But it all began rather inauspiciously. School standards in the 1970s were low and teachers were barely held to account, says Munby. “I didn’t even know the exam results for my own subject, because no one did.” The existing inspectorate turned up “every ten years” and “it was possible to be pretty mediocre as a teacher and keep your job”.

Munby self-effacingly calls himself a case in point. “I was basically too nice – I just didn’t know how to manage behaviour.”

There being no formal appraisals of teachers, Munby has only ever found evidence of his performance from those days on the website Friends Reunited. It reads: “Does anyone remember Mr Munby? He wore a beard and drove a yellow Ford Cortina. He was a nice man but he couldn’t control us. It was a wonder we learnt anything.”

Munby chuckles. “Schools are much, much better now.”

After teaching history and English in Gateshead, he got a job as an ‘advisory teacher’ to Sunderland City Council, to deliver the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (known as TVEI). Brought in by Margaret Thatcher and then-education secretary Keith Joseph in 1983, the idea was for 14- to 18-year-olds to build up a record of achievement including technical and social skills, outdoor activities and employer links. It’s the kind of broader



Munby and his wife Jacqui at their wedding on the island of Santorini

capture of achievement that school leaders are looking at now post-pandemic.

Munby himself was especially interested in “involving students more in assessment and reflecting on their learning. It was the forerunner of ‘assessment for learning’.

In the end, there was too much emphasis on the formal record of achievement. But there was some great work going on with formative assessment.”

He thinks much of that broader approach has been lost (TVEI was scrapped in 1997). “It’s not that I think examinations are wrong, but we’re failing to recognise the broader aspects that young people bring. The system is very narrow, and much narrower than it was.”

Following Sunderland, Munby spent two years as an assessment consultant for schools across the north-east, before landing a job as an adviser to Oldham local authority in 1989, just as GCSEs were replacing CSEs and O-levels. Ofsted came along in 1992, and performance tables were also introduced.

“It was a huge time, because everything suddenly changed,” says Munby. But back then, some SATs were assessed by teachers. “That helped teachers to understand what good looked like,” he says. “The system at the moment encourages a dependency on

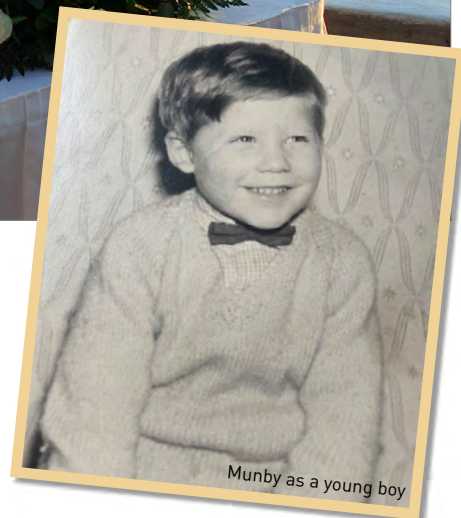
examination, rather than robust moderation of teachers’ judgments.”

After a stint as assistant director of school improvement at Blackburn Council, Munby then became director of education at Knowsley Council in 2000, which he calls a “key moment” for him.

Knowsley had the second-worst GCSE results in the country, and some serious issues. Munby remembers getting a phone call from one headteacher being threatened by a parent who was a dangerous local gangster and having to frantically ring around the police department.

But after one year, Knowsley had dropped to the worst GCSE results – and the *Liverpool Echo* published a letter calling for his resignation. “That was a dark night of the soul,” grimaces Munby.

Determined, he brought all the Knowsley headteachers into one room and set new



Munby as a young boy

Profile: Steve Munby



Munby at ASCL in 2019

goals. Munby says Knowsley became one of the most improved local authorities, and GCSE results moved from the bottom to the eighth lowest.

Not long after, he was asked to apply for the huge job of chief executive of the National College for School Leadership, which opened in 2002. The college had a striking centre in Nottingham and was dubbed the "Sandhurst for schools".

"It shocked me, as I'd never been a headteacher," says Munby. It surprised then-education secretary Charles Clarke too, who asked Munby's interviewers (Michael Barber, a chief adviser, and Peter Housden, director general for schools), to reconsider. "They still recommended me!"

He wanted to make the national college "less insular" and so at a conference in Birmingham he pledged to "telephone 500 headteachers in the first three months of the job". Somehow he managed it. "It was a crazy promise, but it was one of the most important things I did." In the ensuing years, his team helped roll out the National Professional Qualification for Headship and other leadership development programmes.

But in 2010 the government changed. Munby found himself waiting anxiously in the wings at yet another national college conference, to give a speech on "servant leadership" following the Conservative Party's pledge for a "bonfire of quangos". "That's the most important speech I ever made," he says. Gove was sitting in the audience, and Munby had no idea if he was "going to close us down or not".



Munby in his role as Chair of the Teaching Awards

"I telephoned 500 headteachers in three months"

Then it was Gove's turn to speak. "He said, 'I've come to say, "Hail Caesar!"'" He praised the national college, and it continued its work. However, by 2013, it was merged with the Teaching Agency, and eventually closed down in 2018.

Munby thinks that moving the NCTL from a non-departmental body to an executive DfE agency in 2012 changed how it was perceived, and he did not enjoy suddenly becoming a civil servant. "When it became part of the department, it lost something. It was hard for us to be seen as halfway between schools and government."

He also now "had less influence", adding, "I didn't enjoy the culture in DfE. For me, it seemed about having meetings all day and not getting anything done." After eight months, he left to become chief executive of the Centre for British Teachers, which he renamed the Education Development Trust, bidding for contracts to run school improvement programmes all around the world.

More recently, Munby has become even better known, with his book *Imperfect Leadership*, published in 2019 (he has a follow-up out soon). To generally rave reviews, it expounds the idea that all leaders need mentors and should ask for help.

"Hero heads are now much less in the limelight, and there's more talk about system improvement, and I think that's a healthy change," reflects Munby. He adds he would rather we had 'national support schools' than 'national leaders of education' – placing emphasis on the team, not the individual.

But system improvement is also more centralised now, he notes. "I'm not bitter about the college closing – that's politics. But what you've got now is a market. So instead of the national college being the vehicle by which to help schools, the department puts out a contract and people like the Ambition Institute or Teach First bid for this work."

He pauses. "You could argue it's a more self-improving system. But I think interestingly the system is also now more centralised. What needs to be done is now laid down quite a lot. There's been a centralisation of control of standards."

