

# SCHOOLS WEEK

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2022 | EDITION 274

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- Council-run trusts on the table, but would they work and is it politically palatable?

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

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# SCHOOLS WEEK

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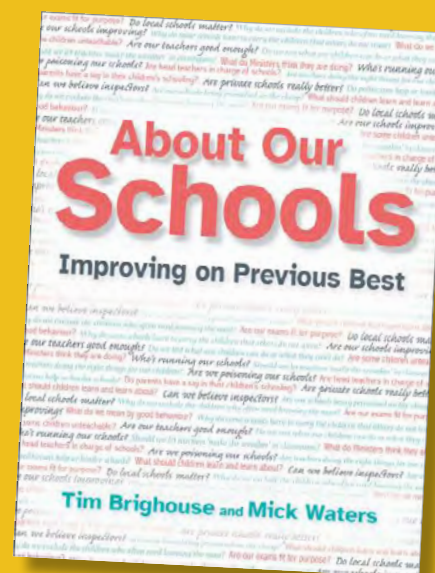
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NEWS

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# Zahawi's absence crackdown: what you need to know

TOM BELGER

@TOM\_BELGER

Schools will have to publish attendance improvement policies and councils use their "full range" of legal powers under plans to end the "postcode lottery" in handling absence.

Unions cautiously welcomed more consistency on fines and policies, but warned only extra cash and joined-up strategies will tackle persistent absence. The Department for Education confirmed no extra cash was forthcoming.

Proposals include requiring schools to publicise "robust" attendance management and improvement policies, akin to the behaviour policies schools must publish, with boards obliged to scrutinise them. Trusts would also have to provide training and share best practice.

Councils would also face national standards and thresholds for enforcing attendance, and academies directed to only grant leave in "exceptional circumstances" – like maintained schools.

Documents also reveal plans to "modernise" rules over attendance and admissions registers and information-sharing "in due course".

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi said the proposals will "end the postcode lottery" in attendance management.

He added that "as we transition from pandemic to endemic, it makes me even more determined to fight for children to be in school every day they possibly can be".

Non-statutory guidance will also be published, to take effect from September. Statutory guidance and penalty notice regulations will follow "when parliamentary time allows", the consultation which runs until March adds

## School to set out 'clear expectations'

The statutory guidance proposed would mandate all schools draft, publicise and regularly review policies on attendance management and improvement.

Documents will have to include "clear expectations" of parents and pupils, plus strategies and a "clear escalation route" for handling persistent absence.

Trusts and maintained school governors face extra attendance duties, such as checking and offering strategies to do so, making training available and holding leaders to account. Trusts will have to share best practice.

But James Bowen, policy director at school



leaders' union NAHT, said updated policies "won't be enough", with more funding for cash-strapped councils needed.

## Councils to use 'full range of powers'

Further statutory guidance will give councils a "minimum set of expectations" for attendance work – but not "impose a specific model".

Expectations are likely to include using "the full range of legal powers", advising all schools, taking a "strategic view" to prioritise areas in need, regularly assembling schools, and retaining attendance experts and family support staff.

Steve Thomas, education national secretary at union Prospect, agreed there was not enough consistency or clarity on councils' work.

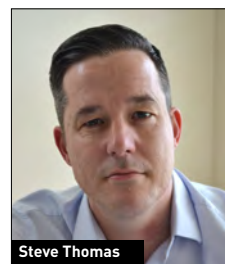
But he said the "devil will be in the detail", noting



Nadhim Zahawi



James Bowen



Steve Thomas

simultaneous cuts to council school improvement budgets.

## 'Fairness' for absence fines

A new "regulatory framework" for fixed penalty notices would further "improve consistency and fairness" nationwide.

The DfE says councils' current discretion means similar absence can attract fines in one area but not others. It noted 15 councils issued fewer than 10 penalty notices in 2020-21.

Council-written thresholds for considering sanctions would be replaced with national ones. These will include any unauthorised leave of absence in term, a "number of occurrences" of lateness, and excluded pupils being in public during school hours – with "reasonable exceptions".

Councils will also have to consider prosecution after a certain number of fines. But they will still decide which measures to take, the DfE insisted.

Bowen called fines a "relatively blunt tool", but clarity and consistency "might be helpful".

## Academy rules tightened

Meanwhile the consultation also proposes imposing rules limiting leave to only "exceptional circumstances" on academies. Such rules already apply to maintained schools.

This will "further increase consistency".

## The 6 attendance policy proposals:

1. New duty for schools to publish attendance plans
2. Expectations for council attendance services
3. National framework for dishing out absence fines
4. Bringing academy absence rules in line with LAs
5. Modernise attendance sharing regulations
6. Further details on home attendance register in weeks



## NEWS

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# Tracker trial aims to manage rising absence rates

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Ministers have taken what they believe is the first step towards monitoring school attendance in “real-time”, allowing them to act immediately on any “big challenges”.

The government has asked schools to sign up to a daily attendance tracker trial that will collect real-time data from their registers to help address absences quickly.

The new automated system may replace other forms of attendance data collection if the trial is successful.

The Department for Education will run the test over the “coming months” to see whether daily attendance data can help the government “understand and manage” sector-wide trends.

If “big challenges” are seen in certain areas or groups of schools, the DfE wants schools, councils and academy trusts “to be able to use it and seek out support and understand what may be causing children to be absent from school”.

The government’s new attendance advisers are already working with local authorities and trusts with “exceptional attendance challenges”, the DfE said.

The trial will be run by Wonde, an education technology company, which will ask for schools’ agreement to share daily pupil-level and attendance data with the DfE.

It will then be automatically extracted from their management information systems, with “no daily action” by schools needed.



The DfE told leaders in an email this week that the trial was “the first step towards a more efficient approach to data collection that is less burdensome for schools”.

It is part of a raft of measures to tackle rising absence rates, including new requirements for schools to publish attendance improvement plans.

It follows calls from Dame Rachel de Souza, the children’s commissioner, for “live” attendance data to help to identify between 80,000 and 100,000 children who are not on school rolls.

“We need to see the attendance data now,” she told MPs earlier this month.

The government said its new automated daily data collection trial would reduce administration, and help people “spot and address system-wide issues more quickly if the trial is successful”.

However, the DfE said the data would not be used for decision-making or to make judgments about what constituted a school causing concern. It would also not be used for inspection, decisions

around academisation or moving schools in and out of trusts.

Nadhim Zahawi, the education secretary, said the new proposals would help to “end the postcode lottery of how attendance is managed in different schools and parts of the country, and make sure every child and family gets the best possible support to attend school as regularly as possible”.

The trial would assess the quality of data collected, as well as its potential to “replace other forms of attendance data collection to reduce burdens on schools”.

The DfE said it would manage the data collected “in compliance with data protection laws, and the Department’s own data protection policies”.

Earlier this month de Souza said: “At the moment we can only see the percentage of kids who weren’t in school, we don’t know if they’re the same ones as yesterday or today.”

The DfE said the trial was part of its ambition to introduce more automated data collection.

