

# SCHOOLS WEEK

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

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# Omicron battle looms as pupils return to schools

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- Trust sets up 'internal supply agency' as leaders find solutions
- Supply firms reveal ex-teacher barriers, with few in classroom

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# SCHOOLS WEEK

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## LONG READ

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## Staff shortages bite as few returner teachers reach classroom

FREDDIE WHITTAKER &amp; JAMES CARR

@SCHOOLSWEEK

INVESTIGATES

Pupils across England returned to school this week as cases of the Omicron Covid variant continue to surge.

One-third of schools had more than one in ten staff off already, with warnings that absence rates will continue to rise.

While most schools have opened, using strategies such as setting up “internal supply agencies”, over one-third have been unable to source cover from stretched agencies.

Meanwhile, some supply firms say the government’s call to arms for retired teachers to plug the gaps is making little impact. Schools Week investigates...

**‘Many schools are teetering on the edge’**

While official government figures are yet to be released on staff absences, Schools Week has found seven schools and trusts reporting around ten per cent of staff absent this week.

Nadhim Zahawi said staff absences of about eight per cent were reported at the end of last year, but warned “that’s probably likely to rise with increasing cases in school”.

An NAHT survey of around 2,000 leaders found 36 per cent reported more than ten per cent of their total staff absent on the first day of term.

A quarter reported more than ten per cent of their teaching staff absent on the first day – with nine per cent warning they had one in five teachers absent.

England’s biggest trust, United Learning, reported “at least a couple of hundred staff off” this week, equating to around three per cent. Chief executive Sir Jon Coles said it was an area on which “everyone is concerned”.

Arbor, a school management information system provider for over 1,600 schools and 200 trusts, found disruption is “unevenly distributed”. While some schools are reporting relatively low staff absences, the worst-hit have up to 27 per cent of staff absent because of Covid.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of school leaders’ union NAHT, said: “Many schools are teetering on the edge and the next few weeks at least will undoubtedly continue to be an incredibly challenging time.”

Arbor statistics found around 3.3 per cent of



pupils were absent this week due to Covid.

The number of schools reporting at least one positive Covid case upon return has also increased – from 69 per cent at the end of last term to 82 per cent.

The government has advised schools to take a “flexible approach”, with “combining classes” flagged as a solution.

However, five education unions – the NEU, NASUWT, UNISON, GMB and Unite – plan to challenge schools following such advice, which they say will only “increase virus transmission”.

A case study on flexible learning published by the government from academy leader Ian Bauckham, also chair of Ofqual, suggested “temporarily” suspending the teaching of subjects such as music or PHSE in order to ease pressures.

**Schools run ‘internal supply agencies’**

Schools hit hardest by staff shortages have been forced to partially close this week and request certain year groups stay home.

Outwood Academy in Ormesby, Middlesbrough, closed to pupils in Year 9 and 10 on Wednesday, while nearby Outwood Bydales closed for Year 10.

An Oasis Community Learning school in Birmingham was also partially closed.

Active Learning Trust has established an “internal supply agency” to safeguard against future disruption. Chief executive Stephen Chamberlain explained the trust will use its central team to plug gaps, with around eight qualified teachers ready to take over lessons and an additional 20 capable of filling support staff and data admin roles.

He added: “I’ve cancelled all other stuff at the moment and said we’re

an internal supply agency. We all live close to one of our hubs... we will deploy to whichever school is needed.”

Tim Marston headteacher at Wreake Valley and The Roundhill academies in Leicester, uses a staffing model where all staff have “capacity within their timetable to teach one extra lesson”.

Around ten per cent of the schools’ teachers were absent this week, but the model allowed them to cover lessons without using supply teachers.

Schools reporting low staff absences this term often pointed to high rates of Covid absences before the Christmas break and large portions of staff testing positive over Christmas.

**‘There aren’t any supply teachers’**

Half of respondents to the NAHT survey said they are using supply teachers to cover absences, but 37 per cent said they were unable to source the staff they needed.

Vic Goddard, chief executive at Passmores Co-operative Learning Community in Essex, warned: “There aren’t any – you simply can’t get supply teachers.”

This was especially problematic at primary level where smaller staff numbers meant it was difficult to provide cover internally, he said.

Andy Byers, headteacher of Framwellgate School in Durham, had to contact numerous new agencies to find cover. Ten per cent of teachers were unable to return due to Covid. “The consequence of that is the supply teachers we’re getting are people who are unfamiliar with the school and students, which is not great,” he added.





## LONG READ

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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Before Christmas, the government issued a call for former teachers to return to the classroom to cover Covid absences. A portal was set up with contact details for dozens of supply agencies.

But several agencies involved in the scheme told Schools Week they had seen a limited response. Concerns over Covid, delays to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and issues with referencing for long-retired teachers are also presenting challenges.

Adam Sugarman, director of TLTP Education, said 76 former teachers had come forward, but "out of that, only four are compliant".

"The two big things that slows it down is the DBS and the references," he said, adding that there should be a "completely different" DBS check for returning teachers that is prioritised and free of charge.

The government said before Christmas that the DBS was "ready to meet any spikes in demand for its service", and would continue to issue 80 per cent of checks within 14 days. But Sugarman said his own firm's experience was "very different", and they could sometimes wait "a couple of months".

Aspire People offers former teachers a £100 joining incentive and £250 for referrals. The company has so far had 14 people come forward, four of whom are now moving through its system. Kelly Steadman, the company's sales director, said the call should have come earlier.

School leaders have also expressed doubts. Tom Quinn, chief executive at Frank Field Education Trust, warned that a "Dad's Army" just "rocking up and saying we can help" was unrealistic.

But others have said any extra help is to be welcomed.

Zahawi said earlier this week that he did not yet have data showing uptake of the scheme nationally and would have a "better idea at the end of this week".

**Older teachers fear spread of Covid**

Stewart McCoy, managing director of Career Teachers, said his organisation had "not had any noticeable response" to the call to arms, with "only a handful of enquiries".

He also warned that "many older teachers do report that they are fearful of the potential increased risk of transmission in schools".

Mike Donnelly, from Premier Teachers, reported similar issues. Of between 20 to 25 people who came forward after the DfE's call, a "very high proportion" had pulled out, with the prevalence of



the virus being the main reason.

Graham Simms, managing director of Education World, said he had seen "little to no impact in our incoming candidate recruitment trends" from the drive.

Key Education, a small agency covering Norfolk and Suffolk, has had around five applications, though none is yet cleared for work.

Director Samantha Dyson warned there had been "confusion around the announcement". Some teachers "think it is a voluntary scheme" and so are "surprised" to have to pay for a DBS.

The company heard from some teachers who retired 10 or 20 years ago. "The challenges with that are the changes in curriculum and the use of technology within the classroom so there needs to be allowances for this."

Marios Georgiou, from Step Teachers, said his company had seen just four ex-teachers come forward. "Unfortunately, and in spite of our efforts to promote the government's plan, I do not see this changing significantly."

**Recruitment firm puts 10 teachers to work**

Other organisations, however, have reported a better response. Gavin Beart, divisional managing director for education at Reed, one of the bigger supply agencies, said it had received just over 70 enquiries. "We registered quite a few in that last week before Christmas. Ten of those are out working this week already, so we are pretty pleased with that."

He said he would like to see the DfE call to arms extended to cover support staff too as "we think they'll be needed in the spring term".

4myschools has heard from 13 retired teachers since the call for action. Chief executive Simone Payne said this was "higher than normal and many only want to do one or a few days a week".

Kerry Sheehan from Athona Education said they had had 30 former teachers express an interest, which was "definitely above the level we initially expected".

The DBS and DfE were approached for comment.



## COVID

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## More air-cleaning units would be 'waste of money', says Zahawi

FREDDIE WHITTAKER &amp; JAMES CARR

@SCHOOLSWEEK

Schools are raiding their own coffers to buy air-cleaning units for their classrooms after the government allocated just one for every three schools in England.

But education secretary Nadhim Zahawi insisted this week that data on carbon dioxide levels reported by schools showed that providing more of the devices could "waste taxpayers' money".

Ministers say that 7,000 units will be provided, but only to schools which have classrooms with CO2 readings of over 1,500 parts per million, and which cannot complete remedial works before the end of February. This is on top of 1,000 units for special schools and alternative provision settings.

The government has faced criticism that this falls far short of what is needed, with over 20,000 schools and between 250,000 to 300,000 classrooms in England. The allocation is also less generous than what is on offer in some other parts of the world.

In Germany, the government announced in 2020 that it would subsidise 80 per cent of the cost of installing air cleaning equipment in schools. In New York City, the Department of Education announced last year that it would provide two air purifiers for each of the city's 56,000 classrooms. This is equivalent to around 65 per school.

And, in Toronto, Canada, the district school board said it would provide more than 16,000 units in the area's 583 schools, equivalent to around 27 per school.

The government has not said how much it will spend on the 8,000 units. Analysis of products available via a separate government marketplace for schools to buy their own equipment found the cheapest unit on offer was £424.82. Buying 8,000 of these devices would cost £3.4 million.

Zahawi told MPs on Wednesday that the allocation was based on feedback from schools about CO2 levels recorded on 300,000 monitors – costing £25 million – sent out by the government. "That is the funnel that we go through, otherwise we waste public money, taxpayers' money, on buying 300,000 air purifiers for classrooms that simply do not need them," he added.

Zahawi said there had been "some corroboration of that modelling" from pollsters Teacher Tapp.

The organisation found in December that around 4 per cent of respondents taught in a classroom



Nadhim Zahawi

with a CO2 reading of more than 1,500ppm, suggesting the government's allocation was "about right".

Guidance states that a consistent CO2 concentration of more than 1,500 ppm "is an indicator of poor ventilation".

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

But Teacher Tapp also found that 47 per cent of primary teachers and 73 per cent of secondary teachers reported not having a CO2 monitor in their classroom – meaning the true figure may be higher. In the meantime, some schools are bypassing the DfE to order their own equipment.

Colebourne Primary School in Birmingham has bought 16 Philips air purifiers – one for each classroom. At £250 each, they cost £4,000 in total.

Headteacher Stuart Guest said it was an "absolute

disgrace" that the government had not put units into schools already.

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust is looking to buy around 380 units for its classrooms. The trust will apply for some of the government's 7,000 units, but chief executive Dan Morrow said the scheme was restrictive.

"You need a week's worth of readings, so it takes time and obviously 7,000 isn't going to be enough to cover what the system requires."