With research out in September showing two in five headteachers are planning early retirement, Munby's long historical view of school system leadership is especially valuable. Perhaps ministers could trust more in the 'imperfect leaders' he celebrates, and release a little more control back to them.



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Opinion

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Our letter stops short of calling for Ofsted to be scrapped, writes Colin Richards, but reform is required now to make the inspectorate fit for purpose

As a former HMI, I have gladly added my signature to the Positive Ofsted Reform open letter addressed this week to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman.

Ofsted has grown in power and influence since its creation 30 years ago. Initial reactions mostly involved suspicion. But that soon grew into anxiety. Later, outright fear. Today, it's rare to find a school leader without a personal anecdote to tell of emotional turmoil when thinking about an Ofsted visit.

Ofsted now stands in need of fundamental reform, and I support every effort to get its leaders to listen to concerns from educationalists and teachers on the ground.

Last week, Ofsted's national director for education claimed that a return to routine inspections after the Covid-19 pandemic was "the best way for Ofsted to support the [education] sector". Almost simultaneously, the government committed an extra £24 million to support an acceleration of inspections – and this at a time when schools are having to cope with ongoing Covid-related disruption and the long-term effects of closures.

"Support" is not what it feels like on the ground, especially to schools "in need of improvement". Nor does Spielman's threat to half of outstanding schools that they face a downgrade after undoubtedly the hardest period schools have ever faced. The only "support" the



COLIN RICHARDS
Former senior HMI

Reform is needed now to rebuild trust in Ofsted

cash injection will provide is to reinforce the rigidity of a 30-year-old inspection system.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Ofsted has been largely absent. Initially praised for

And it is doing so not to support schools but to prop up a simplistic and misleading grading system designed to inform parent choice. Yet, only three weeks ago, YouGov

“Accountability can be re-made fairer and more sustainable

nothing more than not doing its job, the inspectorate failed to find any purpose when schools needed real support. Challenged about this in her September accountability hearing at the education select committee, Ofsted chair Dame Ryan could only listen as the watchdog was described as a "hedghog at the back of my garden" by committee chair, Robert Halfon.

But the inspectorate is back in schools, armed with a broadly untested pre-pandemic framework that is known to be unjust to primary schools in particular (even in normal times) and fails to take the past two years into account.

revealed that two-thirds of parents don't even look at their reports. Among the wealthiest, only 41 per cent do. Among the poorest, it's 24 per cent. Given the rate of change in inspection frameworks, it's hardly surprising.

We are also hearing more and more reports of teachers struggling mentally because of the stress of inspections. A UCL study shows that more than two in three teachers in England report being stressed, compared to a global average of 45 per cent. High-stakes Ofsted inspections play a large part in this.

Our letter stops short of

calling for Ofsted to be scrapped. I, like many signatories, believe it can and should play an important role for schools, but it needs rebalancing away from undermining them and towards supporting them to improve the quality of education they provide.

To do so, its reports need to be far more informative to teachers and parents alike about why the school needs to improve and how that might be done. Stock phrases from a statement bank show just how impersonal current reports have become.

And when there is serious disagreement about a grade, schools need to know they can properly challenge inspection judgments, with a reasonable expectation that they can be overturned on appeal. The complaints process must be strengthened and include an independent layer to ensure that necessary accountability.

But accountability starts at the top, and we should expect the chief inspector herself, from whom the inspectorate's whole ethos and approach flow, to be properly monitored too. Dame Ryan has only had two days' physical interaction with Amanda Spielman since March. That's just clearly not enough. The post is also held to account far too little by parliament.

With these reforms, the school accountability system can be re-made fairer, more sustainable and more consistent, with Ofsted at its heart. Change is desperately needed, and with it the rebuilding of trust.

Opinion

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MICK WATERS

Vice president, National Association for Environmental Education

DfE climate commitments merit only a cautious welcome

Despite the multiple ironies surrounding COP26 education announcements, they are to be welcomed, writes Mick Waters. After all, we've waited long enough

Nadhim Zahawi's launch of the DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy at COP26 is surely welcome. Education is a vital vehicle for addressing climate change and the security of the future of life on the planet. It is, however, an announcement full of ironies.

The first irony is that the government's wholesale commitment to this cause is in direct contrast to so much of their policy agenda, which faces away from the future. In *About Our Schools*, to be published shortly, Tim Brighouse and I explore the way our schooling system is too susceptible to the policy whims of secretaries of state. Sadly, Zahawi's announcement will come across to many like one of those whims – a ministerial move to 'catch the rising tide' of opinion, unmatched by political commitment and unlikely to result in sustained (let alone sustainable) policy.

The fact is that while this policy should be welcomed, it is many

years late. Every school's roofing could already host solar panels, not just those of a pioneering few, and the environmental damage of millions of annual test and exam papers (plus all those practice versions) could have been reduced years ago.

The second irony is that before

“Every school's roofing could already host solar panels

Michael Gove revised the national curriculum, it contained a series of cross-curricular strands, including environmental sustainability (as well as multiculturalism, physical and mental health and financial literacy). These were to inform and be informed by a range of subject disciplines, yet these were all abandoned by Gove as fripperies in service of a future world he believed demanded an emphasis upon self-styled 'powerful' knowledge.

Moreover, this revision was led by the same newly minted secretary of state for education who while in opposition had instigated a judicial review of the Labour government's decision to provide all schools with a DVD of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient*

Truth. The same man who later would become secretary of state for... er... the environment.

As a politician more interested in rhetorical victories than practical progress he is doubtless philosophical about his own government revamping his earlier curriculum to include teaching of environmental matters. And besides, the announcement itself may well be little other than a rhetorical gambit in his image.

A review of geography and science where climate change is already taught and a 'model science curriculum' are unlikely to be looked upon as the kind of fundamental change the current secretary of state has led us to expect.

The DfE strategy proposes an award for youngsters who make a

valid contribution to environmental sustainability. I welcome this too, and all the more so because it is a criterion-referenced award, contrasting sharply with our cruel norm-referenced exam grades that so unfairly guarantee failure for so many children in our schools.

But is it really as far as we can go to recognise young people's climate leadership? Many have been campaigning for several years now, rallying to the call of Greta Thunberg (who ministers, meanwhile, have openly criticised). During COP26, young people protested loudly about politicians not taking matters seriously. So perhaps it's time we trust them to set the curriculum agenda.