TOM BELGER | @TOM\_BELGER

## Explainer: The stats behind attendance focus

Nadhim Zahawi has said tackling school absence is his “top priority”. While Covid is causing huge disruption, a rise in long-term absence is also worrying.

Autumn census figures show unauthorised absence rates have edged up from 1.2 per cent in 2019 to 1.4 per cent in 2021.

Analysis by FFT Education Datalab last week found 9.3 per cent of primary pupils missed either 40 sessions or more, or had five or more spells off during the autumn.

It rose to 19.8 per cent at secondary

schools, and 24.9 per cent among Year 11s. Disadvantaged children were more likely to be persistently absent.

Children’s commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza (pictured) has also pressed the issue, announcing an inquiry into missing children last month.

One study estimated there were up to 135,000 “ghost children”. It noted 6.5 per cent of pupils were absent for non-Covid reasons in September, versus around 5 per

cent in 2019, though some have challenged the statistics.

Zahawi has convened an “attendance alliance” network of sector leaders and appointed five attendance advisers who will be parachuted into councils and schools to help boost attendance.

Although such moves have raised eyebrows given past cuts to council attendance services.



## NEWS

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# Attendance dips as Omicron surges through classrooms

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR\_93

Special schools have been hit hardest as the Omicron variant rips through classrooms.

Department for Education attendance survey data this week estimated 415,000 pupils (5.1 per cent) were absent for Covid-related reasons on January 20 – up from 319,000 two weeks earlier.

Of these absent pupils, 322,000 (3.9 per cent) had a confirmed case – the highest number since records began last March and more than double the 159,000 off on January 6.

The rise has pushed overall school attendance down to 87.4 per cent, meaning one in eight pupils were off school last week.

Attendance at primaries dropped from 91 per cent on January 6 to 89.1 per cent last week, while secondary school attendance remained at 85.9 per cent.

Special schools recorded the lowest attendance, falling from 82 to 78.4 per cent.

Surveillance data from the UK Health Security Agency suggests special schools are disproportionately affected by Covid.

Special schools reported 100 outbreaks – five or more test-confirmed Covid cases – during the first full week back (starting Monday January 10).

Primaries recorded 123 and secondaries just 17. For context, there are nearly 17 times more primary schools and more than three times as many secondary schools as special schools.

Staff have been affected too. In special schools, 6.7 per cent of teachers and leaders were absent because of Covid, as were 6.8 per cent of support staff, up from 6.2 and 6.6 per cent respectively.

In contrast, 5.8 per cent of primary teachers and leaders and just 2.9 per cent of secondary school teachers and leaders were absent because of Covid on January 20.

Dominic Wall, the headteacher of Co-op Academy Southfield in Bradford, said characteristics of special schools, such as a lack of social distancing, an inability for some pupils to conduct LFD tests and



pupils "less able to wear masks", were exacerbated by Omicron.

"For the staff working in special schools right now there's an epidemic of anxiety about what the level of unrecognised risk is from asymptomatic cases when we can't test the students – that is a worry we have to live with."

In advice, published for schools by the DfE, special school head Matt Rooney suggested asking parents not to send pupils into school if they appeared symptomatic or unwell.

Other DfE-approved advice included creating a pool of talented teaching assistants who could step in if there were teacher shortages.

But some special schools are being forced to close classes and introduce rotas.

A school business manager for a high-needs setting in Plymouth, who wished to remain anonymous, said staff absence this term was "insane" with "around 25 per cent off almost constantly".

The school had closed two classes as its reduced staff number meant it could not ensure the safety of pupils.

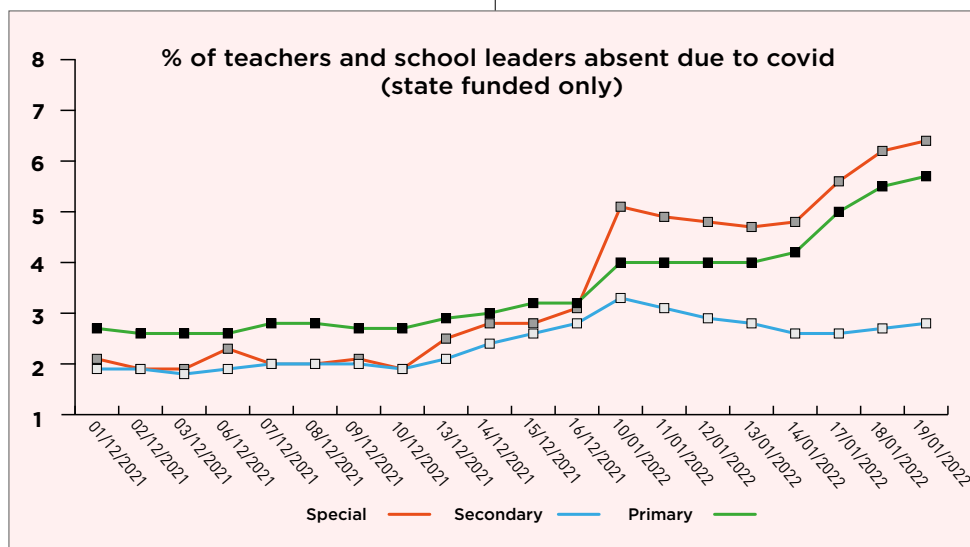
Wall said his school had a rota system in which 20 per cent of pupils learned at home each day. The school has had "50 staff off for ten days consistently, which is 37 per cent of our staff".

"The children's care is so complex that if we lose the wrong combination of people who have had the correct training, we can really struggle to meet the care needs of individual children," he said.

Simon Knight, head of Frank Wise School in Oxfordshire, said the biggest challenge was ensuring safe levels of staffing.

Supply agencies were "rarely a suitable option because the staff available cannot necessarily replicate the skills, experiences and familiarity with our setting that we require".

Almost 25 per cent of all state schools said they had more than 15 per cent of teachers and leaders absent last week, up from 18 per cent that had more than 15 per cent off on January 13 and just 8 per cent at the start of the academic year.



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## NEWS

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## Officials consider council-run MATs to achieve academy ambition

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The government is considering allowing councils to run their own academy trusts as ministers draw up measures to achieve a fully academised system.

Multiple sources told *Schools Week* the idea of having council-run MATs is under consideration as part of the government's upcoming schools white paper, due out later this year.

It comes as the Department for Education's top boss told MPs this week that ministers were exploring "other options" for schools that want to become academies while "holding on to some of the relationships they've already got".

The government has said it wants to see all schools in multi-academy trusts. But senior civil servants this week spoke about their desire to see strong "families of schools" and fewer standalone academies.

The softening in language comes after education secretary Nadhim Zahawi also ruled out setting "arbitrary deadlines" for mass conversion last year.

As of January 2021, 78 per cent of secondary schools were academies, while just 37 per cent of primary schools held the status.

One source said the government was "open to slightly different models of partnerships", which could see maintained schools become academies on paper but still maintain a link to their local authority.

However, the white paper proposals are still at an early stage, and no date for publication has been released yet.