If the trust bought the same units as Colebourne, units for all of its classrooms would cost £95,000, but Morrow said they would try to achieve economies of scale.

"It's not going to be cheap... It's about reassuring our staff, parents and children around taking every measure necessary on both ventilation and purification, and I also think it's about a sense of equity."

Nick Oswald, head of Great Ouseburn Primary School in York, said his school had purchased HEPA filters at £70 each for his four classrooms. "I felt that the cost was well worth it for a couple of reasons.

"Staff and pupil safety – anything that reduces the risk must be worth doing. And financially, the cost of a day and a half's supply would more than cover what we spent on these."

However larger academy trusts in particular have managed to boost their reserves through Covid, meaning some would be able to afford funding units of their own. Some have spent the extra cash on catch-up and laptops.

## How England's offer compares

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COVID

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## Ofsted's workforce depleted as inspectors told to focus on school roles

JAMES CARR

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Ofsted has just over 10 per cent of its usual inspection workforce to call on over the next few weeks, meaning far fewer schools will be visited than expected.

Under new measures to limit Omicron disruption, education secretary Nadhim Zahawi announced this week that inspectors who are also education leaders will be left to "focus on their leadership responsibilities at this critical time".

Zahawi said the change was a "temporary measure" in place from the start of this term.

Ofsted told *Schools Week* that it has around 1,170 contracted school Ofsted inspectors – 800 of whom are serving headteachers and senior leaders. The watchdog also clarified this week that it has temporarily agreed not to ask any Ofsted inspectors to carry out inspections.

Instead, it will rely solely on the 185 school inspectors who are directly employed by Ofsted, to continue conducting inspections from next week. HMIs account for just 13.6 per cent of the watchdog's normal roster of school inspectors.

The watchdog said it would be providing additional detail about what the reduced capacity means for inspections in the coming days. But it is likely to lead to a large scaling back of visits until normal service is resumed.

Zahawi also announced that the inspectorate would be encouraging schools "significantly impacted by Covid-related staff absence" to request a deferral. Last term around a quarter of requests to defer inspections were turned down by Ofsted.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, repeated the union's demand for all deferrals to be granted upon request.

Ofsted said it would continue to consider deferral requests on a case-by-case basis.

The watchdog returned to full routine inspection activity in September, however visits

were suspended again in the final week of last term so schools could prepare contingency plans for expected Omicron disruption.

Inspections had already been paused for this week so that secondary schools could test pupils on their return to the classroom after Christmas.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of the NAHT school leaders' union, warned that inspections were the "very last thing schools need given the pressure they are under just to stay open and minimise disruption for learners".

He added: "Encouraging schools to ask for deferrals of inspections is helpful but it would be even better if all uncertainty were removed by simply suspending inspections entirely this term so inspectors can return to the classroom to help the effort."

In November, it was announced that Ofsted would receive an extra £24 million between 2022 and 2025 to speed up inspections of all schools and colleges to give a quicker assessment of education recovery.

The acceleration is not scheduled to begin until next year, with the extra cash allowing the watchdog to recruit more inspectors and manage the programme of rapid inspections.

*Schools Week* analysis last year identified 16 regulators in England which conducted regular inspections and assessment in their sector prior to the pandemic.

Just six of these, including Ofsted, had returned to normal inspection activity. The remaining 10 either conducted targeted and "risk-based" investigations or introduced remote measures to inspect providers.

Ofsted inspections of initial teacher training (ITT) providers will also resume this month.

The Department for Education said in December that providers inspected either this month or in the first week of February will be granted a 10-day extension to apply for reaccreditation under government reforms.

Impacted providers now have until February 21 to submit their applications as part of the ITT Market Review changes.

## Forced conversions down to one a month

TOM BELGER

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EXCLUSIVE

The academisation of "inadequate" schools has slowed to just one conversion a month, official figures reveal.

Only three schools launched as academies between October and December following forced conversion, *Schools Week* analysis shows. It marks the lowest monthly opening rate on record, while September's 11 conversions were the fewest since 2005.

The slowdown comes despite the Department for Education's renewed academy drive that began early last year.

Experts said the pausing of routine Ofsted inspections when the pandemic hit had shrunk the academy pipeline of poorly rated schools. Those rated "inadequate" are forced to convert, with government officials finding sponsor trusts to offer support.

Ofsted statistics show that only 49 maintained schools had the lowest rating as of September, compared with 151 the previous year.

Only 67 schools were in the DfE "sponsor pipeline" list of approved conversions last month, down from 165 as the first lockdown began in March 2020.

Jeff Marshall, managing director of education advisers J&G Marshall, said the reduced number of conversions was "pretty much down to fewer inspections".

Ofsted resumed routine inspections last term and said in November it would accelerate inspections of every school. But this week it agreed to "encourage" schools badly hit by the Omicron spread to request deferrals.

Marshall said school clients expected conversion rates to grow again once inspections "resume in earnest".

Some believe Ofsted's new inspection framework will "trigger more sponsored conversions in the second part of the year", and the anticipated white paper will "kickstart a renewed push" to academise.



## EXPLAINER

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# Masks in the classroom: what the evidence says

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

The Department for Education has set out the evidence behind its decision to reintroduce face masks temporarily in secondary school classrooms.

The move, communicated to school leaders last weekend, is a particularly sensitive one. Ministers have faced a backlash from Covid restriction sceptics, including many influential Conservative MPs, but have been under sustained challenge from unions to reintroduce the measure for months.

So how effective are masks in the classroom? Schools Week takes a look at the evidence...

## Study suggests positive impact – but data ‘limited’

A DfE study in October found the Covid absence rate across schools using face coverings fell quicker compared with those who were not using masks. However, the data has limitations.

The study looked at data submitted by 123 schools through the education settings form and was pre-Omicron, which has proved to be more infectious than the previous Delta variant.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi claimed on talkRADIO that these schools had “face mask policies in the classroom”. He claimed he was the “evidence-led secretary of state”.

But the DfE’s report says the data “does not differentiate between whether face coverings were used in classrooms or communal areas”.

The preliminary analysis found that secondary schools not using masks saw their average absence rate fall by 1.7 percentage points from 5.3 per cent on October 1, to 3.6 per cent three weeks later.

In schools that did use face coverings, absence fell by 2.3 percentage points from 5.3 per cent to 3 per cent.

The DfE accepts there is a “level of statistical uncertainty around the result” and that “further work should be done”.

But Professor Stephen Gorard, director of the Durham University evidence centre for education, said the analysis was “good enough” to support the use of facemasks in classrooms and was “explicit about its necessary limitations”.

He added that the analysis suggested a “small effect size on infections from wearing masks” which “might save some lives as well as absences”.

The DfE said it was working to make the



underlying data and analysis available to an external peer reviewer for independent replication of results.

## Questions around US masks study

The DfE said there were scientific studies which looked at the link between Covid and the use of face coverings in education settings, but they were “not conclusive”.

It cited several United States studies which “generally find higher rates of Covid-19 in schools without mask requirements, compared to those with mask requirements”.

One study in Arizona published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that schools without mask requirements were 3.5 times more likely to have outbreaks between July and August last year.

The CDC has recommended that all children aged 2 and above should wear coverings indoors at school, which contrasts with the UK’s response. However, some have discredited this study claiming it is unreliable and flawed.

In the run-up to Christmas, the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) told the government it might be necessary to consider the wearing of face coverings in primary school classrooms, where “the balance of risks and benefits did not previously support it”.

But the government decided to keep primary pupils exempt, citing other measures to reduce transmission such as staff testing and improved ventilation.

A second study showed that US counties where schools required masks also had less transmission of the virus in the community.

In November 2020, the UK Health and Security Agency looked at mask evidence in schools and

summer camp settings.

The DfE said these three studies were “observational” and had “limitations”, so the results provided “less direct evidence of effectiveness of face coverings than randomised control trials”.

Results were “mixed” but “taken together” they supported the conclusion that “the use of face coverings in schools can contribute to reducing” transmission.

## School leaders’ communication concerns

The DfE said it would work with the UKHSA to “carefully monitor the data and the evidence” and continue to strike a balance between managing transmission risk and reducing disruption to education.

Back in April, when face masks were used in the classroom after lockdown, a DfE survey found that almost all secondary leaders and teachers thought face coverings made communication with students more difficult.

The World Health Organisation said that for children with hearing loss, mask wearing might present learning barriers and could cause missed learning.

The DfE said it was therefore important to continue to offer flexibility to schools either not to use face coverings or to use transparent coverings.

Zahawi has asked the DfE for more research into the negative impacts of face coverings on education. He said masks were “distracting for children at a time when they should be concentrating or listening to their teachers”.

But, overall, he said that wearing masks was a “sensible, pragmatic and proportionate thing to do”. He hopes that “data will allow us to ditch masks in class” from January 26.

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## NEWS

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# Top trusts team up to bid for £121m flagship Institute of Teaching

TOM BELGER

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EXCLUSIVE

Four of the country's leading academy trusts have created a new teacher training body that has bid to run the government's flagship £121 million Institute of Teaching.

Harris Federation, Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT), Star Academies and Oasis Community Learning have co-founded the School Led Development Trust (SLDT).

The SLDT was formally incorporated as a company operating "for the public benefit" on 31 May last year, with the four trusts as members and their chief executives as directors.

The registration came only a few weeks after the Department for Education began the tender process for the operation of its new Institute of Teaching (IoT).

The trusts confirmed they had bid for the contract and were now awaiting the outcome.

The Ambition Institute is also in the running, with the process believed to be in the final stages and a decision due within weeks. The contract is due to start in February.

A DfE spokesperson said the operator would be announced "in due course", ahead of the planned launch later this year.

The IoT will be the country's "flagship teacher and leader development provider" and must have at least four regional campuses. The government has said a pilot will begin in September, with 500 trainees from September 2023 and 1,000 the following year.

The winning organisation or consortium is due to receive £121 million to run the body over six years, though only £17 million is guaranteed to set up and run the body. The rest is dependent on recruitment and future spending reviews.

An SLDT spokesperson said the group would provide professional development "from initial teacher training through to executive headship". Its "strength lies in its collaborative approach"



and having four trusts on board gave it "considerable reach, capacity and energy", the spokesperson added.

Sir Dan Moynihan, chief executive of Harris, told Schools Week that the organisation would be a "ground-breaking initiative to incubate and share best practice" across the country.

But it is not clear how far the organisation's future rests on winning the IoT contract. The spokesperson declined to comment further.

The trusts also already run their own teacher training programmes.