The final irony is that the



government's 'strong and decisive' action on the environment comes in the month that the National Association for Environmental Education celebrates its 50th anniversary. For five decades, our small but perfectly formed subject association has supported schools and teachers in their efforts to help children understand, appreciate and care for their environment, with scant support from any government.

For a relatively negligible price, Nadhim Zahawi could have sponsored an enthusiastic member of staff in every school to join that organisation. In one fell swoop, he could have grown the reach of a professional community with a true commitment to putting sustainability 'at the heart of education' and supported the development of an evidence-based approach to teaching sustainability nationally.

My bias for the NAEE aside, this must surely be part of any climate change strategy for schools – regardless of how it's achieved. That this government has not so far made the connection is, indeed, deeply ironic.

Opinion

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ZAHARA CHOWDHURY

Diversity, equality and inclusion lead,
Beaconsfield High School and
The Beaconsfield School

Teachers need support to make the uncomfortable comfortable

We owe it to our students to tackle cultural fault lines with them – and to our teachers to ensure they are equipped to do it, writes Zahara Chowdhury

Covid-19. George Floyd. Sarah Everard. Sabina Nessa. Samuel Luiz. Israel and Palestine. The Capitol insurrection. COP26. The Kyle Rittenhouse trial. Every conversation about these topics comes with a level of discomfort. We and our students see them dissected on social media. Whether we join in or not, we are all witness to the cultural battlefronts that open up around them – about race, gender, sexuality, class and, effectively, our value systems.

This is the context of Generation Z's childhood, and it is one they don't see reflected in our curriculum. But this isn't an article about reforming what we teach them. Whether we set out to or not, these uncomfortable conversations will find their way into our classrooms regardless. The more salient question is whether we are ready for them when they inevitably arise.

This is the generation of social justice and social media, and we simply can't ignore their need to learn how to navigate the sheer level of unfiltered information they are

being exposed to. Having formed relationships of trust founded on fairness and impartiality, teachers are in a privileged position to steer their students' growing engagement with global affairs. And if we want to do away with the idea of being workers in 'exam factories', then this is surely the way to reclaim our professionalism.

But it won't do to relegate these uncomfortable conversations to 20-minute assemblies (which aren't conversations, but monologues and presentations) or to an already over-loaded PSHCE curriculum, for

which staff training and professional development is limited.

As an English teacher, my subject lends itself to tackling these topics, yet I have learned to navigate these uncomfortable conversations on the job and without a safety net. No wonder they are uncomfortable!

In ten years since completing my PGCE, I have been involved in teacher training in different capacities. Though the Teaching Standards speak of 'respect for the rights of others' and 'high standards of ethics and behaviour', the majority of my training, mentoring and coaching was rooted in teaching and learning my subject area. My knowledge of and compliance with the rest has broadly been assumed.

And I'm someone for whom they are an area of interest. Quite rightly, not every teacher shares similar lived experiences or curiosity. Yet we

weekly sessions (or less) really the best way to ensure students receive responsible, relevant and appropriate information?

Sadly, the new early career framework does little to fix these endemic problems for future trainees. But we are answering the call as a school community by fully engaging with how young people wish to receive this information. Who do they want to listen to? How can we get their families involved? How can we narrow the gap between school and the professional world, where many of these topics are prevalent?

Headteacher at Beaconsfield High School, Rachel Smith, consistently reminds us of our responsibility to "educate for the outside". That is, to teach our young people in a candid and authentic manner where we learn as a collective. The result is a series of Uncomfortable Conversation conferences, the first of which will be on overcoming toxic masculinity and promoting gender advocacy, in association with The Global Equality Collective.

This is a new initiative, but its reception has been overwhelmingly positive. Students, parents and staff will attend, but the collaborative element doesn't end there. We are also welcoming other schools to learn with us, and we will be hosting Uncomfortable Conversation webinars with respective experts, making the most of the digital spaces our students inhabit with us to spread the knowledge and expertise we discover and develop.

Until this type of training is prioritised, collaboration and networking will continue to be key to ensuring that, regardless of barriers, our students are at the forefront of making the uncomfortable, comfortable.

“ Sadly, the new ECF does little to fix these endemic problems

are all potentially teachers of PSHCE. How then can we pretend to any sort of consistency in teaching students the way to engage safely with these uncomfortable conversations? Is a scripted curriculum for



Opinion

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



JONATHAN DOUGLAS

Chief executive,
National Literacy Trust

Under-funded primary libraries undermine 'levelling up'

New research shows primary school libraries in a parlous state nationally, and building back better won't happen without them, writes Jonathan Douglas

Over the past decade, a 30 per cent reduction in public spending on public libraries has seen more than 800 shut their doors. Many others are struggling to stay open. Yet, at a time when school libraries are more essential than ever, they too are on the wane.

I started out as a librarian in Westminster in the 1990s. I have seen first-hand the huge positive impact they can have, not just on children but on everyone's wellbeing and future prospects. That was confirmed again to me recently when, strolling through a market, a stallholder recognised me and came up to me to talk about the books I had shared with him when he was younger.

Schools Week readers don't need to be told how important and formative books can be. Yet our latest research shows that teachers are regularly buying books from charity shops to make up for the fact that their schools don't have a dedicated school library budget (40 per cent of them

don't). One in eight primary schools in England doesn't have a library at all. And more worryingly still, the figure jumps to one in four for schools with a higher proportion of pupils on free school meals.

Can we really talk of a levelling-up agenda without a strategy to

– a literacy attainment gap that has worsened due to the pandemic.

While there was an understandable focus on digital access for online learning during lockdowns, there has been no such focus on access to books for securing the recovery. Like the digital divide, the issue of literacy is essentially one of social inequality, and that is at least as much down to access to books as it is to good teaching.

Children's literacy has been a concern for many years and can seem intractable. But school libraries offer at least a partial answer to this challenge, and at a relatively small cost. They are not a panacea, but a well-stocked school library represents the diversity of society, enhances teaching and learning across the school and fosters

their health and wellbeing and to vote in elections, among many other benefits that flow from simply being able to read confidently at a young age.

To help tackle the problem, the National Literacy Trust has launched a new Primary School Library Alliance with Penguin Random House UK, which will transform and equip 1,000 primary school libraries by 2025 – supporting half a million pupils. Responding to our call for large-scale public and private funding, Arts Council England and a number of soon-to-be-announced corporate organisations have already pledged significant financial investment into the Alliance.