It is not the first time a beefed-up role for councils has been proposed. In 2018, Labour announced that if elected, it would allow councils to take back academies when their sponsors fail.

A report by the EDSK think tank in 2019 recommended that schools be allowed to join local school trusts based on the MAT model, to allow local authorities to run academies in their areas.

Report author Tom Richmond said one of the "biggest challenges" facing a push for full academisation would be the "lack of capacity in high-performing trusts".

Current trusts are unable to



absorb more than 12,000 maintained schools "within any meaningful timeframe", he added. "It is therefore no surprise that the government may turn to high-performing local authorities to set up their own trusts to shoulder some of the burden."

However, he said the move would only be successful if council trusts operated "at arm's length from each local council" to reduce conflicts of interest and ensure councils champion all pupils "regardless of which school they attend".

Sir David Carter, the former national schools commissioner, said there had been "a discussion about strong and effective local authorities setting up their own MATs since 2016".

"In principle, I think it could be a policy shift that is of the moment. If the government wants to get more schools into academy trusts, the reality is that many primary schools in particular would look differently at this model to joining an existing trust."

A National Governance Association (NGA) member survey last year found just five per cent of maintained school governors planned to join a MAT in the near future.

Carter said there were "risks around the lack of school

improvement capacity", but that these could be overcome "through improvement partnerships with other trusts".

Trusts sponsored by local authorities would also "need to start at scale and would probably be unviable if they started too small".

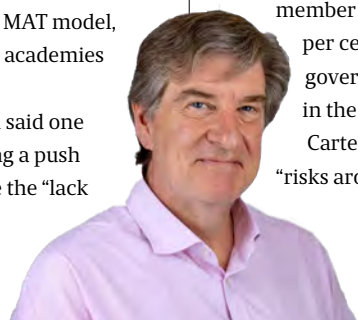
But if these sorts of issues could be addressed, "then I can see no reason why this might not work in locations where schools have good relationships with their local authority and benefit already from strong educational support".

Questioned by MPs this week, DfE permanent secretary Susan Acland-Hood said, "One of the things we will be looking at as part of the schools white paper is whether there are other options we should be looking at for other groups of schools who might want to be taking up this opportunity but also holding on to some of the relationships they've already got".

She also suggested the white paper may set out a "framework" for "what good looks like" in academy trusts, against which trusts could then be inspected at a later date.

At the moment, Ofsted can only inspect individual academies and carry out "summary evaluations" of trusts, but wants powers to directly inspect trusts themselves.

She told MPs the "first step would be to set out that framework before you started inspecting people against it."



Sir David Carter



Tom Richmond

## NEWS

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# DfE rethink delays advisory board results

FREDDIE WHITTAKER &amp; TOM BELGER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

EXCLUSIVE

Experts fear a three-month election process for new regional schools commissioner advisers "may have to be restarted" after it was paused while department officials consider a reorganisation.

Candidates for RSC advisory boards were told last week that results would no longer be announced by the end of this month. An email said it was "taking longer than anticipated to constitute the new advisory boards".

However, *Schools Week* has learned the results are on hold because the Department for Education is considering appointing a ninth RSC in London. Currently the capital is split into three RSC regions.

The DfE said election results would be delayed "whilst we consider the impact of any change on regional boundaries".

Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner from 2016 to 2018, said creating a commissioner for London "would not be unhelpful".

But he said the elections "may have to be restarted as the candidates in three of the regions may no longer be located in the region that they were standing in".

"There is also the issue of trust leaders voting for a candidate who might be part of the new London region and not part of the original region that they were eligible to vote in."

Susan Acland-Hood, the DfE's permanent secretary, admitted on Monday that the eight current RSC regions, introduced in 2014, did not match up with more widely used regions in other departments.

Most use nine regions, known as the government office regions.

While London is split into three areas, Yorkshire and the Humber is also divided under the RSC system.

Acland-Hood told the public accounts committee a specific London RSC was "under consideration", but would not commit to a timeframe.

Any changes to other regions as part of a restructure would be limited.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of



the ASCL school leaders' union, said it would be "very odd to have held advisory board elections only to then change the organisational structure".

The restructure seemed like "an unnecessary distraction" when schools were at full stretch.

It comes as ministers reveal they are looking at the DfE's future operations alongside an ongoing review of the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Michelle Donelan, the universities minister, said that "having reflected on how the Covid-19 outbreak has changed us and our sectors, and at how we want to work in future, we are working with our staff to take a purposeful look at how we are organised to deliver".

A source familiar with the department's operations said such a review would "make sense", as the department would eventually need to "wind down" its large Covid division.

Data published by the DfE in December shows its Covid response unit has 85 staff. A further 113 work on education recovery, while 91 work on rapid testing and 34 on the Covid response in schools.

Its regional delivery directorate, led by Dominic Herrington, the national schools commissioner, is the department's second largest, with 546 staff. A further 166 work on academies and school reform.

Stuart Lock, the chief executive of Advantage Schools and a candidate for the northwest London and south central England advisory board, said delays might be "frustrating" for candidates, but he could "see the case" for rationalising regions.

If reforms were planned it made sense to "explore these before blindly carrying on with election announcements".

"I agree with a system that's well-run, rational and works with key people in the sector. Change is always difficult. The

DfE thinking it through, rather than announcing to keep us happy with potentially more chaos, seems sensible."

But Kevin Courtney, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said RSC structures were in "fundamental need of reform – moving to nine regions is nothing like enough".

It was "not right" that decisions about academisation were taken by bodies that "only represent the academies sector".



Susan Acland-Hood

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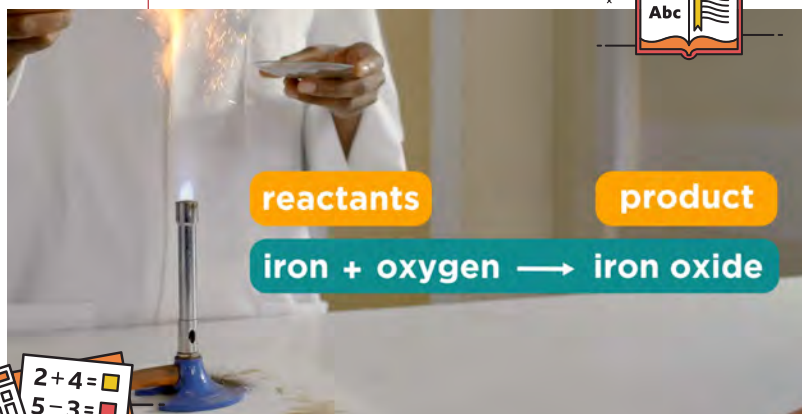
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# Council tells heads to 'self-manage' Covid outbreaks

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR\_93

EXCLUSIVE

A council has "abrogated its responsibility" after telling schools public health officials will no longer provide Covid advice unless a child is in hospital.

Instead Durham County Council is asking leaders to "self-manage" outbreaks.

Durham wrote to school leaders earlier this month detailing changes that allow it to "prioritise high-risk cases and provide targeted support" as fears rise of a "significant wave" of the Omicron variant.