The SLDT's plans align to the IoT's remit – offering training for new, early career and senior staff alike, and sharing best practice.

The IoT will deliver the early career framework (ECF) for new teachers and national professional qualifications (NPQs) for more experienced staff as part of the DfE's wider overhaul of teacher training.

The IoT will also attempt to replicate the approach of schools which "combine high standards of pupil behaviour and discipline with a broad knowledge-based and ambitious curriculum", according to the DfE.

Such statements have sparked concerns that more of the DfE's preferred teaching methods could be imposed on the sector. There are also fears it could threaten the viability of existing training providers.

The SLDT spokesperson said member trusts had a "proven track record" on both educational outcomes and teacher development.

"The trust is the next organic stage in the national evolution of a school-led system that recognises that the deepest knowledge and most effective practice is generated by colleagues in schools," they added.

The trusts also have a comprehensive cover of the country, with at least one academy in each of the eight regional school commissioner regions.

Martyn Oliver, OGAT chief executive, said that "every region has good practice to share and deep-seated problems to remedy".

He added: "In the North our challenge is to arrest underperformance in cold spots where response to earlier initiatives has not been sustained."

Sir Hamid Patel, chief executive of Star, said that "levelling up can only be achieved by colleagues sharing their wisdom and disseminating practice that actually works".

John Murphy, chief executive of Oasis Community Learning, said the trusts had long-standing relationships, but Covid had fuelled even greater collaboration among their and other leaders.

Ambition Institute was contacted for comment.



Sir Dan Moynihan



Martyn Oliver



Sir Hamid Patel



John Murphy



NEWS

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# Trust kicks off diversity drive with NFL recruitment policy

TOM BELGER

@TOM\_BELGER

EXCLUSIVE

The country's largest academy trust has begun using anti-racist recruitment policies borrowed from the US, ensuring that at least one ethnic minority candidate is shortlisted for many senior posts.

Trusts are also hiring diversity specialists, challenging "Eurocentric" history and urging staff to declare their ethnicities to monitor progress.

Johan Jensen, director of All-in Education, said diversity and inclusion advisers like him had been "inundated" by schools since George Floyd's murder – with demand still high 19 months later.

Newly published accounts reveal that United Learning, England's biggest trust, has quietly overhauled its curriculum, culture and recruitment. It has applied the "Rooney rule" for certain vacancies, named after former National Football League diversity chair Dan Rooney.

Introduced in the NFL in 2003, it guarantees at least one shortlist spot for ethnic minority candidates provided they meet the minimum requirements.

## 'We've got great staff, but they don't look like our students'

Chief executive Sir Jon Coles said its HR processes were already fair, but the rule marked a "strong signal" to potential applicants.

It is one of multiple changes since 2019, reflecting Coles' growing sense that the "overwhelmingly white" faces at leadership meetings meant "something was going wrong. We had great people, appointed on merit, but they didn't look like our students."

Schools Week's annual diversity audit last year found just two of the 117 trusts with 15 or more schools had non-white leaders.

Other United Learning reforms include reverse mentoring, with 40 junior ethnic minority staff mentoring senior leaders. The aim is to facilitate "dialogue between people from different backgrounds" and support career progression, accounts say.

Meanwhile curriculum reforms include more diverse literature, studying



the Mali empire, and the relationship between "Christendom in the West and the golden age of Islam", according to Coles.

"It's very easy to have a Eurocentric approach to history, but not very accurate," he added.

## BAME forums spark change

Both Coles and John Murphy, his counterpart at Oasis Community Learning, said they had learnt from new forums for ethnic minority staff to share their views. Coles found some staff felt well-supported into leadership roles, but others felt they "weren't encouraged" and were deterred by the lack of diversity above.

Murphy said that listening in at new anti-racism and LGBTQ+ staff network meetings was "one of the most powerful things I've done as CEO".

Oasis is also hiring dedicated staff to promote workforce equality and diversity, and a "lead practitioner for curriculum development around global heritage".

Both organisations have increased staff training. Oasis will survey staff this month and benchmark responses against other organisations, while Coles has urged staff to disclose ethnic data to boost monitoring.

Current data is too "poor" to clearly track progress so far, Coles said, but senior leaders, heads and those on track for headship were now "visibly more diverse".

Murphy said that around 10 per cent of leaders were of "global heritage", but he expected a more diverse leadership pipeline to almost double this.

## 'Modish catchphrases aren't helpful'

Ethan Bernard, co-founder of Aspiring Heads, said he saluted United Learning for "bold steps to try new or radical approaches". But he cautioned

that the Rooney rule should not be a "checkbox activity" or "performative".

In the NFL, it is widely seen to have succeeded initially, but then progress reversed.

Allana Gay, co-founder of BAMEed, said it was rare for trusts to explicitly reference the Rooney rule, but more schools were only shortlisting if longlists included diverse candidates.

She warned that reverse mentoring also places the onus on junior staff to educate, and power dynamics can limit openness. Having paid, in-house diversity specialists is also rare, she said.

Jensen said that education was "a decade or two behind" other sectors on diversity efforts, adding: "Nervousness often leads to inaction."

Among heads, 92.7 per cent are white British, compared with 84.9 per cent of all teachers.

Some schools fear offending those they want to help, while others fear a backlash "on the conservative side", Jensen added.

Coles said he was not worried about sparking "ridiculous headlines", but added: "Decolonising the curriculum and other modish catchphrases I don't think are useful – it's polarising and puts people's backs up."

Introducing diverse voices has not meant "casting out important things written by white people", he added.

Coles and Murphy said that Floyd's death last May galvanised existing efforts, but Jensen said it changed "everything" in the sector.

Gay said that, even without significant DfE encouragement, "all schools are looking to make their curriculum more inclusive".



Sir Jon Coles



Allana Gay

## NEWS

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# MAT under financial scrutiny cuts CEO's £225k salary by a third

TOM BELGER

@TOM\_BELGER

EXCLUSIVE

A multi-academy trust ordered by government to find savings to balance the books has slashed its chief executive's £225,000 salary by more than a third, accounts show.

This comes as *Schools Week* analysis shows executive pay continuing to rise among large trusts that have previously been warned over high pay by government. Yet some leaders have seen pay stagnate, or even cut.

The Rodillian Multi-Academy Trust, which runs four schools in Yorkshire, paid its chief executive Andy Goulty between £225,000 and £230,000 in 2019-20. It put him in the top 20 best-paid academy bosses in the country.

But its latest accounts show he received between £140,000 and £145,000 in the year to September 2021 – a cut of at least £80,000.

The trust did not respond to repeated requests for comment about the drastic fall in pay.

It takes Goulty's pay to below the £150,000 threshold which has previously triggered government warning letters demanding trusts justify pay levels, as part of a clampdown on runaway salaries.

The cut also follows years of Education and Skills Funding Agency scrutiny over the trust's finances.

A 2017 probe found it paid Goulty almost £8,000 to spend 78 nights in a four-star hotel. ESFA was told this was because he worked late.

Rodillian then received a financial notice to improve in 2018 over failures in governance and balancing the books.

Goulty said at the time the trust had inherited deficits from two schools it was pressured to take on by government. Its 2018 accounts record a £1.4 million general fund deficit.

A second notice followed in 2019, ordering the trust to prove "all possible economies are being made" to balance budgets.

But the notice was lifted in September 2020. New accounts show last year's surplus pushed reserves to £3.7 million after Rodillian "delivered economies".



Rodillian marks a contrast to trends at ten of the largest trusts to release 2021 annual accounts so far that have previously been sent letters over CEO pay.

*Schools Week* analysis shows they handed leaders an average £4,500, or 2.6 per cent, pay rise. The mean salary was £175,500. It followed an average £5,000 hike the previous year.

Paul Tarn, chief executive of Delta Academies Trust, saw his remuneration rise by £20,000 to £225,000. A spokesperson said all pay followed a "robust review and market benchmarking process", and Tarn's previous hike had not exceeded inflation. "This takes into account their excellent performance as leaders of one of the largest and most financially efficient trusts in the country."

The 51-school trust was also the largest on the list, expanded last year and records above-average results.

Two other trust leaders, Greenwood Academies Trust's Wayne Norrie and Cabot Learning Federation's Steven Taylor, have seen minimum pay bands jump at least £20,000 over two years.

A Greenwood spokesperson said Norrie's recent raise to at least £190,000 brought it "in line with rigorous national benchmarking and cost of living increases nationally".

The "excellent" leader of 37 schools had also "consistently refused

incremental increases" as CEO since 2016, and the pay took government guidance into account.

Taylor's minimum pay band rose £10,000 in both 2019 and 2020 to £170,000. Paul Olomolaiye, chair of the CLF board, said it conducted robust analysis annually to ensure that pay reflected "national expectations", official guidance and individual responsibilities and performance.

He noted the head of a single London secondary could earn £125,000, whereas the trust oversees more than 12,000 pupils and 2,000 staff. "The CLF board ensures its approach to pay is transparent, proportionate and justifiable."

Taylor had not received a more recent rise in 2021 "in line with government guidelines for teachers' salaries", he added.

Dr Mary Bousted, joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the key question was whether trusts boosting executive pay were also handing staff fair rises or were imposing freezes at the time.

"Trusts would really have to justify awarding disproportionate pay rises to the executive layer and not staff," said Bousted. "Teachers can be the most hard-working, and research shows the strongest way to raise standards is middle leaders, often earning much less than CEOs."



Dr Mary Bousted



## NEWS

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## Online GCSEs 'by 2025', as exam board launches major pilot

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Thousands of students in England will sit on-screen tests this year in a major pilot run by AQA, the country's largest exam board, marking a big step towards online exams.

A second exam board, which is already running on-screen GCSE trials, has now said it is preparing to make high-stakes exams available on screen by 2025.

Under the AQA trial, up to 2,500 secondary school students from between 60 and 100 schools will trial online GCSE exams early this year. They will also take part in adaptive assessments where the difficulty adjusts as students move through the test.

The trials, reported to cost hundreds of thousands of pounds, will provide evidence on how on-screen tests could work in future.

Colin Hughes, AQA's chief executive, said a move to digital assessment was "only a matter of time", with the pandemic highlighting the need for "resilience in the system".

His comments echo Ofqual chief regulator Jo Saxton, who told *Schools Week* last year it was "not a question of if, it's where might we involve it more, and when" on using technology in exams. The government appears to be supportive of the trials.

Speaking to the BBC's *World at One*, Hughes said barriers include a school's location, the equipment they have and connectivity – all issues thrown up during the pandemic.