But transforming primary school libraries needs a nationwide approach which brings together public, private and third sector skills and resources. To achieve the pace and scale of change required, we need a collective effort from policymakers too – because only their leadership can ensure we give primary school libraries and reading spaces the priority we must as a society.

We know that school leaders are stretched – and that many headteachers are contending with limited resources and space. That's why we are currently recruiting schools to take part in our free training programmes in locations across the country, which includes resources to help schools audit and develop their reading-for-pleasure provision.

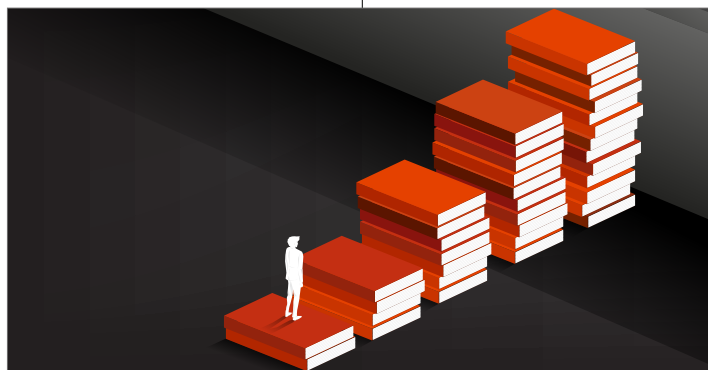
Schools and teachers are doing an incredible job, but if we fail to support them, the penalty suffered by children, families and schools will be fundamental and long-lasting. If we are truly to build back better, then the school library will be pivotal to our long-term prosperity.

“Like the digital divide, the literacy gap is an issue of access

fix that? Low levels of literacy are closely linked to child poverty and poor educational attainment. Social and economic disadvantages are reinforced when the poorest families don't have access to books in their homes. The reading skills of the poorest children are up to 18 months behind those of their better-off peers

partnerships with parents and families.

And as such, school libraries can help to change the outlook for the rest of young people's lives. By encouraging children to read and to discover the joy of books, we give them a better chance to do well at school, to get better jobs, to look after



Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



Teaching Machines: The History of Personalized Learning

Author: Audrey Watters

Publisher: MIT Press

Reviewer: Terry Freedman, freelance ed tech writer and publisher, ICT and computing in education

Here is a very strange paradox. On the one hand, everyone agrees that a key ingredient for success in life is having great teachers. On the other, there's a relentless narrative that education is somehow broken and that fixing it entails replacing teachers or transforming some or all of what they do.

Teaching Machines deals with the development of technologies to effect the latter, and while its sole focus is the United States, it provides invaluable insight into the mindsets of the sort of people behind them. People who believe that education needs rescuing, and have the messianic zeal to believe they are the ones to rescue it.

The issues it focuses on are just as relevant here. Take our erstwhile Key Stage 3 Strategy, for example. It didn't involve teaching machines, but, rather, took the novel approach of effectively turning teachers into machines with lessons that weren't exactly scripted but didn't fall far short. Twenty years on, some MATs use fully scripted lessons today.

Not that we've been altogether immune from attempts to mechanise teaching either. It's not so long ago that computer programs first purported – falsely, according to two independent research reports at the time – to offer instruction adapted to the needs of each individual. How many apps today continue to make that claim, now with AI as their selling point?

Some of these aims are laudable, which Watters recognises. Freeing teachers from mundane, onerous tasks such as checking basic subject knowledge is a notable one. Look

behind the spin, though, and it becomes clear that such 'teaching machines' are really just 'testing machines'. And while their effective use could enable teachers to be more creative and to spend more quality time with their students, they aren't without their own ethical problems. AI programming, for example, is notoriously subject to incorporating the programmer's biases – and these are seldom teachers.

And as Watters astutely notes, all of this happens in a cultural context that is often ignored or taken for granted. The idea that schools and teachers are inefficient is renewed by each generation of what we now call 'disruptors'. It was used to justify the application of Taylorism or 'scientific management' to education (cf. league tables and Ofsted). And each time based on a fear that we are falling behind internationally.

"Too often," Watters says. "the context is stripped [out] and all that seems to matter is the technology itself. Its history is simply a list of technological developments with no recognition that other events occurred, that other forces (cultural, institutional, political, economic, and so on) were at play."

Sal Khan is a case in point. His suggestion that internet video-based instruction could reinvent education, Watters shows, is merely a repeat of similar claims made for film, radio and television. Yet education has come to incorporate all of these, demonstrating its ability to change and adapt. So while his accusation that education has not fundamentally changed in hundreds of years generates national headlines, the main contention of *Teaching Machines* is that he is only the latest in a long line of those making such claims. In fact, according to Watters, it is

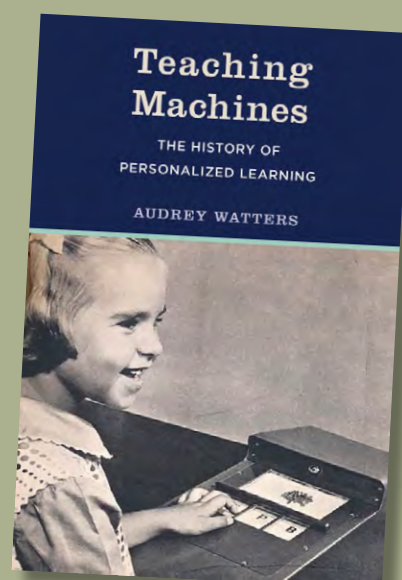
this thinking that hasn't changed for over a century.

In short, Watters' central thesis is a powerful one, and *Teaching Machines* provides a breath-taking array of examples to back it up.

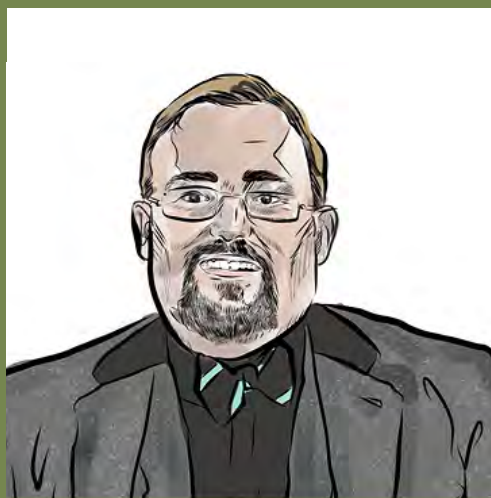
However, that sheer amount of detail is one of the book's key drawbacks. So much so that I'm tempted to suggest that a second edition should focus on the chapters about programmed instruction and relegate most of the rest to a voluminous notes section at the back.