Unions say the council has "abrogated its responsibility", adding it is "essential" every school has access to local public health support when they feel it is needed.

But others welcome the change, saying the new system is "much easier" to work with.

## 'Limited capacity' stops support

In an email sent to school leaders, the council says a predicted "significant wave" of the Omicron variant will "increase demand on public health services".

Because of the predicted "excess" demand, mainstream schools are told to stop reporting Covid cases to the council and "manage outbreaks in accordance with their own outbreak management plans".

An attached template advises measures such as attendance restrictions, face coverings and bubbles.

But the Department for Education's contingency framework says schools should



"seek additional public health advice" when considering these sorts of measures.

The council told schools if further advice is needed, they should contact the DfE's Covid helpline.

It will only provide local public health support to special schools or mainstream schools that have a "case in hospital".

## Council has 'abrogated' responsibility

Julie McCulloch, the director of policy at the Association of School and College Leaders, said the council "appears to have abrogated its responsibility to assist schools" in a move "at odds with the government's contingency framework guidance".

With school decisions about Covid measures "very much in the public spotlight ... it is important that leaders get the full backing of their local public health team".

Last week scores of secondary schools ignored the government's last-minute rule change and opted to keep face masks in their classrooms.

Andy Byers, headteacher of Framwellgate school in Durham, said he did not feel "cast adrift" and the new system was "much easier".

Schools could still get advice from the council's education team, who in turn could contact local public health services if required, he said.

The system was "clear and well-organised" and provided good levels of local support and autonomy for schools, he said.

## Region hit with Omicron surge

The north east currently has 1,259 Covid cases per 100,000 people, the highest of any region. Durham's rate stands at 1,364.

However, nearby councils in Gateshead, Newcastle, Northumberland and South Tyneside told *Schools Week* their systems had not changed and schools were still advised to contact local public health teams.

Amanda Healy, Durham's director of public health, said there were a "very high number" of Omicron cases in schools. The measures allowed the council "to target our support to higher-risk settings".

"We continue to provide support to schools as much as we can, and will contact schools directly if data shows pupil case numbers are higher than anticipated and further assistance is needed."

James Bowen, the National Association of Head Teachers' director of policy, said that after two years of managing Covid cases, schools "may feel confident in dealing with these themselves".

But it was "essential" that every school still had access to local public health officials whenever they felt it was needed, he said.

Councils also must be "mindful of the pressure" a Covid outbreak placed on leaders.

"School leaders are not experts in public health, and nor should we expect them to be."

JAMES CARR | @JAMESCARR\_93

## Another 1,000 air-cleaning units for classrooms

The government will now provide another 1,000 air-cleaning units to schools, taking the total to 9,000 – but nearly a fifth of requests were rejected.

As of Friday last week, the Department for Education had received requests from 1,550 settings for government-funded air cleaning units.

While 1,265, or 82 per cent, had their bids accepted, the remaining 285 were rejected.

To be eligible for the devices, schools needed to have classrooms with sustained

CO2 readings of more than 1,500 parts per million (ppm), and be unable to complete remedial works before the end of February.

A survey of 4,367 state-funded education settings found 12 per cent reported sustained CO2 readings of 1,500ppm.

However, just 3 per cent of those were unable to remedy the high readings through opening a window or building work – meaning they met the criteria to apply for units.

The DfE stated that "those settings who applied but will not receive units did not meet

the eligibility criteria set out".

The promise of 9,000 units is 1,000 more than previously touted. There are about 300,000 classrooms in England.

Schools will be sent the same products that are listed on the government's online air purifiers "marketplace" – a Dyson Pure Cool Formaldehyde TP09 or Camfil City M.

Both products are said to remove more than 99.9 per cent of ultrafine particles in the air. Allocations will be determined by stock levels rather than CO2 readings.

## NEWS

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# Councils with SEND cash black holes to get new cost-cutter visits

SAMANTHA BOOTH

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EXCLUSIVE

Councils with multi-million-pound shortfalls in special needs funding will face visits by government cost-cutters as ministers "lay the foundations" for new reforms under the much-delayed SEND review.

The Department for Education is looking to appoint 15 finance professionals as special educational needs and disability financial advisers (SFAs) to visit local authorities from March.

It is part of a new £1.5 million "Delivering Better Value in SEND" scheme, which will also establish an "index" measuring councils' performance against spend.

Estimates suggest council deficits in their high-needs funding – for children with complex needs – could balloon to more than £1.3 billion next year amid rising demand.

The DfE said it now needs to "lay the foundations" for reforms due to be announced in the upcoming SEND review and create "capacity and capability" in the system. There is an "urgent need" to resolve issues at cash-strapped councils, a spokesperson added.

The new advisers aim to uncover "underlying drivers" of "high spend and poor outcomes" at councils with growing designated schools grant (DSG) deficits.

Tender documents last year stated the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme would create a framework to "embed a value-based approach to effective SEND system management" and set out "what good looks like".

Part of this is an index looking at authority spend and outcomes, to create a "value score" for each council. The successful supplier would also be asked to create a "diagnostic tool" to "interrogate" council's data to identify "the root cause" of poor performance or underlying drivers of costs.

Chris Rossiter, chief executive of SEND charity the Driver Youth Trust, said it looks like government is "trying to work out



through a verification audit whether councils are using this money effectively, or is there a lot of wastage? And how much of that is spent on management and delivering that system, rather than reaching children?"

The new advisers appear to mirror the controversial school resource management adviser scheme, where government sends financial experts into schools to help them find savings.

But the "high-calibre" SEND consultants will also help develop "reforms and change strategies" to enable "effective management of their high-needs system".

Documents state advisers will be paid between £24,000 and £132,000 on an initial 12-month contract.

*Schools Week* understands this is for up to 55 days work a year, which equates to between £436 to £2,400 a day. At the top end, that works out at nearly £2 million across all 15 advisers.

However, James Bowen, director of policy for school leaders' union NAHT, said the "fundamental issue" is not "local inefficiencies, but a failure to match the far-reaching SEND reforms introduced in 2014 with the appropriate level of funding".

A Society of County Treasurers survey last year showed that high-needs deficits across 40 authorities in county areas rose from £134

million in 2018-19 to a projected £1.3 billion in 2022-23.

Bowen added: "It is a concern that the government believes that financial advisers are the solution to high-needs budget deficits when there are far more fundamental problems that still need addressing."

High-needs funding has increased from £6.5 billion in 2020-21 to £9.1 billion in 2022-23. But it is still not covering costs.

Five councils were told to cut SEND spending and reform services earlier this year in exchange for government bailouts totalling nearly £100 million.

The DfE has set aside another £150 million to hand councils as part of its "safety valve intervention programme".

A department spokesperson said all councils "must take responsibility for effective and sustainable management" of their high-needs systems. They added the advisers would help "to develop more effective management of high-needs systems across the country".

But Cllr Keith Glazier, education spokesperson for the County Councils Network, said the advisers are "unlikely to unearth any major issues which are contributing to this unsustainable situation than those who work on the frontline in delivering SEN services have found".