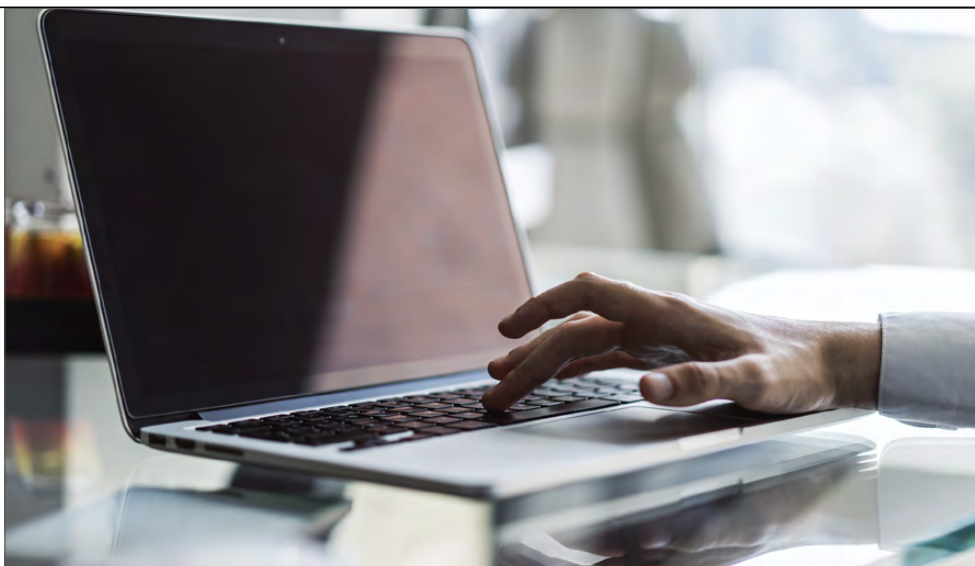
A report by Ofqual in 2020 found that large-scale standardised tests could not be moved online in the "immediate future". The review found inconsistencies in school IT provision and unreliable internet connections.

The AQA trial will use a range of school sizes and types and their IT infrastructure will be selected.

Up to 1,500 students will complete the GCSE part of the pilot, with 45-minute tests in English, maths and two in science.

AQA wants to keep the "assessment burden low" for students. It will conduct a full programme of research to understand schools' experiences.

Hughes said the trial costs were within six figures as it "wants real pragmatic



hard evidence rather than speculative discussion" about online assessment.

He added that teachers and students have learnt "a huge amount" about online learning during the pandemic. Digital assessment can "enable improved fairness, along with richer data on learning and achievement, and potentially faster accurate marking", Hughes added.

Exam board OCR, owned by Cambridge Assessment, is running trials of a "digital mocks service" of GCSE and AS assessments taken entirely on-screen in nine countries for three subjects, including computer science and history.

It is also preparing to make high-stakes exams available on-screen by 2025. A nine-month trial of "digital progression tests" in 16 countries, involving 1,500 students and 120 teachers, has just been completed.

Some of its Cambridge Technical qualifications have been available to sit on-screen since 2017.

But a spokesperson said that running a digital GCSE maths exam nationwide "raised important issues of equality and requires wider system change".

The AQA trial will also include adaptive "smart" assessments, for key stage three and GCSE students.

The *Times* reported that sophisticated software allows questions to adjust in difficulty according to the performance of the candidate as the exam progresses, possibly removing the need for foundation and higher papers at GCSE.

Hughes said: "It's not highfalutin technology, it's available today. It has this enormous virtue that pupils can move through their own test in their own way and genuinely demonstrate what they can achieve in the time available."

But a spokesperson for exams regulator Ofqual said: "There are many factors that need to be thoroughly considered and tested to protect the interests of students. So these changes clearly won't, and shouldn't, happen overnight."

They will play a "central role" in making sure the use of technology for qualifications is "done properly and regulated appropriately", the spokesperson added.

In a letter to the *Times*, Neil Roskill, vice president and ex-CEO of the Independent Schools Association, said that "faith in computer technology can undermine confidence in pupils' results". A recent example was the 2020 exams fiasco.

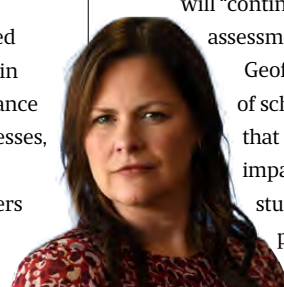
Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi said technology can be a "force for good in education". He wants to "keep pushing at those doors to see where we can go further".

Pearson Edexcel already offers a GCSE computer science exam online, as well as BTEC functional skills. A spokesperson said it will "continue to invest" in onscreen assessment.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of school leaders' union ASCL, said that technology could "have a big impact on the fairness of exams for students by making them more personalised and intelligent".



Colin Hughes



Jo Saxton



## HONOURS



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# Honoured: teaching sector well represented in New Year 2022 gongs

## FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

An academy trust sector body chief, the government's behaviour tsar and the boss of a teacher training charity are among those recognised in the 2022 new year's honours list for services to education.

Confederation of School Trusts (CST) chief executive Leora Cruddas and Teach First boss Russell Hobby have received the CBE.

ResearchED founder and Department for Education behaviour adviser Tom Bennett has received the OBE.

In total, 56 people with links to England's schools sector are recognised this year.

Fifteen of them are either serving or former trust chief executives or executive headteachers. Also recognised are six headteachers and other senior leaders, and seven members of support staff.

### 'Those on front line deserve honours'

Founded in 2018 to replace the Freedom and Autonomy for Schools – National Association, the CST now represents almost 60 per cent of academies in England.

As its leader, Cruddas advises the government on various issues and lobbies on behalf of the sector.

The former director of policy at the ASCL school leaders' union said she was "enormously proud of everything my board, my team and I have achieved so far, but it is truly humbling to be honoured in this way".

She added it is "those on the front line who deserve to be honoured".

Hobby, who served as general secretary of the NAHT leadership union for seven years before joining Teach First in 2017, said he was "very grateful" and "blessed to work in teams of amazing people, striving to make a difference for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds".

Former children's minister Robert Goodwill is to be knighted, but absent from the list entirely is ex-education secretary Gavin Williamson, who was tipped for a knighthood earlier this year.

Lord Frank Field, the former Labour MP who set up the Frank Field Education Trust, has been made a member of the Order of the Companions of Honour, which recognises a long-standing contribution to government.

### 'Women leaders deserve the utmost recognition'

Seventeen people with links to England's schools have received the OBE.

Bennett said he was "deeply moved" and "grateful to the thousands of teachers who turn up every day and help children flourish in calm, safe spaces where they learn in dignity. My honour is shared with them."

Government academy troubleshooter Angela Barry, who has in recent years served as interim chief executive at failing trusts such as Lilac Sky, Bright Tribe and SchoolsCompany, said she was "humbled".

But she was "even more honoured to have been able to make education my career so that I could help children and young people get the best start in life".

Also recognised with an OBE is Vivienne Porritt, a co-founder of both WomenEd and DisabilityEd. She said this was for the "amazing WomenEd global community and for all women leaders in education who deserve the utmost recognition".

A number of serving academy leaders have also received the OBE, including Lorraine Clarke and Matthew Jones from ARK Schools, Shabir Fazal from Eden Boys' Leadership Academy and Catherine Kitchen, chief executive of the Skylark Partnership Academy Trust.

Amanda Nicholson, chief executive of King's Academy Trust, also received the OBE, as did Raymond Friel, former chief executive of the Plymouth CAST trust, and Donald Parker, former boss of the Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust.

### Gongs for former heads and support staff

A number of former senior leaders have also been recognised with an MBE. They include Michelle Blanchard, a former executive principal for the Dixons Academies Trust, and Dr Helen Holman, former head of the Orchard School in Bristol.

The honours list features ten governors or trustees, including Tracy Luke, chair of Turner Free School in Folkestone, Kent. The school is part of the Turner Schools academy trust, which was set up by Dr Jo Saxton, who went on to become a DfE policy adviser and is now chief regulator of Ofqual.

Gongs also went to nine representatives of the charity and third sectors, while five recognised council officials and one went to a teacher.

Three went to civil servants or government advisers, including Dr André Imich, an adviser to the DfE on special educational needs and disabilities.

You can read the full list of those honoured for services to education on page 17



Vivienne Porritt



Angela Barry



Leora Cruddas



Tom Bennett

## HONOURS



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# Who got what in the schools community?

## CBE

Leora Anne CRUDDAS, Chief Executive, Confederation of School Trusts

Russell Keith HOBBS, Lately General Secretary, National Association of Head Teachers

## OBE

Yvonne Dawn BAKER, Chief Executive, STEM Learning

Angela BARRY, School Improvement Partner and Leadership Development Consultant

Thomas BENNETT, Director and Founder, researchED, and Behaviour Adviser, Department for Education

Lorraine Anne CLARKE, Regional Director and Executive Principal, ARK Schools Academy Trust, Hastings

Mohammed Shabir FAZAL, Headteacher, Eden Boys' Leadership Academy, Manchester

Raymond Francis FRIEL, Lately Chief Executive Officer, Plymouth CAST Trust

Dr Andre Jan IMICH, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Professional Adviser, Department for Education

Matthew Leon JONES, Executive Principal, ARK Globe Academy, London

Catherine Margaret KITCHEN, Chief Executive Officer, Skylark Partnership Academy Trust and Chair, National Association of Hospital Education

Clive Anthony LAWRENCE, Lately Executive Headteacher, St Giles' School, Derby

Neil LEITCH, Chief Executive Officer, Early Years Alliance

Catherine Lynne MCCLURE, Director, Cambridge Mathematics

Amanda NICHOLSON, Chief Executive Officer, King's Academy Trust and Executive Principal, Oakwood, Manchester

William John OAKES, Lately Headteacher, Dartford Grammar School, Kent

Donald PARKER, Lately Chief Executive Officer, Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust

Amanda Lin PARRY, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, HISP MAT and Executive Director, LEARN Teaching School Alliance, Hampshire

Vivienne PORRITT, Co-Founder and Global Strategic Leader, WomenEd and Co-Founder, DisabilityEd UK

Margaret Patricia SEXTON, Chair, North East Learning Trust and Apollo Schools Trust, Durham

## MBE

Zulkifl AHMED, Lately Special Educational Needs and Disability Group Manager, Worcestershire County Council

David Gwynne BACKHOUSE, Chair of Governors, Grove Primary School, Mayfield School, Barley Lane Primary School, and Redbridge Primary School, London