And while it is highly readable for the most part, Watters relies too often on loaded language that does little to enhance her narrative. Presenting those she criticises as "sneering", "scoffing" or "crowing" is just as likely to turn some readers off.

Notwithstanding these quibbles, however, this is a well-researched and important book that should be on every educationalist's reading list.



Reviews



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

@JMSREFLECT

Does That Make Sense? Breaking Bad Habits

@DrHSkelton

I wouldn't normally nominate the same author twice in a row for this column, but this piece by Helen Skelton deserves recognition. There are always plenty of new(ish) ideas for teachers to build into their practice, but breaking old, bad habits is not something we talk about enough. And yet, doing so can be just as powerful in improving the quality of our teaching.

Skelton has clearly reflected on this, and this useful read focuses on three particular habits: asking "Does that make sense?", breaking the silence when students are working, and seeking quiet with a "Sshhh!". Even if these aren't habits you need to break (I am guilty of the first!), Skelton explains the rationale for making a change, and practical techniques to do so. A great post to start reflecting on how to make your professional new year's resolutions stick!

TOP BLOGS of the week

Making Feedback a Dirty Habit

@FH_FranHaynes

Continuing on the theme of bad habits – this time, students' – this is also my second selection this week that quotes Aristotle. (It's not an entry requirement, but it doesn't hurt!) I was, I confess, a little uncertain as I started reading this critique of 'directed improvement and reflection time' (commonly known as DIRT), a practice I find very useful. But Haynes makes a convincing case that this form of feedback risks failing to address students' bad habits.

She therefore proposes a new structure based on identifying these, redirecting students' efforts, and building in self-monitoring and lots of opportunities to practise. As Haynes argues, "It's not a case of scrapping DIRT altogether but making a few tweaks so that it becomes as fertile a ground for learning as possible." I will definitely try her approach with my classes in my next round of feedback.

How I Used Mini-Whiteboards in My Lessons Yesterday

@HistoryKss

I've long found the mini-whiteboard a very useful whole-class assessment tool, but not all my colleagues are persuaded. So this post

by Kristian Shanks instantly gripped me, with his opening self-description as "a bit of a mini-whiteboard refuser". Shanks goes on to explain why he was persuaded to give them another go and – in a blog written quite unlike any I've read – to talk us through his lessons of the day and how he deployed the mini-whiteboards in each.

The result is highly effective. He shares a wide range of activities and reflections on how each one went and what he learned from them. To conclude, he notes some limitations on mini-whiteboard use, but acquiesces that he "learned a lot more information about student content and procedural knowledge than I may have done using my traditional, habitualised teaching methods".

Now to break those bad, old habits, I guess!

High Stakes Exams and Mocks – Let's Go Low, Low, Low, Low

@Xris32

During lockdowns, there seemed to be a high level of recognition that students had experienced substantial disruption – perhaps even trauma – and needed to return to a nurturing environment in order to thrive. With the return of inspections and exams (as far as we know) this year, there is a danger this may have been overlooked.

Here, Chris Curtis offers a powerful reminder of the costs that can accrue if we allow our stress to be transferred to students. Mocks are a particular concern in this regard. As he notes, they are "largely viewed in negative terms" because "every mock highlights what they cannot do".

As well as a powerful argument for lowering the stakes, this is a practical post too, with tips for using mocks to build a sense of the positive, to identify the successes students can build on and to encourage them to embrace mistakes.

Research



Harry Fletcher-Wood will regularly review a research development throughout the year. Contact him @Ambition_Inst or @HFletcherWood if you have a topic you'd like him to explore

What is interleaving and how can we maximise its benefits?

Harry Fletcher-Wood, Associate dean at Ambition Institute

When we plan an activity, we instinctively group like with like. We discuss Monet, then talk about Renoir; we add fractions, then move on to subtracting them. Sometimes, however, mixing things up can help.

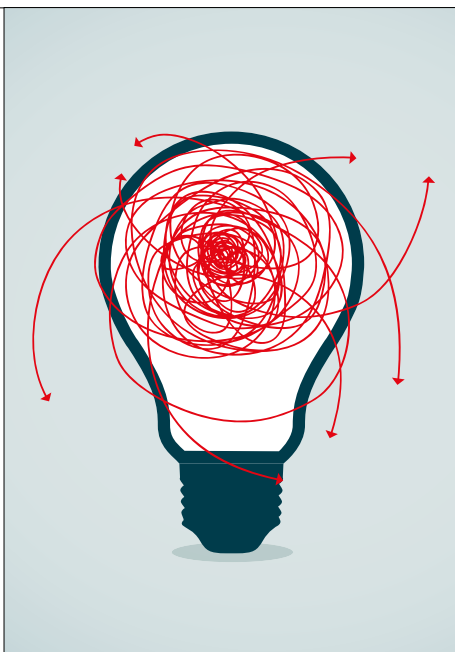
It's called interleaving, and it's a desirable difficulty: a way to make learning harder initially, that boosts student retention subsequently. Some desirable difficulties are pretty straightforward. Spacing learning, for example, just means... well, spacing learning out by revisiting topics.

Interleaving is a bit more complicated though, both because it's counter-intuitive, and because researchers note that we sometimes apply it in ways that go beyond the evidence.

A classic study illustrates interleaving well. Researchers taught students how to find the volume of four 3D forms (obscure ones, to reduce the influence of prior knowledge). Students then did 16 practice questions, four for each form. Some students – blockers – practised like with like (four spherical cone problems, then four spheroids, and so on). Others – mixers – practised the same questions ordered at random.

Initially, blockers did better than mixers because the mix was confusing. But when they returned for a test a week later, mixers did three times better than blockers. As the researchers noted, simply changing the order of practice "led to large gains in test performance".

So why does interleaving work? The researchers suggested that mixing things up "requires that students learn not only how to perform each procedure but also which



procedure is appropriate for each kind of problem".