# Behaviour Hubs: A school-tailored approach towards a culture that benefits everyone

**T**he £10 million Behaviour Hubs initiative from the Department for Education is preparing to welcome its fourth cohort of Partner schools onto the programme in April 2022.

Behaviour Hubs provides tailored support to schools and MATs to help them create calm, orderly environments where pupils can learn – and teachers can teach. This free programme matches schools that want and need to improve pupil behaviour with a Lead school that has an exemplary track record in behaviour culture.

This school-to-school support is complemented by a series of online training modules and resources developed by a team of expert behaviour advisers headed by DfE's Tom Bennett. Applications for schools and MATs to join the April 2022 cohort are currently open.

## A 'one size doesn't fit all' programme

The Behaviour Hubs programme isn't intended to make schools start again from the ground up. Instead, Lead schools help to diagnose behavioural issues and build a steady roadmap for internal behaviour improvements based around the parts of a school's existing behaviour culture that already work.

Understanding the context and unique challenges of each Partner school is essential to the programme's success. This means that while specific behaviour approaches, such as an outright ban of mobile phones, may be appropriate in certain contexts, this isn't an expectation of the programme since it operates under the ethos that one size doesn't fit all.

## Supporting Covid recovery in schools

The design of the Behaviour Hubs programme has meant it is well-placed to help schools develop relevant strategies to improving behaviour culture following the disruption caused by Covid-related school closures.

Lead schools with exemplary behaviour practices host termly open days which allow Partner schools to observe a variety of



approaches to sustaining effective behaviour cultures in action. Regular networking events provide a forum for schools to openly discuss the challenges they are facing, as well as share any solutions they have been developing. This idea exchange underpins the essence of Behaviour Hubs and ensures that the programme remains relevant regardless of the context.

## Creating a behaviour culture across all provisions

The Behaviour Hubs programme has welcomed several exemplary special and alternative provision (AP) Lead schools, which support other special and AP schools on a one-to-one basis. A number of Lead schools on the programme also operate in challenging and disadvantaged contexts.

Special and AP schools benefit from all the same networking opportunities as other school provisions within their hub, while receiving support from a Lead school with an intimate and in-depth knowledge of improving behaviour in schools that match their own provision.

In addition to the core training modules, which are essential to the success of building sustainable behaviour practices, Behaviour Hubs offers specialist training modules that focus exclusively on behaviour management for pupils

with SEND, as well as best practices in AP and special schools.

## Empowering schools to make lasting changes

Consistency is a fundamental ingredient in creating an effective behaviour culture, and the programme helps schools adopt a whole-school approach that empowers staff at all levels to actively promote this culture.

The ongoing coaching provided by Lead schools builds confidence and develops the skills leaders need in order to diagnose issues, develop informed responses, drive change and continually review performance. Developing leaders in this way empowers them to develop an effective, sustainable behaviour culture beyond the life of the programme.

As such, Behaviour Hubs is as much a benefit for teachers as it is for their pupils; tackling classroom disruption facilitates higher-quality teaching which boosts teacher wellbeing, staff retention and ultimately improves outcomes for all pupils.

The Behaviour Hubs programme is currently accepting applications for the April 2022 cohort of Partner schools.

Visit [www.behaviourhubs.co.uk](http://www.behaviourhubs.co.uk) for more information and how to apply.



## LONG READ

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# Warm welcome: Schools offer 'sanctuary' to Afghan refugees

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

Schools have opened their doors to thousands of children evacuated from Afghanistan, hiring language experts and counsellors and adapting their curriculums to meet their "moral obligation" to their new pupils.

Up to 15,000 people were evacuated from Kabul in August, about 10,000 of them Afghan nationals and about half of them children.

The government says all school-aged children who came during the airlift are now in school. More are still arriving, although it will not say exactly how many have been placed, under what has been dubbed 'Operation Warm Welcome'.

The Department for Education has set aside up to 6,000 laptops and tablets for Afghan children settling in England.

Forty-seven councils were handed £12 million to provide education for refugee children - £6,580 for each primary-age pupil and £8,755 for each secondary. The money is for extra staff, as well as transport, uniforms and free school meals.

In Liverpool, more than 90 pupils have joined four schools. The Academy of St Nicholas, near one of the hotels for refugees, has taken 41.

Headteacher Jeniffer Sing said as soon as the school found out about the children needing places "the whole community just wanted to help".

Staff spent time at the hotel getting to know pupils and to understand their level of education and English and the "trauma" they had suffered.

That trauma is significant, with many pupils still fearing for the safety of relatives left in Afghanistan.

Siobhan Riley, the school's director of SEN, said one pupil who prepared a video for a school assembly described "the day everything changed. He heard gunshots and got home to find his parents packing suitcases. Within 20 minutes, they'd left."



Afghan refugees evacuated from Kabul board an Atlas Air commercial aircraft for a departure flight from Ramstein Air Base



Salman and Noman Khan, pupils at City Academy in Birmingham

## "The whole community just wanted to help"

The school has an adapted curriculum for the new pupils. It will soon recruit an English as an additional language (EAL) coordinator to monitor progress, and a counsellor to help with wellbeing.

Some year 11-age pupils have started in year 10 to give them more time to study. However, two pupils who studied at an international school in Kabul will sit GCSEs

this year in "five or six" subjects.

Garston Primary School in Liverpool has taken on 13 pupils.

Head Sarah Knipe said there was never "any question" of her school's involvement.

"If we had known that these children were housed here sooner, we would have probably battered down the doors of the local authority to try to get them in."

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## “We put ourselves forward as a place of sanctuary”

The school has also had to tailor its support. Some children are “more accomplished” in English, while others have been separated from their families and need extra support.

Two schools run by the CORE Education Trust in Birmingham have also admitted new pupils, although not through the official resettlement scheme.

Said Anwar joined Jewellery Quarter Academy in year 10 last week after travelling without his parents through Europe, living for a time in the “jungle” camp near Calais.

Headteacher Jamie Barton said the school felt it had a “moral obligation” to take extra pupils, and had “put ourselves forward as a place of sanctuary, a place where students will find a home and a place where they will find compassion.”

Other Afghan pupils who arrived at the school during previous years “buddied up and supported” their new schoolmate, translating for

him in his first meeting with Barton.

Brothers Salman and Noman joined City Academy about six months ago. They live some distance away, but headteacher Rekha Shell-Macleod said there was “no local school willing to offer them a place”.

All three students are supported by a unit called CORE Hello, which provides “wraparound care” to pupils from all four trust schools who are struggling with language acquisition.

Shell-Macleod said older pupils would access the “same number” of GCSEs as other pupils “which is really important for them”, but also follow a tailored curriculum with a bigger focus on language.

Ninestiles Academy, also in Birmingham, has enrolled five year 10 and 11 pupils from Afghanistan in the past six months.

Head Alex Hughes said teaching the new pupils “requires great flexibility”.



### Facts and figures

**10,000** Afghans evacuated from Kabul

**Around half** are children

**47** councils finding places for pupils

**£12m** for staff, meals and transport

**6,000** laptops allocated by DfE

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## NEWS

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# Shortages and increased prices delay school's opening

TOM BELGER

@TOM\_BELGER

Building material shortages and price hikes have delayed a new school's launch by a year, leaving families scrambling for places at a few days' notice.