Michelle Dawn BLANCHARD, Lately Executive Principal, Dixons Academies Trust, Bradford

Wendy CASSON, Lately Head Teacher, Educational Diversity, Blackpool

Thomas Richard COOKSON, Chairman, Physics Partners, Kent

Brian CROSBY, Chief Executive Officer, Coast and Vale Learning Trust, Yorkshire

Kevin Francis DICKENS, Director of Resources, The Abbey School, Faversham, Kent

Jacqueline Anne EASON, Chair of Trustees, Leading Edge Academies Partnership, Cornwall

Sister Margaret Catherine HARLOCK, Chair of Governors, St Brendan's Sixth Form College, Bristol

Angela HOLDSWORTH, Chief Executive Officer, The Sea View Trust, Lancashire

Dr Helen Brewster HOLMAN, Lately Headteacher, Orchard School, Bristol

Marilyn HUBBARD, Chair of Trustees, Inspiring Future through Learning Multi-Academy Trust, Milton Keynes

Jayne Elizabeth JARDINE, Chief Executive Officer, The Rise Partnership, London

Edwina Jayne LANGLEY, Lead Attendance Officer, Birmingham City Council

Janet Belinda LEFLEY, Community Manager, The Romsey School, Hampshire

Dr Vivienne Catherine LENNOX, Chair of Governors, Suffield Park Infant and Nursery School, Norfolk

Tracy LUKE, Chair of Governors, Turner Free School, Folkestone, Kent

Patricia Ann MARCHIORI, Lately Chair of Trustees, Ambitions Academy Trust, Poole

Susan Elizabeth PARISH, Business and Community Manager, Park Community School, Havant, Hampshire

Sandra Beverley PRAIL, Governor, Brighton, Hove & Sussex Sixth Form College

Susan REILLY (Sue Thorpe), Senior Delivery Lead, Regional Delivery Directorate, Department for Education

Amanda SMITH (Amanda Austin), Executive Head Teacher, Fernwood Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham

Kerry Lynne STOCKLEY, Governor, Preston Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees

Joy Sheridan TUBBS, Director, Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education

Michelle Kay WILLETT, Chief Executive Officer, The Gallery Trust, Oxfordshire

Peter John WILSON, Trustee, Milton Keynes Special Needs Advancement Project

## BEM

Muhammad Kamil ALI, Volunteer Tutor, BPCD Trust, Luton

Julia BAINES, Teaching Assistant, St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Bracknell

Angela Patricia BLOWER, Lately Catering Manager, Middlesbrough Council

Elaine FORSYTH, For services to Education in Surrey

Averil Selina GIBBINS, Lately School Cleaner, Whitehouse Community Primary School, Ipswich

Roger William HOWARD, Volunteer Groundskeeper, Meadlands Primary School, London

Kim JOHNSON, Arts Education Consultant, Derbyshire County Council Virtual School

Ian MACPHERSON, Music Tutor, Percussive Edge, Harrogate

Marion Elizabeth MAIDMENT, English Teacher, Ferndown Upper School, Dorset

Hanina Alice SIMON, Manager, Redbridge Schools Library Service, London

*\*Names and titles appear as published in the government's honours list*

# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Weary school leaders gear up for another Covid battle

As pupils returned to schools this week after the Christmas break, it feels there's a sense of trepidation about what might come next.

With Omicron rates surging, it is no surprise that school leaders, teachers and support staff fear the impact this relatively new variant will have on their communities.

Indeed, its impact is already being seen. One in three schools are reporting staff absence rates of 10 per cent.

The government's plea for ex-teachers to return was only ever going to help around the edges. But early reports suggest that the barriers faced by supply agencies trying to get returner teachers back into the classroom means they might miss out on many who are keen to help.

Supply agencies were caught off-guard by the announcement in the week before Christmas, and the process for vetting volunteers is hardly straightforward.

Headlines about MPs and former Ofsted chief inspectors rolling up their sleeves play well for the government. However, the reality is that it is bound to be more difficult for those who have been out of the profession for longer to return to the classroom

While every extra gap filled will represent a small victory, many schools will have to find their own solutions for filling shortages.

A survey today suggests a third of schools already could not source the staff they needed.

While larger academy trusts with big central teams may be able to weather the storm, it's the smaller and standalone schools without access to such resources that face the biggest hit.

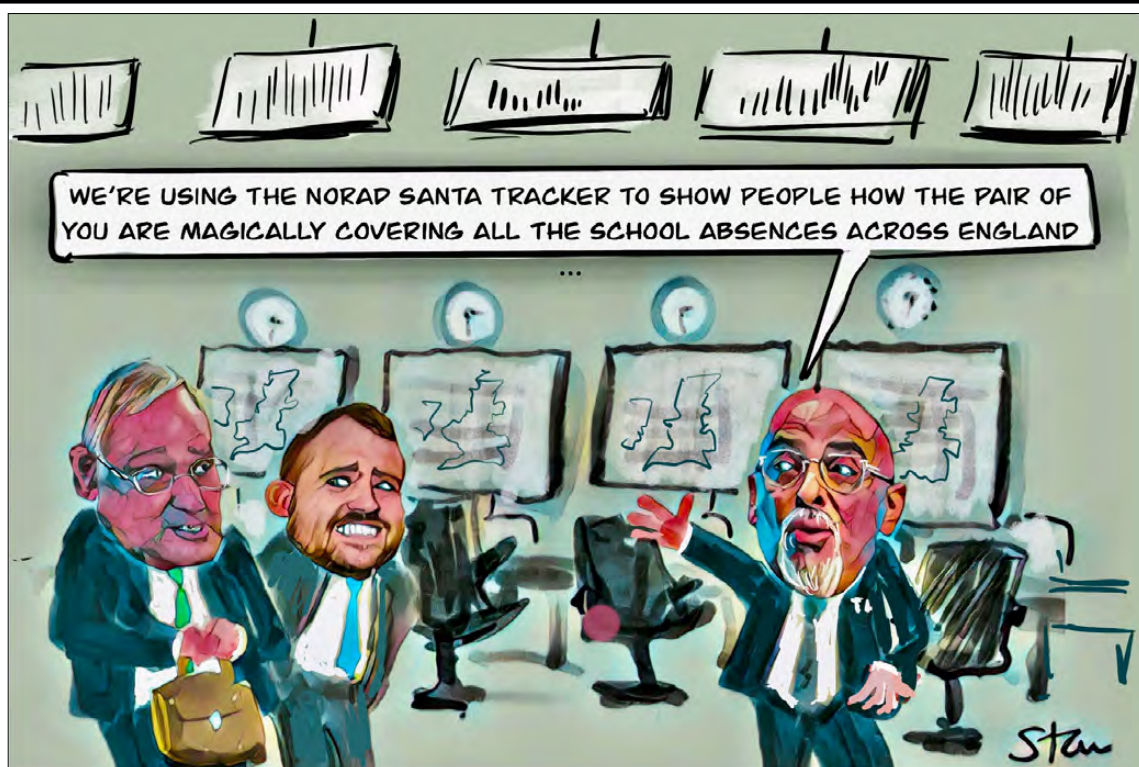
School staff will of course rise to the challenge, as they have each time during a barrage of relentless challenges since Covid first struck. But this already feels like one crisis too many.

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# Profile

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER



## ‘Hopefully I’m the last shadow and the next schools minister in the Labour government’

**Stephen Morgan, Labour’s latest shadow schools minister, says he wants to put education ‘front and centre’ of the party’s next manifesto – but voters will have to wait to see his policies. By Freddie Whittaker**

**S**tephen Morgan is the fifth shadow schools minister in two years, and he wants the sector to know he’s sorry.

“What I’ve been saying to people is that I’m really conscious of that, and I apologise for that, because they will probably feel like they’re having déjà vu moments where they’re repeating what they’ve told my predecessors.”

The Labour MP for Portsmouth South succeeded Peter Kyle in Sir Keir Starmer’s front bench reshuffle in December.

But unlike his predecessors, Morgan tells *Schools Week* in his first interview since taking the role that he’s in it for the long haul. “Keir said that’s his team that he wants to take through the next general election, whenever that might be... Hopefully I’m the

last shadow and the next schools minister in the Labour government, and that’s what my focus is on.”

When we meet in his constituency office, a former hot dog restaurant a stones-throw from his old secondary school, Morgan explains how his own education had a big impact on his politics.

Morgan grew up in the district of Fratton,



## Profile: Stephen Morgan



Stephen as a Scout



Stephen as a toddler with sister Charlotte

**“I wouldn’t read a book at school, I’d read copies of the Guardian. And that probably shaped my politics”**

Portsmouth, in the 1980s and attended state schools. His father, a silk-screen printer, and his mother were school governors and “very involved in the local community”.

Morgan’s interest in politics piqued when, at an early age, a family friend gave him back issues of the *Guardian* to read. “I wouldn’t read a book at school, I’d read copies of the newspaper. And that probably shaped my politics.”

Growing up in “Thatcher’s Britain”, Morgan remembers learning in “crumbling” Victorian schools, and a “lack of care and attention” for education from government. He joined the Labour Party in 1997 at the age of 16, “with that hope of a Labour government that would transform our country and prioritise education”.

“Inspired and encouraged” by his teachers, Morgan went on to become the first in his family to go to university, reading politics and sociology. He arrived at Bristol

University with his belongings in bin bags, while other students turned up with trunks bearing their family emblem.

“I guess, coming from a working-class family, it was never seen as something that people like me would do. But it was my teachers who said, ‘If you want to go far in life, then this is absolutely something you should pursue.’”

He considered a career in teaching but was discouraged by the “workload and challenges” faced by his own teachers.

After a Master’s at Goldsmiths in London, Morgan worked in local government, initially for Portsmouth City Council and then in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

He said he had never considered becoming a politician, but seeing his grandfather, a D-Day veteran, not receiving the social care he needed at the end of his life inspired him to get involved.

After moving into the voluntary sector as chief executive of a charity in Basingstoke, Morgan ran for Portsmouth City Council, where he won a seat in 2016. Theresa May called a snap general election the following year.

“I said to my trustee board, ‘Look, there’s a general election. It’s my home city. I’ve

always wanted the opportunity. And Labour won’t win, because we’ve never won that seat before.’ And they said, ‘Yeah, we’ve looked at the statistics, there’s no chance of you winning, have two weeks annual leave and off you go.’”

Morgan went on to win the seat in 2017, and trebled his majority in 2019.