It's easy to imagine students asked to add fractions completing 20 questions without focusing fully on each one; they just apply the same method each time. On the other hand, if each question type differs, students have to think harder. They are likely to make more mistakes early on, but when they encounter a new question in the wild, they are more likely to be able to pick a good approach.

In a helpful review of the science of learning strategies, Weinstein, Madan and Sumeracki describe three situations in which interleaving can help students think harder, and so perform better:

- Problem solving, such as mixing addition and subtraction problems, or drilling a variety of physical skills rather than a single one.
- Learning to distinguish between categories, such as attributing paintings to artists.
- Alternating between models and questions, rather than just showing a model, then asking students to complete

questions.

However, there are two caveats about interleaving. First, one elegant study demonstrated that students aren't keen on it and don't think to do it unless prompted. Students were learning to associate artists with their artworks. Different groups of students encountered artists and artworks in five different ways, from purely interleaved to purely blocked. Mixing up the order of the artists meant students learned them better. But asked whether they preferred interleaving or blocked learning, students tended to prefer blocking.

The article suggested neat ways to compromise, like mixing up blocks, or becoming increasingly random. These had the same positive effects as interleaving, and students were keener on them. But it's worth noting the researchers' finding that students rarely think to interleave, unless we suggest it to them.

The second caveat is that it doesn't work for everything. For a start, it has mostly been tested in maths and science. There's nowhere near as much evidence for its effectiveness in other subjects.

And then, as Weinstein and her colleagues note, interleaving has only been tested for learning within lessons. So while some suggest interleaving across the curriculum or between subjects, this isn't something for which we have evidence. A little confusion helps, but too much doesn't – particularly if it discourages students.

Interleaving improves retention, but there are other great ways to improve retention: what's best depends on what is being taught and to whom. So, as with many intriguing research findings, once we've discussed the evidence, we return to the most important factor for successful implementation. Namely, that there is almost nothing that can be prescribed for all classrooms, and the best person to decide whether, how and when to apply a strategy is the evidence-informed teacher.



NCFE



SHAPING SMARTER LEARNING

Educational charity and leader in vocational and technical learning. Committed to powering a smarter education eco-system.

ncfe.org.uk

Week in

Westminster

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

MONDAY

One of the most illuminating highlights of Sir Michael Barber and Patrick Law's recent Foundation for Education Development pamphlet on the last 30 years of education secretaries is Gavin Williamson's advice to his successor.

"All decisions will get criticised, but the worst thing is to do nothing. Don't expect to be viewed fairly and develop the hide of a rhinoceros," he said, when asked what he wanted to pass on to Nadhim Zahawi.

We'll leave it to the schools sector to decide whether Gav has been judged fairly or not...

TUESDAY

Education committee chair Robert Halfon is well-known for having his own personal pet projects, but now he seems to be using his own committee to push them.

This week, the committee announced a new inquiry into the "effectiveness" of post-16 qualifications like A-levels, T-levels and BTECs.

MPs on the committee will explore whether a new baccalaureate system that would "allow young people to study a greater blend of academic and vocational subjects" should be introduced in their place.

If that idea sounds familiar, that's because it was proposed by Halfon himself in 2019.

We look forward to seeing the chair call himself as a witness.

Schools looking for clear and unequivocal advice from the government about security in the wake

of two recent terrorist incidents would have been disappointed this week.

Following the decision to increase the national threat level from "substantial" to "severe" after the explosion at Liverpool women's hospital and the fatal stabbing of Tory MP Sir David Amess, the DfE wrote to schools.

"Whilst it should be noted that there is no credible threat to the education sector, education settings may wish to review their security policies following these incidents," the update stated.

Helpful!

WEDNESDAY

Nadhim Zahawi couldn't resist having a pop at one of his colleagues when he accepted the "minister to watch" award at the Spectator parliamentarian of the year awards this week.

The education secretary is reported to have said: "When I stand in front of the mirror every morning shaving...my head...trying to look like Saj...I think about the boy from Iraq who became the education secretary. This is the greatest country on the earth."

Of course, the joke about Saj – health secretary Sajid Javid – was made at the expense of fellow Tory MP James Gray, who was criticised earlier this year for allegedly saying that Javid and Zahawi looked the same.



Harry Cole
@MrHarryCole

And what a speech from @nadhimzahawi

"When i stand in front of the mirror every morning shaving.. my head.. trying to look like Saj.. I think about the boy from Iraq who became the education secretary. This is the greatest country on the earth."

THURSDAY

The Department for Education was forced to concede this week that it used "unfortunate wording" in a research report on experiences of sex and relationships education and sexual risk taking.

The report, based on surveys of young people conducted in 2018, included the following passage:

"Young people of minority sexual orientations (i.e. gay, lesbian, bisexual or other), those with disabilities, and those who participated in other risky behaviours were significantly more likely to say that their school RSE was 'not at all useful'."

WiW quizzed the DfE on the seeming implication in the research that being gay, lesbian, bisexual or even disabled was considered "risky behaviour".

The department was quick to point out that the report referred to two distinct types of risky behaviour – that of a sexual and non-sexual nature.

Of course, context is king, and the document does indeed refer to "risky behaviours" such as underage and unprotected sex. The phrase "other risky behaviours" also appears elsewhere in the report, in reference to binge-drinking and drug-taking, so the DfE's argument does hold water.

However, considering it has taken the best part of three years for the DfE to report on the survey result, you would think they might have had time to check that the language about such a sensitive issue was up to scratch and as clear as possible.





Leadership Opportunities (Competitive Salaries)

We are an ambitious MAT of nine primary schools in Greenwich, Medway and Croydon serving diverse and aspirant communities of learners. Our core values of Collaboration, Excellence, Friendship, Resilience, Respect and Responsibility, define the way we care for, enrich and teach every child.

What sets us apart from others is the opportunity to work at the cutting edge of educational thinking and practice, supported by excellent training and development and opportunities to take part in ground breaking research projects and collaborative work with talented and innovative colleagues, both at a local and national level.

HEADTEACHER – FOREST ACADEMY PRIMARY SCHOOL, CROYDON

Forest Academy is a rapidly improving school and we are seeking to appoint a visionary Headteacher who will help us secure our vision for excellence. Situated in South London, it offers a very unique opportunity for someone who wishes to work in a supportive school community. The role would suit a nurturing and collaborative leader, who has a passion for excellent teaching and learning, to inspire our warm and friendly school family to exceed their ambitions.