The disruption at Lyde Green Secondary School near Bristol highlights the disruption of Covid on building projects, with nine-month waits for roof tiles nationally and a third of companies reporting material shortages.

Experts said strict timelines for work outside term-time left schools especially vulnerable.

Lyde Green was due to welcome 120 Year 7 pupils in September in temporary accommodation and move on site in 2023.

But South Gloucestershire Council has told parents escalating costs and increased construction delays will delay opening until 2024.

It highlighted "market conditions" affecting supply and cost of building materials and labour.

Dave Baker, the chief executive of the Olympus Academy Trust, which is due to run the school, said it was "awful" not welcoming pupils as planned. Olympus will offer about 60 more places at a trust school several miles away, the same as the number of first preferences.

But families had just six days to find new places.

"There are a lot of angry parents," said Georgina Binks, noting families had been awaiting a secondary at the new development for years. Her daughter was "heartbroken" and feared she might never study there if the initial intake was limited to younger age groups.

Binks, who recently had a stroke, said the new school's location - a short walk away - would have been "ideal" as it allowed her daughter, who helps to care for her, to return home at short notice or pick up her brother from the nearby primary.

Baker said the delayed launch reflected "eye-watering" costs and "incredibly long lead-in time" to construct the school's nearby temporary site too, from mobile classrooms to toilet blocks.

He highlighted gaps between government budgets and builders' prices. "The numbers didn't align."



Lyde Green Secondary School

Cost pressures on the permanent site also reflected updated designs and the contract changing hands, said a spokesman for new contractor BAM. This had "cost implications", despite BAM mitigating risks and material cost pressures through "early proactive procurement".

It is understood the council hopes issues can be swiftly resolved through negotiations and potentially extra funding.

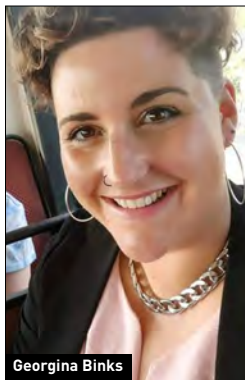
A leading construction survey earlier this month found a third of companies reporting supplier delays. Higher fuel, energy and raw material prices were pushing up costs, while shipping delays and haulage shortages meant long waits, the IHS Markit poll found.

Graham Watts, the chief executive of the Construction Industry Council, highlighted waits of up to 41 weeks for some roof tiles, and problems securing bricks, boilers, steel lintels and some paints.

Tim Claremont, a partner specialising in construction at law firm Browne Jacobson, said issues partly reflected a construction boom as Britain and other countries emerged from lockdowns.



Dave Baker



Georgina Binks



Another multi-academy trust's accounts show "supply chain difficulties" meant £2.6 million of its £3 million capital funding received in-year went unspent.

Future Academies, founded by the former academies minister Lord Nash, said "a number of projects" had been deferred. It did not respond to request for comment.

Similar issues have affected other schools worldwide, from the paused rebuild of a Belfast secondary to delayed roofing work on Californian schools.

Watts said most product stocks were "relatively good", however, and industry polls showed some pressures easing. But he warned price hikes and delays in shipping could last months as Covid shut Chinese ports and UK brick production problems continued.

Claremont said schools faced particular headaches if work was impossible outside holidays. "Any slippage in often tight programmes can easily prevent works being completed on time, and schools either fail to open or need to find alternative solutions to accommodate additional students, which can be costly."

A DfE spokesperson said it was working "actively" with the council towards swift completion, but South Gloucestershire was responsible for delivery and enough alternative places were available this September.



## NEWS

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# MATs gain schools and record cash boost amid Covid

TOM BELGER

@TOM\_BELGER

Multi-academy trusts have continued to expand and enjoyed a record boost to their finances over the past year amid the pandemic, new research shows.

The academy sector is in "very robust financial health" despite the challenges of dealing with Covid, according to the 2022 Academies Benchmark Report, published yesterday (Thursday).

Here are some of the main findings from the annual poll of more than 300 trust clients of the Kreston Academies Group, a network of accountancy firms.

## MATs grow, but SATs slow

The average size of existing MATs has continued to rise, from 6.8 per trust in 2020 to 7.5 last year. Almost two-thirds of trusts expect to grow next year.

But the number of academies overall rose only 2.5 per cent amid Covid disruption. The number of single-academy trusts also continued to fall, but at a slower rate than last year.

It underlines how Covid has hampered the government's drive for maintained and standalone schools to join MATs, with MAT-to-MAT transfers or mergers instead accounting for much expansion.

Warwick Sharp, the Education and Skills Funding Agency's academies and maintained schools director, told the Public Accounts Committee this week that ESFA "wants to see fewer single-academy trusts".

New MATs also appear increasingly rare, with only two more MATs in 2021 than a year earlier.

## Surpluses double to record high

The average surplus among MATs jumped to their highest in the decade since the report began, reaching £467,000 – up 94 per cent on last year's also-record £221,000 surplus.

The research chimes with recent *Schools Week* analysis of major trusts' accounts, with some enjoying multi-million-pound windfalls linked to Covid.

Only 3.8 per cent of trusts saw cumulative



deficits, down from 8.2 per cent two years previously.

At academy level, secondary and primary finances both remain better than pre-Covid in 2019, though primary surpluses slipped from 2020's £25,000 to £14,000 last year.

The report called the gains "remarkable", with lockdowns showing it is "much cheaper to close a school than keep it open" as trusts saved on bills, supply, exam fees and cleaning. "Savings have far outweighed the losses," the report added.

Authors expect trusts to spend surpluses next year on catch-up, predicting that a hiring spree could push up salaries. But rising energy costs and salaries will also eat into budgets.

Sharp told MPs the government was already challenging trusts with high reserves not designated "for a good reason" to spend more on current pupils. "That normally changes behaviour."

## GAG pooling more popular

Some 14 per cent of MATs now pool general annual grant funding, meaning "income is controlled centrally with each school funded based on their needs".

It marks a significant increase on the 5.2 per cent seen two years previously and 11 per cent in 2020.

The report says adopting this remains "sensitive", noting: "Whilst this may help the trustees of MATs focus on those schools with the greatest need, there is a perception that in the short term some schools will gain and others will lose out."

But only three per cent of trusts have not centralised some services.

## CEO pay reaches record high

The average pay packet among large trust chief executives or most senior leaders with other titles has reached £150,000 for the first time, the survey suggests.