Part of the victory he puts down to demographic change. Portsmouth is more “diverse and cosmopolitan” than it was, and Morgan believes Labour was also finally seen as an alternative to the Conservatives in the area. Its policy offer also cut through, he believes.

Another impact in 2017 was the party’s campaigning on school budget cuts, and Morgan worked with unions “on calling the government out on cuts to city schools”.

He believes education will be a “battleground” at the next election too. Despite recent cash-terms uplifts, funding is still an issue raised by leaders he speaks to. Staff burnout is also a big concern. “At every



# Profile: Stephen Morgan



Stephen graduating from the University of Bristol



school I've been into in the last few weeks, heads and staff have said this is the worst it's ever been in terms of morale."

Morgan joins the shadow education team at a pivotal time for schools. The government's much-delayed SEND review and a promised schools white paper are both expected in the first half of this year.

This will force Morgan to confront a difficult policy area for the party – academies. While much of Labour's grassroots still wants them returned to local authority oversight, the party has in recent years softened its stance, saying those academies that do well will be left alone.

Although Morgan says the party still has concerns about accountability, he believes any reforms of the school system must be about "outcomes not structures. I don't think we would want a whole-scale restructuring exercise. It would be the wrong time to do that."

One criticism levelled at Labour in recent years is that the party has often dragged its feet on announcing firm policies, and failed to paint a coherent picture of what education would be like under a Labour government.

Rebecca Long-Bailey, who served as shadow education secretary between April and June 2020, admitted at the time that the lack of an "overarching message" from Labour on its flagship National Education Service was one of the reasons it lost the 2019 general election.

Morgan wants to put education "front and

## "Heads and staff have said this is the worst it's ever been in terms of morale"

centre of our manifesto", but voters will have to wait still to hear the party's full policy platform.

"We're certainly as close to the next election now as we are the last. But we wouldn't set out our retail stall halfway during the parliament - we would do that much closer to the election."

But Labour isn't starting from scratch either, he says, and policy development work by his predecessors and the party more widely will be factored in. "I don't think we are starting from a blank sheet of paper, and I'm proud to be in a democratic party where we've got huge amounts of members who have particular views on these issues."

Aside from its own alternative education recovery plan, voters were offered a brief glimpse at some of Labour's proposed reforms at last year's party conference. Starmer renewed the party's commitment to scrapping tax breaks for private schools, pledged to offer more extra-curricular activities and to introduce two weeks' compulsory work experience.

The Labour leader also pledged to reform Ofsted to include a school improvement role, abandoning plans set out under Jeremy Corbyn to replace the inspectorate entirely.

On Ofsted, Morgan says he wants to

take the "stress" out of the process. "What teachers are saying to me is that often inspections are not a pleasant experience, that so often, they've made a view of what they want the report to look like and then just go in to find evidence of that. And that cannot be right."

"I think there's better ways to do school improvement work. It shouldn't be a stressful process, it should be a journey for improvement with the school and inspectors."

But asked whether the National Education Service – Labour's umbrella term for its education reforms under Corbyn – will feature in the next manifesto, Morgan says no decision has been made.

"What I want to do in my brief is talk in everyday terms about the impact of Labour government will make to children's lives. So what does that mean in reality for a child who's struggling at school, or a parent that wants her son to succeed?"

"I'm not wedded to any particular models. It's got to be about outcomes, improving people's lives, about enriching their experience of school so that they can succeed. Badges don't mean anything. But real, tangible policies that will make a difference, of course, do."

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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KEITH  
FOX

Former headteacher and  
retirement returner

## Making a return from retirement a success

Follow some simple guidelines on your return to school and you too could end up asking yourself why you ever left, writes Keith Fox

The education secretary has issued a call to arms for ex-teachers, asking them to return to the classroom to tackle staff shortages caused by Covid. Like retired medics who have been called back for “one last job” administering vaccines, it’s now the turn of former education professionals to help save the day.

I hope many former teachers will answer Nadhim Zahawi’s call. And if and when they do, I hope both they and the schools that receive them will be ready work together. For what it’s worth, here’s my advice on making a success of a return to the classroom after a long absence.

### Be humble

I taught for two decades from 1974 before becoming a headteacher, which I did until I retired in 2017. I found retirement didn’t suit me, so in March 2019 I started as a supply teacher.

Since then, I’ve been moving between different schools for The Pioneer Academy (TPA) trust as a

“flexi” teacher, but now I’m settling in to do three days a week at one of their London schools, Stewart Fleming Primary School. It’s a small world. The trust’s CEO, Lee Mason-Ellis, is now my boss. But I used to be his. In fact, I interviewed him for his very first teaching job.

“It’s natural to feel de-skilled when you first return

So my first piece of advice for any returning teacher, no matter how senior their last role was, would be to approach the situation with humility. For me, having been a headteacher for such a long time meant that, although I was only retired for two years, it had been an age since I’d served daily at “the chalk face”. A lot has changed. And we know from experience that a lot always does.

### Ask questions

Teaching styles are a prime example. I was a real proponent of interactive whiteboards as headteacher. Now, there is a heavy reliance on them and I’m having to practise what I preached for the first time.



In other professions, the assumption might be that your absence has de-skilled you. But in teaching, it’s almost the opposite. When an ‘experienced’ teacher comes on board, others can assume they know everything they need

a secondary school returner might enjoy dabbling with new subjects outside of their specialism. However, I would recommend trying to stick to your comfort zone at first and building from there.

You may feel needed elsewhere, and even be tempted to stretch into areas you always fancied but never had a chance to explore, but there will be enough new things to learn without making life more difficult for yourself. This is even more pertinent for those returning under the shadow of the pandemic, with the responsibility of helping pupils to catch up.

### Adapt and thrive

Clearly, I didn’t anticipate a global pandemic when I returned. Undeniably, it has made teaching more complicated. But if you take control of your own safety and that of the children in your care, you really can just get on with the job. Children are very adaptable and you can be too.

After all, brain plasticity is key to an ageing brain’s cognitive function. So for all the talk of risk, there’s something to be gained too.

In fact, I’ve gained so much, I sometimes wonder why I ever left.

to. In addition, newer or younger teachers may be hesitant to offer help in case they cause offence.

But it’s natural to feel de-skilled when you first return, and it can affect your confidence. Just remember: there are lots of people who can help you. You just need to let them know you are keen for their support.

In fact, newly qualified teachers are a great resource. They’ve just done all the relevant training, and are likely to value exchanging their up-to-date knowledge for the wisdom of your experience.

### Stick with what you know

After a couple of years back at it, I’m enjoying the variety of working with different year groups, like

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**Abusive behaviours towards school staff are becoming normalised and we need to rethink our assumptions about how to deal with them, writes Rachel Smith**

The pandemic started with an initial wave of support for schools, but ongoing challenges and controversies have created a backlash that has seen abuse towards staff – and particularly leaders – normalised. What I've learned from my experience is that you can't be over-prepared for this. Investing in protecting yourself can only help to prevent costly escalation.

For a start, putting robust policies in place means you can always be sure you are treating every person and situation fairly and with parity, and makes it less likely your judgment will be clouded by the threat of consequences when they arise.

They help our communities to interact with us, too. We have a communication policy that sets out exactly who to get in touch with and how. We've also brought in a "disruptive visitors policy". While I understand why schools still resist signs proclaiming "We will not tolerate abuse of our staff", the vast majority of parent respondents (289 vs 9) supported the measures we put in place.

Policy also helps ensure your actions are in tune with your moral purpose as a school. In the heat of frantic decision-making that's easy to forget, but it really matters. As does ensuring the whole community understands your vision and values. And one of those values must be honesty. I remember being told my problem as a leader was that I was "too honest". I can assure you, there is no such thing.



RACHEL SMITH

Headteacher,  
Beaconsfield High School

## How to build your armour against parental abuse

But there's a line between professional honesty and "saying it like you see it". My first mistake was to respond with emotional disbelief. With hindsight, the response should have come from the school, not me, and should have asked for evidence

been invaluable. If you don't have access to that, then at least sleep on your response. Write the letter you want to send, go to bed, then delete it and start again. And always get HR feedback before you send it. All of which will help ensure

**“ It can leave you feeling like you're in a pressure cooker**

of the accusations. This guidance is now written into our complaints policy to avoid mounting costly and unnecessary defences.

Speaking of defence, one of the best pieces of advice I received was to retain the services of a specialist education law firm. Their support has

your emotions don't make matters worse, but can leave you feeling like you're in a pressure cooker. Members of your team can provide helpful checks and balances on your decision making, but there's a limit to how much you should confide in them.



When my turmoil felt invisible to everyone around me, writing an impact statement provided huge relief. Then, with the support of governors, I began working with a psychoanalyst. This helped me accept that none of what happened was my fault or within my control. No NPQH or professional mentoring can provide what an impartial, trained counsellor can for your mental health.

And it has affected my practice too. I've learned to adopt a 'coaching' style in difficult conversations and not to let my body language betray my words, which has made me, if anything, more honest. And it has helped me see that sorry doesn't need to be the hardest word. I now work on the basis of acknowledging others' feelings by apologising for everything. Vulnerability and insecurity are often the source of anger, and apologising makes it easier to fight for people rather than against them.

But the sad truth is that some people simply won't see past their anger. What has protected me most in the face of that has been my diligent record-keeping: every meeting, every decision, every agreement reached and action taken. An accurate record is the best defence there is.

Ultimately, there is no one with the power to make your assailant stop. Your local authority and union can provide valuable HR advice. And once evidence was shared, the DfE, RSC and ESFA all offered words of support. But beyond that you are on your own.

I don't believe anyone's skin is thick enough for that, so I advise you now to build your armour.



# Opinion

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



MIKE ION

Education director,  
Avanti Schools Trust

## Admissions are closing the door on social mobility

**The new social mobility commission chair should lobby for one reform that would deliver real change and silence her critics, writes Mike Ion**

The appointment of Katharine Birbalsingh as chair of the social mobility commission has received a mixed response from the profession and media commentators alike. I have never met Ms Birbalsingh but, like others, I follow her on Twitter and have observed the rise of Michaela Community School with interest. She is clearly an able, passionate and committed professional and I wish her well in her new and important role.

My hope is that she will apply her trademark boldness to some of the structural challenges that have impeded social mobility in England for decades. In education, one of the most notable is the issue of school admissions. Year after year, we see evidence of schools failing to give priority to children in care; using supplementary forms asking for personal details about the applicants' parents; requesting 'contributions' to the school fund; asking for birth and marriage certificates, and using 'subjective tests' to select pupils.