We are looking for someone who will:

- Have the skills to inspire and promote the highest quality of teaching and learning.
- Model best practice, with the knowledge, skills and expertise to develop and build on effective systems.
- Be a passionate leader with a proven track record, who will lead the school in partnership with the community and the Trust.
- Have a real belief in inclusion and supporting all children to be successful.

We can offer you

- Happy, well behaved and enthusiastic children who enjoy learning;
- A committed, hardworking and supportive team both in the school and as part of the wider Trust community;
- A school that is at the heart of the community;
- Central and regional services for finance, HR, estates and IT to enable school leaders to focus on teaching and learning.

Information on the Headteacher role can be found on our website.

Closing Date for Applications: Thursday 2nd December at 5.00pm

Interview date: Wednesday 8th December

ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER – ELAINE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MEDWAY, KENT

Elaine Primary School is a two-form entry school serving a vibrant local community. Our focus is on academic excellence for every child delivered in a caring and supportive learning environment that nurtures children's development into positive, well rounded members of the community.

Working closely with the Headteacher this role offers a fantastic career progression opportunity to become a member of a senior leadership team delivering a key role in the school's strategic leadership.

Information on the Assistant Headteacher role can be found on our website.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 8th December at 5pm

Interviews: Week commencing 13th December

The successful candidates for these two senior leadership roles will be keen to build on their passion for providing our young people with the very best learning experiences. Applications should provide evidence of your strong leadership strengths and experience, as well as your commitment and alignment to the Trust's ethos and values.

TRUST TEACHING AND LEARNING LEADER

An experienced and committed leader with responsibility for supporting the development of teaching and learning across our Trust. The successful candidate will work collaboratively across our schools to share best practice and develop skills and knowledge.

TRUST INCLUSION LEADER

A committed and talented leader with responsibility for Inclusion across our Trust. The successful candidate will join our Trust Education Team and work across the schools to support and develop teachers using their skills, knowledge and specialism.

Information on the Trust Teaching and Learning Leader and Trust Inclusion Leader roles can be found on our website.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 8th December at 5pm

Interviews: Week commencing 13th December



**Launceston College
Multi Academy Trust**

Chief Financial Officer

Launceston College Multi Academy Trust consists of six schools (primary and secondary) across Cornwall and North Devon.

Our Trust aims for young people to become happy, responsible and successful by learning the knowledge, skills and values which are important for society. We seek to develop adventurous students, who have the character, resilience and self-awareness required to be successful. We have exceptionally high aspirations for our students and support them no matter what their background or circumstances.

The Trust seeks to appoint an experienced and qualified financial professional to join us as Chief Financial Officer to support the delivery of an exceptional education for the young people in our care.

The main purpose of the job:

- Responsible for the effective management, reporting and recording of the Trust's finances, ensuring the highest levels of financial probity and meeting all requirements of both the law and financial reporting standards.
- Develop a financial strategy which considers influencing factors to both

underpin sustainable long-term financial health and which supports the Trust in achieving strategic outcomes, building the competency of the financial function.

- The role will require regular travel to trust sites to develop and maintain key relationships with each school setting, in order to ensure the financial function makes a full contribution to the needs of the schools within the trust.

This role is full time, 37 hours on a permanent basis.

Salary: Grade L, £55,500 - £60,480

Closing date is initially Monday 6th December 2021, 9am.

To find out more, or to apply, please visit our website.

Safeguarding Statement:

Our Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All posts are subject to DBS clearance and appropriate pre-employment checks.

Rocklands School is looking for someone with the:

- **Aspiration** to continue our journey to the next level
- **Passion** to focus relentlessly on what is best for every pupil in our context
- **Ambition** to sustain a rich and varied curriculum which engages and inspires every child
- **Ability** to further develop outstanding educational provision, whilst securing what works well, that results in outstanding outcomes
- **Compassion** to support all members of the school community
- **Character** to exemplify the school's vision and values
- **Willingness** to understand what the team has to offer and get the best from them
- **Inspiration** to take us with them on the journey
- **Insight** into the challenges specific to special educational needs provision
- **Vision** to cultivate collaborative relationships with all stakeholders

Further information about Rocklands School is on our website www.rocklands.manorhall.academy or telephone 01543 548700.

Applications should be sent to bursar@rocklands.manorhall.academy

Closing date: Wednesday 5th January 2022 12 noon

Shortlisting: 10th January 2022.

Interviews: Week commencing 17th January 2022



Rocklands



**Manor Hall
Academy Trust**

Rocklands School is a Primary generic special school providing education for children aged 2-11 years with a broad range of special educational needs.

Following the retirement of the dedicated and very well-respected Head Teacher we have an exciting opportunity to offer the right candidate. We are looking to appoint a passionate and forward-looking Head Teacher to lead our dedicated and skilled staff and support team from September 2022.

Our aim at Rocklands is to create a learning environment where the child is firmly at the centre of all we do. They will be inspired to believe in themselves and strive to become the best they can, ready to take the next steps on their journey through life. Visits to the school are welcomed and strongly encouraged.





Hub Director

This is a truly exciting time at DEMAT and we seeking to appoint a Hub Director to join us.

As one of the largest primary schools Trusts in the country, our 39 academies span across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Norfolk, and Suffolk. This hugely important leadership role will mean having strategic oversight of up to 5 of our academies. You will enhance, promote, and demonstrate DEMAT values and standards across the hub.

As a recognised leader, you will share our passion and belief that all children have the right to, and deserve, the highest quality curriculum, which is academic, carefully sequenced and taught by expert teachers who insist on the highest expectations of behaviour. You will support our vision for every child to flourish, to be introduced to the richness of human experience, and to understand and question the world around them.

We are committed to providing systems of high-quality support and challenge to ensure that our school leaders develop and that our schools continually improve. Our leaders have direct links with each other, our Education Team, and our central support teams. We provide significant operational and management support, and together we are building a strong offer for professional development at each level.

You will find a **Hub Director applicant pack** below which will give you further insight into the role and who you will be joining.

If you would like an informal discussion about this role, or visit us, please contact Laura Barton via hrteam@demat.org.uk.

The deadline for applications is midday on 1 December 2021 at midday.

Become an Examiner for Pearson!