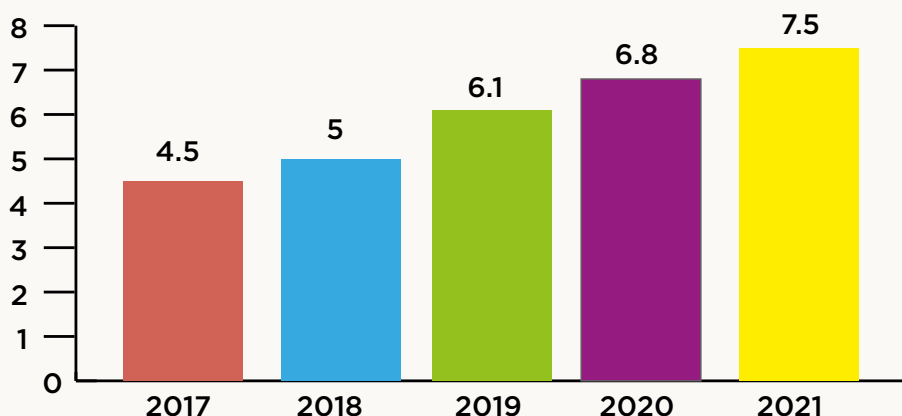
Pay had stood at around £142,000 two years previously and actually fell to £140,000 in 2020, before a £10,000 jump among trusts with at least 5,000 pupils.

Average CEO salaries stood at £106,000 among trusts with 1,000-2,500 pupils, and £84,000 among those with fewer than 500 pupils.

School business manager salaries have also seen "upward pressure" amid high demand.

Meanwhile, the report warned that at a challenging time for the sector and after a public sector pay freeze, salaries "may need to rise" in order to recruit teachers.

Average number of schools per MAT



# EDITORIAL

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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## Warm Welcome must be extended to all

It is heartening this week to hear how schools are pulling out all the stops to make child refugees from Afghanistan feel as welcome as possible.

At a time when schools are already stretched by Covid, it does great credit to the sector that so many have stepped up.

We agree with the school leaders who described taking these children in as a "moral obligation". It is incumbent on us as a society to make sure those displaced, often as a result of the actions of our own country, receive equal care in our system.

However, we are sure there will be many in the sector who wish government was more welcoming to those arriving on our shores by other means.

A child is a child, no matter where they come from. As ministers consider what to do with their cruel "no recourse to public funds" policy, which outside of Covid denies children of undocumented migrants access to free school meals, we hope they bear this in mind.

## Council-run MATs may entice, but are they effective?

It's an idea that has been floating around for a while. But officials are seriously looking at whether letting councils run academy trusts should feature in their white paper.

The obvious positive is that it would give the government's academy drive a huge boost. Many council schools, particularly primaries, are reluctant to join a big MAT. Others are already in their own effective partnerships that could be formalised into an academy structure.

But there are two big hurdles. First, will it work? You would certainly think there has to be some sort of criteria allowing only councils with a strong track-record.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, is it politically palatable? Given Michael Gove's all-out assault on local authorities in the early days of ramping up academies, it would be quite the U-turn.

But Nadhim Zahawi seems to want to win the sector over. And officials have already been watering down their ambitions for all schools in MATs to everyone in a "family of schools". Watch this space.

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# Feature

JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERG

A child's leather shoe at  
Auschwitz Birkenau.  
Credit: Olivia Hemingway



## “How do you teach students that genocide is a societal thing?”

Two former teachers who founded the Centre for Holocaust Education at the UCL Institute of Education tell Jess Staufenberg why understanding complicity is a big part of their work

“I didn't set out to become a teacher of such a disturbing history.”

Ruth-Anne Lenga, a former RE teacher, didn't expect her life to take such an unusual turn when she left the classroom in the late 80s. She had joined the Jewish Museum in London as head of learning, helping with exhibitions about Anglo-Jewish life: the bakeries, East End, vibrancy of

culture.

One day, a man walked in. He had hollow cheeks and took Lenga's hand in an iron grip.

“This was no ordinary man – this was the most compelling individual you would ever have met,” smiles Lenga.

The man held a suitcase full of objects he had hidden with neighbours when he lived

in Holland at the start of the Second World War. They included his wife's wedding dress and little shoes for his two-year-old son, Barney. “He was telling us we had to put on an exhibition about the Holocaust, and his life.”

Leon Greenman, then in his 80s, was born in Stepney Green in east London, but in the 1930s moved with his wife and son to

## Feature: Centre for Holocaust Education



Professor Stuart Foster and Ruth-Anne Lenga, founding members of the Centre

Rotterdam. When Germany invaded in May 1940, Greenman took their most important belongings and divided them between his two neighbours, asking one to keep his identity documents and English currency safe, so he could get his family back to England.

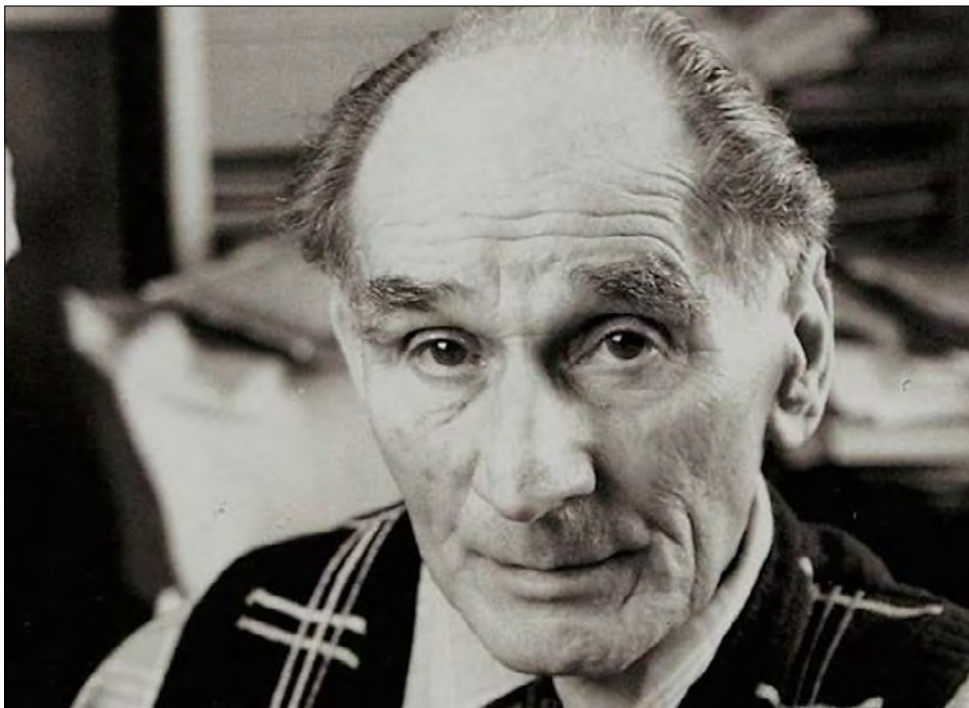
"But the neighbour betrayed him," Lenga says. "Out of fear of being caught helping Jews, they burned the passports and the money disappeared."

In October 1942, Dutch police raided Greenman's home, arrested his family and took them first to Westerbork transit camp in the northeast of the country, and then transferred him to Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland – the largest Nazi death camp. When he was freed in 1945 from Buchenwald camp, he was recorded in an interview saying: "I don't know where my wife and child are." He later found they had been murdered.