Why does it matter? For those who want to see an increase in the levels of social mobility, for those who care about enhancing the life chances of all our nation's young people and realising our full potential as a society, infringements of the admissions code make for depressing reading. Britain, or

“Secondary admission policies are the secret scandal of our system

rather England, remains almost unique among OECD countries in the degree to which the allocation of a secondary school place determines a child's future life chances. That's why school 'choices', rather than house prices, dominate discussions at Islington dinner tables.

Nationally, the angst of middle-class parents as their children get to secondary school age has reached epidemic proportions. One consequence is that every year children from many of the nation's poorest households are routinely allocated to schools that parents with 'higher aspirations' are determined to avoid.

How much is really down to aspiration and how much to

privilege and access remains an interesting question, but the fact remains that secondary school admission policies are the secret scandal of our education system. Trapped by the rhetoric of parental choice stoking improvement through competition, locked in by a league table agenda of what

constitutes a 'good' school, and unwilling to confront the evidence about selective admissions policies, ministers of all political colours have allowed the line on admissions to drift in a direction that works against every other strand of government policy.

The current admission practice in many of England's secondary schools is helping to institutionalise inequality in the nation as a whole. Unfair admissions procedures only intensify social, cultural and ethnic divisions. They foster delusions about consumer choice and reinforce outdated perceptions of quality in education.

The outcome of such covert selection practice is to produce an educational apartheid that creates

vast ghettos of underachievement which then suck in vast amounts of public money to compensate for structural inequality. They hold back overall levels of achievement. Our divisive secondary school system is working against our objective of increasing post-16 staying-on rates and widening participation in universities.

So I urge you, Ms Birbalsingh: use your new position and bully pulpit to address one of the main factors that restricts social mobility in this country. For example, the code of practice on school admissions already excludes selection by ability as an admissions criterion to all primary schools. So how about lobbying for that to be extended to include secondary schools?

A policy focused on undoing the worst effects of supposed parental choice would throw open hundreds of thousands of places in good secondary schools to parents who have previously been excluded from applying. The winners would far outnumber those who would be anxious about loss of privilege, and there can be no question that it would contribute to a more equal and less divided nation.

What a legacy that would be for the nation and its children. And what a way to silence your critics.



## Reviews

BOOK  
REVIEW**Huh: Curriculum Conversations Between Subject and Senior Leaders****Authors:** Mary Myatt and John Tomsett**Publisher:** John Catt Educational**Reviewer:** Jenna Crittenden, headteacher, Platt C of E Primary School

When two of education publishing's big hitters collaborate on a book, that's a must-read for me. As a teacher and leader with a passion for curriculum development, when I found out their aim here was to help dispel bad curriculum leadership practices, I was sold. Although the quirkily titled *Huh* is primarily aimed at secondary colleagues, I looked forward to some insights I could share with my primary colleagues.

And from the foreword, I wasn't disappointed. Myatt and Tomsett's authentic tone, their acknowledgement of the challenges schools face, and their leadership insights about line managing those with greater subject expertise than your own add up to a refreshing dismissal of 'one-size-fits-all' approaches.

Then, Claire Hill's initial chapter hit upon a core issue I come across a lot: that those who are most passionate about curriculum can often also be those who cause most damage to its design. There's an important insight here about how failing to appreciate colleagues' personal journeys can be intimidating and limit progress. Sometimes guilty of this myself, I was keen for tips on avoiding it.

Though secondary-focused, Hill's solutions were certainly helpful. But her chapter also highlighted some huge primary issues for me, namely size of team and structure of staffing. Some primary leaders will be able to rely on in-house 'experts', but many will not.

Yet curriculum development readily appears on school development plans, begging the question as to how many

are really constructing curriculum from its foundational purpose up, as opposed to engaging with it only superficially from fear of acknowledging inexperience and inviting poor judgment. Either way, *Huh* gives a good starting point and support structure for all colleagues, even the most insecure, to focus on the big picture and avoid a checklist reductionism.

This initial chapter alone makes the book a worthwhile investment. Its focus on practical solutions means I will be sharing it with every governing board I work with to help develop shared understanding and to answer their termly question: "Why is it taking so long?"

The remainder of the book is structured primarily around subject chapters, and although this could put primary leaders off, I found them fascinating and varied in approach. It was enlightening to see how key stage 3 curricula are often planned in subject silos. While my primary bias had me thinking as I read that our global curriculum model could aid this, I was left pondering the possible negative impact of our approach on our secondary colleagues – sometimes beyond our control.

Liz Dunbar's chapter on music really brought this to life. All primary heads would love to have a specialist to drive this area but music is not a national priority; it's not used to judge how good a school is, and often budgets don't allow it. This means primaries' music offering varies hugely depending on staff willingness and ability to go above and beyond, and leaves secondary music teachers to pick up a huge disparity of experience, knowledge and love of the subject. This raised some big questions for me about cross-sector collaboration, the challenges faced by small schools, and how

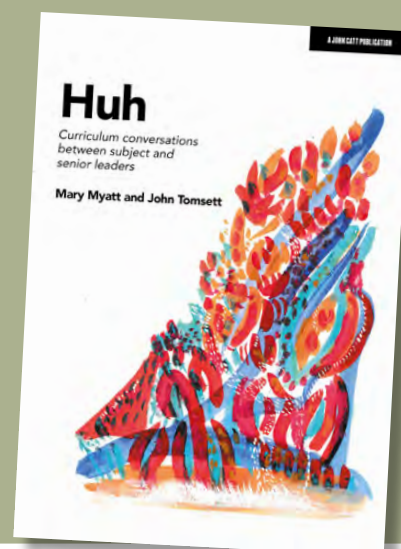
to develop expertise in those who may lack passion for the task.

The concluding chapter summarises the importance of conversations between line managers and subject leaders in school. While of course they are of value, the reality in primaries is that these conversations could be between the same school leader and the same subject leader with responsibility for four or five subjects.

I felt refreshed by reading that almost all of the case study schools here had a real focus on year 7 transition, but I felt this exposed necessary work to stem the disparity between primary and secondary.

*Huh* gave me a helpful look into the world of secondary line management and brought up a multitude of questions about how primaries can help bridge that gap. But it can't all be on us to change. There are many good reasons why curriculum looks different for us too.

So I hope there is a primary version in the pipeline. Primary and secondary leaders alike would benefit.



# Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is Sonia Thompson, Headteacher, St Matthew's C of E Teaching and research school, Birmingham

@son1bun

## Cultural capital: an exploration

@Penny\_Ten

As the new year begins, I have been looking back over blog posts that have influenced me over the years. There are many, but I have picked just one because of its ongoing relevance: this soaring piece by Penny Rabiger, which takes us back to the launch of the new inspection framework that put the controversial subject of cultural capital at the heart of our curriculum conversations.

Rabiger refers us to the originator of the phrase, Pierre Bourdieu, and uses his definition to frame her own thoughts around the EIF, curriculum, context, and terminology such as "decolonise the curriculum", which had not yet achieved the prominence it has come to since.

As 2022 dawns and the pandemic continues to dominate almost every aspect of our news cycle and educational thinking, there is a risk that the groundswell of demand for curriculum reform that was central to the Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd loses momentum. The thought-provoking questions Rabiger presents us with here

## TOP BLOGS of the week



are an important reminder that creating inclusive and diverse cultures is central to our curriculum work.

### Shifting the curve – what will it take?

@teacherhead

We were gifted an epic blog this Christmas too, and I have no doubt I will be returning to this one in years to come. Like you, I'm sure, the one group of students I can be guaranteed to wake up at night in a cold sweat about is those Tom Sherrington identifies as being "at the lower end of the range".

He writes: "If it was easy [to affect change for them], everyone would be doing it." But it isn't, and this is the result of "many contributing factors creating a cumulative effect". He goes on to make a compelling case that we need to rethink how we "deal" with these students if there is ever going to be any chance of "shifting the curve".

Sherrington presents us with a comprehensive list of influential factors, and breaks each one down to explore its effects. These range from student motivation to an inappropriate curriculum and include our propensity to "teach to the top". But what made me inhale sharply was the heading "Students' inherent intellectual

limits". I only exhaled again when he ended this section with a clear rebuttal and a challenge to think about who we place in that "difficult" category and lower our expectations for.

The blog ends as all excellent Sherrington blogs do, with some best-bet solutions before a final challenge to our thinking. What might it look like if we focused our efforts on the lower third? After reading this blog, I doubt anyone could see that shift as anything but a straight win. So, here's to doing whatever it takes in 2022.

### Supporting teachers with their workload

@Xris32

And, when it comes to useful blogs to start what is likely to be another incomparably busy term, none could be more timely than this reflective blog by Chris Curtis. Curtis loves being a middle leader and consistently celebrates the immense contribution middle leaders make as the school ship's "rudder". Here, he offers a clear pathway towards minimising workload and his focus is on the systems that allow leaders to work smarter.

Championing the fact that "a system allows for clarity and reduces the cognitive overload for teachers and students", Curtis offers a range of thoughtful examples of his own systematic approaches for saving time while supporting students to learn better. He gives us vignettes about duplication, teaching components and explanations, and peppers them with key questions that any school could use to audit their provision.

This wonderfully relevant blog ends with a clarion call for all teachers to work together to make change for the better. "A leader can make changes, but they shouldn't always be the one to initiate change," he concludes. As we reset and rethink at this challenging juncture, it is hard to disagree with the idea that "a collective and organic system is far better for all".



# Research



NFER will regularly review a research development throughout the year. Contact them @TheNFER if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

## What impact has the pandemic had on our youngest learners?

**Susan Rose, senior research manager, NFER**

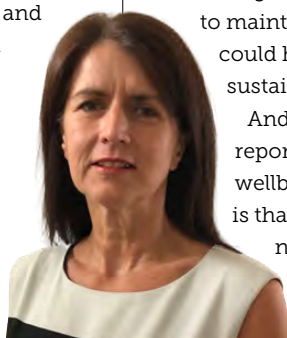
**T**he NFER's study of over 10,000 KS1 pupils in the 2020-21 academic year has found that, on average, children were around two to three months behind where they might have been had the pandemic not happened.

The work, carried out for the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), showed the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers had widened from pre-pandemic levels. In addition to this, we noted a concerning increase in the proportion of children unable to gain even a small number of marks across the papers.

Interestingly, we also saw different patterns in children's performance in maths and reading. For reading, the lower attainers were most impacted by lost time in school. But in mathematics a much wider ability group saw their progress negatively affected.