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- earn extra income in a flexible role
- gain invaluable insight into assessment
- network with likeminded professionals

To find out more and to search for vacancies, please visit our website





HEADTEACHER

Required for September 2022

An indicative salary range of L33-L39 (currently £92,624 - £107,239)
This is a guideline and the salary is negotiable for the right candidate.
A relocation package is also on offer for the right candidate

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 Wednesday 1 December 2021
Interviews will be held: week commencing Monday 6 December 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



Online Leadership Performance Coaches and Mentors

Best Practice Network, home of Outstanding Leaders Partnership, provides accredited qualifications for education professionals worldwide, with a mission to help every child access an excellent education.

This is an exciting opportunity to join the growing Associate team and work on the reformed National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), a suite of DfE accredited qualifications for school leaders, designed to transform the support and development offer for teachers and school leaders throughout their career.

You will work online with a group of participants on our specialist or leadership NPQ programmes to-

- Support and monitor progress
- Respond to participant tasks, activities and learning reflections
- Provide guidance and qualification enrichment activities
- Signpost participants to peer learning communities, multimedia content, research and expert school-led practice etc. on the virtual learning environment
- Undertake leadership performance coaching for each participant

Roles

Online Leadership Mentor – NPQ Specialist Route

Online Leadership Performance Coach – NPQ Leadership Route

Location: Remote

Type: Part-time, Freelance (cohort-based)

Salary/fee: Competitive

For more information and to view the full job descriptions, please visit: www.bestpracticenet.co.uk/programme-associate-vacancies

To apply, please send a copy of your CV and cover letter to bpn_hr@bestpracticenet.co.uk.

Help us build a future for all children, regardless of their background and champion every teacher and school leader to become their very best.



School Business Manager

Sheiling School is an independent school and children's home for children and young people aged 6-19 with special educational needs

Following a review of the senior leadership team structure, Sheiling School is pleased to recruit for the new position of School Business Manager. Candidates must have excellent leadership skills, be educated to degree level or equivalent and must have CIPD level 5 minimum or equivalent with high level ICT skills (essential), with significant, practical and recent experience of HR management. The ideal candidate will also have experience of finance / charity accounting (desirable). This role is primarily HR focussed, with an element of Finance management.

This is an exciting opportunity for a highly motivated individual wishing to progress their career. The post of School Business Manager is crucial to our success in providing the best possible education and care to our pupils. Working closely with the CEO, this post will offer you the chance to make a real difference to the lives of the children in our care.



HR Manager

This is a new HR Manager role and an exciting time to join and establish a growing HR central professional team. We are looking for someone who is ambitious and able to positively influence the development of the HR support service.

The successful candidate will bring HR management and employee relations experience and knowledge, by building capacity in the effective management of disciplinary, grievance and sickness absence casework, updating policies and ensuring compliance. Your advice and guidance will be supported by Headteachers, dedicated school-based and other dedicated teams.

Lumen Christi Catholic Multi Academy aims to be an employer of choice by creating an inspirational and inclusive organisation. The role of HR Manager will have real impact in achieving this aspiration.

For further details, please click anywhere on this advert to download the CES application form, job description and associated documentation.



Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Salary: £130,000-£145,000

Contract: Permanent

Working Pattern: Full Time | Hours: 36 hours per week.

DBS Check: Enhanced

Closing Date: 03/12/2021 at 18:00

Reference: LT/21/170084

Lime Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) specialising in mainstream primary and all through SEND provision, currently responsible for 8 schools, four of which are in Peterborough and four in London.

Following the retirement of the previous Lime CEO, the Lime Trustees are seeking to employ an outstanding strategic leader who is passionate about improving the life chances of all our learners, driving up school standards and ensuring outstanding performance in all areas of the Trust's operations.

We are looking for a dynamic and suitably experienced candidate who will be relentless in articulating the Trust's vision, values and ethos, and able to inspire and empower others to share in achieving them by providing the necessary challenge and professional development support to staff.

In their capacity as Accounting Officer for the Trust, the CEO will work with the Trust Board and local academy leaders to build the Trust's reputation as the education provider and employer of choice, with a value-led, sustainable business model, and ensure compliance with all statutory duties.

This is also a unique opportunity to work with the Lime Trustees in further developing and growing the Trust as appropriate.

We are looking for a CEO who has the following skills and knowledge:

- Ability to drive cultural change and take ownership of the Trust's strategy
- Proven leadership and management experience, and expertise at senior management level in an educational setting for a substantial period of time, or across a variety of primary and special school settings
- Experience of working as Deputy CEO/Headteacher (minimum of 4 years)
- Experience of working in a MAT or a similar establishment
- Sustained record of school improvement in an education Trust environment
- Experience of effective management of funding and resources, including project costing and budgetary management
- Evidence of effective human and financial resources management
- Proven track record of developing business planning and managing the introduction of new initiatives and, in particular, effective building and premises management/improvement
- Excellent understanding of statutory education frameworks, including governance, current educational issues relating to academies, company, charity and education law, policies, guidance and codes of practice
- Comprehensive knowledge of the schools Ofsted inspection framework, criteria and processes

Recruitment timetable:

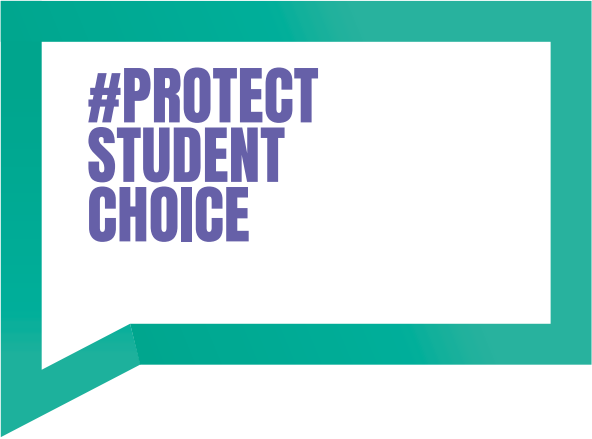
Closing date: 3 December 2021

Shortlisting: w/c 6 December 2021

Interviews: w/c 10/17 January 2022

If you would like to visit one or more of our Lime schools, please contact info@limetrust.org to make an appointment.

Lime Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our learners. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check. References will be taken up prior to interview.



**#PROTECT
STUDENT
CHOICE**

DON'T SCRAP BTECS

The **#ProtectStudentChoice** campaign coalition of over 20 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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The Association for
Modern Universities



NASUWT
The Teachers' Union



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and teachers network



To find out more visit www.protectstudentchoice.org