While the assessment data naturally makes the headlines, the study took a more holistic approach and also considered the issues schools were facing. It's easy to assume that once children were back in school the problem was solved, but schools were still facing high levels of absence, changes in practices and the need to adapt the curriculum.

Children and teachers had to establish new classroom routines. Teachers paid even more attention to pupils' wellbeing and worked hard to ensure additional pressure was not placed on parents and children in an attempt to rush pupil recovery. The study also recognises that knowing the size of the gap is only half the story, and provides detailed diagnostic information on the assessments. The aim is to help teachers identify common misconceptions and provide them with ideas to remedy issues.



And although the headline findings are indeed concerning, the study also provides some good news. By tracking children's performance across the year, we see evidence that recovery is already beginning in mathematics in both year 1 and year 2.

The diagnostics showed some positive outcomes, with children able to perform at least as well as their pre-pandemic peers in certain areas of the curriculum, and actually outperforming them in a small number of areas.

Anecdotally, teachers told us they felt better equipped to cope with the second set of partial closures. The fact the gap didn't increase during that time corroborates this and shows how effectively schools were able to manage remote learning once the tools were in place.

Many headteachers told us parental engagement had improved considerably during both partial closures. This was something they were working hard

to maintain moving forward, and could have a profound impact on sustaining the recovery.

And while some teachers did report concerns around pupils' wellbeing, another positive finding is that children's social skills do not appear to have been significantly impacted by the school closures.

However, nearly two years on from the start of the pandemic, and with the threat of more school closures, there is very clearly no room for complacency. As well as the differences in recovery between maths and reading, gaps still remain and disadvantaged children are considerably behind at what is an early and foundational stage of their education.

For all the extremely hard work schools have put in to close these gaps while dealing with so many other issues, they have simply managed to prevent them from increasing. They now need increased support and resources to put the trend into reverse.

Even without closures and an all-out return to remote learning, high levels of staff and pupil absence will test the resilience of children, parents, teachers and schools. And that resilience is absolutely key to laying the groundwork for the rest of their educational journey.

It is easy to focus on the milestone years, but the adaptability of these young children should not be assumed. The recovery must be for all if it is to be sustained, and that means ensuring children are ready and able to learn and develop effectively into the future.

And without further support and resources, too much relies on the resilience of an already stretched workforce going into what is likely to be a highly disrupted term.

Week in

## Westminster

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

## MONDAY

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi was up and on the media rounds early doors today, defending his decision to reintroduce face masks in the classroom.

He pointed to a DfE study showing masks have had a positive impact on absences in schools that used them when asked for evidence behind his decision on talkRADIO.

Zahawi, claiming he was the "evidence-led secretary of state", said the study compared schools with "face mask policies in the classroom" to those who did not have such policies.

Alas, when the study was published on Wednesday, we found out that the data "does not differentiate between whether face coverings were used in classrooms or communal areas".

So much for sticking to the facts!

\*\*\*

We noticed the Department for Education has awarded a £25,000 contract to a digital agency to come in and review its social media. The contract relates to all social media under the Education Skills and Funding Agency, which to be honest we didn't even know had a Twitter account until we searched for it just now.

It mostly just retweets posts by the more popular DfE account, which was recently telling school leaders it was fine and dandy for nativity plays to go ahead late last year, just as many local authorities were imposing blanket restrictions to try to control surges in Covid cases.

## TUESDAY:

Good to see the DfE starting 2022 as it means to go on. After holding off issuing any new guidance for the whole of Christmas (fair play), news of new measures dropped into school leaders' inboxes on Sunday (although journalists were actually told the day before so it could make the Sunday papers).

Disturbing heads' much-needed holidays and given them just a few days' notice of changes was always likely to go down like a lead balloon, but the DfE could at least get the guidance correct.

Heads had been told that those who test positive on a PCR test but who tested negative on lateral flow tests on days six and seven of their isolation could now return to schools "from day eight".

But a hastily sent email today stated that in fact, if both tests were negative and an individual does not have a high temperature, they may end self-isolation after the second negative test result and return "from day seven".

## WEDNESDAY:

Looks like ministers have fallen back into their old habits again with reassurances about things that, in reality, are out of their control.

Asked by a Conservative MP in the Commons whether exams will go ahead in the summer, Zahawi said: "I can absolutely give him that assurance."

Now, where have we heard that before?

As the Alpha variant was surging across the UK in December 2020, former education secretary Gavin Williamson said he could "absolutely" give a cast-iron

guarantee that exams would go ahead the following summer.

Reader, they were cancelled just a month later.

Interestingly, despite the huge additional workload caused by teacher-assessed grades over the past two academic years, only half of teachers are opposed to exams being cancelled again.

According to a Teacher Tapp poll, a quarter of teachers want them to be cancelled and 21 per cent are "neutral" on the matter.

\*\*\*

Think the government offering one air cleaning unit for every three schools isn't enough? Or do you reckon a plea by ministers for ex-teachers to return to the classroom amid soaring shortages will make no difference?

Well, I have some news for you: unless you have experience "operationalising anything", then keep your mouth shut.

During the same debate in parliament, Zahawi shut down criticism of the schemes by telling Labour shadow schools minister Bridget Phillipson: "I fear the hon lady has very little experience of operationalising anything, given the way she has attempted to misrepresent the efforts we have made to ensure that schools are safe and hygienic."

On the appeal to retired teachers, he said success was "difficult to say as we have had only one day of school... I will happily share that information with the House, but, alas, the hon lady has clearly not had much experience of operationalising".

It is so long since Labour actually had any power that he probably has a point.





## 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.

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To apply, please send a copy of your CV and cover letter to [bpn\\_hr@bestpracticenet.co.uk](mailto:bpn_hr@bestpracticenet.co.uk).

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Westminster Abbey Choir School

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Further information about the role is available in the Application Pack on the TES website, which also clarifies the need to submit an on-line application form via TES. CVs will not be accepted.

On-line applications must be received by noon on **Thursday 13 January 2022** and enquiries can be sent to: [applications@westminster-abbey.org](mailto:applications@westminster-abbey.org).

Interviews and Assessment are likely to take place on **Thursday 27 January 2021**.

Westminster Abbey is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. To prevent them from harm, we undertake appropriate checks on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training and enhanced criminal record check. Westminster Abbey is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

**new wave**  
federation

## Assistant Headteacher

- **Salary:** Competitive
- **Closing date:** Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 12pm
- **Interview date:** w/c Monday 24th January 2022



The New Wave Federation consists of 3 high performing and innovative primary schools in Hackney, London. We aim to provide the best possible primary education in a stimulating and creative environment. The Federation has been awarded Apple Distinguished School Status, which recognises our commitment to innovation through technology.

We are seeking to appoint a Federation Assistant Headteacher to work in our schools and join the Senior Leadership Team. All three schools are in close proximity to one another. Grazebrook is in the Stoke Newington area, Shacklewell is in the Dalston Kingsland area and Woodberry Down Primary School is at Manor House.

In our Federation we have a passion for high standards and we want all our children to achieve their potential and be inspired to go beyond that. This role involves overseeing the curriculum in all our schools. You will have a principle base school however as an employee of the New Wave Federation we may request you work across the schools depending on the needs of the Federation.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Application packs are available from the Federation Business Manager, Ms Alia Choudhry on [achoudhry@newwavefederation.co.uk](mailto:achoudhry@newwavefederation.co.uk)





## Launceston College Multi Academy Trust

### Chief Executive Officer



Launceston College Multi Academy Trust is made up of six distinct and unique schools located in beautiful, coastal and moorland settings in Cornwall and North Devon. We are immensely proud of the educational settings within our Trust.

Our vision is to develop adventurous and ambitious students, who have the character, resilience and self-awareness required to be successful, whatever their background or circumstances. We seek to teach and support them to be responsible as well as happy and successful young people by learning the knowledge, skills and values that are essential for society.

We are looking for an exceptional leader, who has a passion for education and who will work to achieve excellent progress for all the young people in our care and who will foster our culture of achievement, improvement and wellbeing.

#### The main purpose of the job:

- Reporting directly to the Trust Board, the CEO will lead the delivery of the Trustees' strategic and operational vision, putting pupil and student outcomes at the heart of everything they do.

- The CEO will be responsible for overseeing and working with our strong and dedicated team of Principals to ensure the continued improvement of educational standards, equality of access and achievement for all, and effective use of resources across the Trust.

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

**Salary: L33-L43 (£92,624 - £117,197)**

**Closing date is Sunday, 23rd January 2022.**

If you would like to learn more about this position, or would like to apply, please visit our website: [www.launceston-college.cornwall.sch.uk/vacancies/](http://www.launceston-college.cornwall.sch.uk/vacancies/) to access the CEO applicant pack.

#### 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.



### SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER

**STARTING ASAP**

**FT 37 HOURS PER WEEK (TERM TIME + 20 DAYS)**

**SALARY SCALE: 26 £30,451 FTE**

Are you an inspirational, creative and highly organised SBM? Working with senior leadership teams of both schools, you will contribute to their strategic direction. Leading support staff, you will ensure the day-to-day management of the school's HR, site and catering services. You have a relentless drive for excellence and desire to sustain our schools warm and inclusive environments.

As proud members of OLOW Catholic MAT we offer opportunities to work collaboratively accessing Trust wide CPD.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff to share this commitment.

**Full details available via**  
**(<https://www.ourladyofwalsingham.co.uk>)**

**Closing Date: 12.01.2022**

## RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING FESTIVE OFFERS

Have you got roles to advertise in the new year? Book ahead for January today!



**Unlimited Listings Annual Packages – Up to 20% off**  
Covering all vacancies, including leadership roles

BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlimited Featured Listings</li> <li>25% off Classified Adverts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlimited Featured Listings</li> <li>3 x Half Page adverts</li> <li>50% off Classified Adverts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlimited Featured Listings</li> <li>5 x Full Page adverts</li> <li>50% off Classified Adverts</li> </ul>
<b>£2500</b> <b>£2250</b>	<b>£3500</b> <b>£3150</b>	<b>£5000</b> <b>£4000</b>

Rates per college/organisation. Group rates available on request.

**Classified Advertising – 10% off**  
Online Listing included

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<b>£395</b> <b>£355</b>	<b>£595</b> <b>£535</b>	<b>£745</b> <b>£670</b>



**EDU WEEK JOBS**  
**SCHOOLS WEEK**

Offers available until Friday 14th January 2022

**Click here to get in touch**