Last week was the 80th anniversary of the Wannsee Conference in Berlin, in which senior German government officials signed off the "Final Solution to the Jewish question". Yesterday marks the day Soviet troops liberated Auschwitz, now called International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

But this week the Auschwitz museum director in Poland warned "the biggest task for remembrance today is to combat indifference".

Iron-bent on that mission, Greenman began talking to students on the RE PGCE that Lenga was leading in the early 1990s at



London-born Auschwitz survivor, Leon Greenman

### "We found teachers were teaching a perpetrator narrative"

the Institute of Education. In the complex discussions that would follow, she noticed she'd get the same comments every year from trainees about how this encounter with a survivor was the most profound part of the course. "They said it showed them why they needed to be a teacher."

The set-up caught the attention of Professor Stuart Foster, a former secondary teacher who was leading the history PGCE at the institute. The Holocaust has been mandatory in the national curriculum since 1991, following the 1988 Education Reform Act under Margaret Thatcher, but it was Gordon Brown who agreed more awareness was needed. Lenga and Foster teamed up and secured funding for their Holocaust Education Development Programme for teachers in 2008.

Their first task: finding out the current state of teaching about the Holocaust. In 2009 they surveyed 2,108 teachers, and ran interviews with 68 teachers across 24 schools.

"We found that teachers were teaching what we call a 'perpetrator narrative' – 'this is what the Nazis did to the Jews,'" says Foster.

"But who were the Jewish people of Europe?"

Lenga explain: "Only by exploring their hopes, dreams, lives, ordinariness, only then can anyone get a sense of the infinite possibilities that are lost when you murder 1.5 million children." Two-thirds of European Jews – six million people – were murdered in the Holocaust.

"If you go into a bookshop and look at textbooks about the Holocaust, many will have the face of Hitler on them," Lenga says. To counter that "perpetrator" narrative, the team produced a free key stage 3 textbook, 50,000 copies of which have gone to schools, called *Understanding the Holocaust*. The cover shows seven grinning children on a seesaw, enjoying a hot day in Hungary: the lives of ordinary Jewish Europeans before the Shoah – the "catastrophe", as the Holocaust is in Hebrew.

In 2012, Michael Gove doubled the team's



# Feature: Centre for Holocaust Education



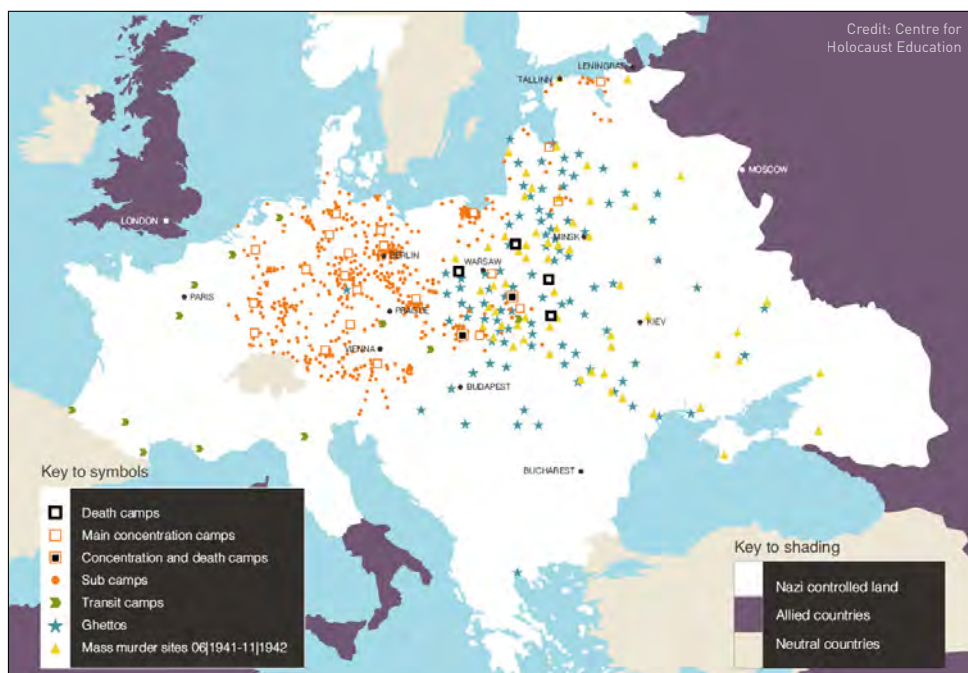
Foster and Lenga outside No 10

funding to an annual £500,000, match-funded by the Pears Foundation, led by philanthropist Sir Trevor Pears. The Centre for Holocaust Education was launched, now offering a module for initial teacher education courses, a masters' module, and the new beacon school award (in which the centre works closely with a school over one year).

The school award attempts to undo many misconceptions the centre found in a survey of pupils in 2016. Of the 7,952 key stage 3 pupils surveyed, 65 per cent didn't know what "anti-semitism" meant, 10 per cent thought that fewer than 100,000 Jews had been murdered - while 56 per cent thought Hitler was solely responsible for the Holocaust.

"How do you get students to understand that genocide is a societal thing? Massive amounts of people have to be complicit," Foster says. Leon Greenman's story was used as a springboard for discussion. "We ask students, who killed Barney Greenman?" Lenga says. It sets me thinking: Leon Greenman's neighbour betrayed him, Dutch police arrested him, he was taken into Poland. "We focus on teaching about complicity and collaboration."

How does the team prepare teachers for the tricky questions that must follow? Such as how the UK treats refugees today (one charity has said the government's treatment of refugees amounts to "performative cruelty"). Or is this British history if it wasn't on British soil? Foster nods: many of these questions have been raised with the proposal of a Holocaust memorial in Westminster.



Credit: Centre for Holocaust Education

## "Only England and Albania stop teaching history at 14"

"It's about it being central to European history." The Holocaust shows there are things we must always learn, regardless of whether they are "British" events or not.

Teachers must also be ready for questions about Palestine and Israel. Last year, as antisemitic incidents rose, then-education secretary Gavin Williamson warned heads to ensure "political impartiality" over the conflict and occupation.

"It's complex enough teaching and learning about the Holocaust, without going into anything else," Lenga says. "One needs a robust knowledge base to engage in these conversations - even just with the Holocaust, you need to know so much."

Foster agrees that big questions arise: "The core issue is the responsibility we have to other people. How far do we care about Syrian refugees, what's going on in Yemen?" This Wednesday, the Auschwitz Pledge Foundation was launched to fund projects that fight indifference to hatred in societies.

The centre has done admirable work through its beacon school award. Remote schools in areas of little ethnic diversity, such as Torpoint Community College in Cornwall, are involved, as is Rockwood Academy in

Birmingham, which has a predominantly Pakistani roll. Pupils there named a new building after a Holocaust survivor they had met.

And the work is needed. Foster points out the national curriculum is not compulsory for academies, and only a third of pupils take history GCSE, with just 6 per cent at A-level. "Aside from us, only Albania stops teaching history at 14 in Europe," he says. We are at risk of forgetting.

Lenga remembers one survivor telling a group in Sheffield about his guilt at the relief he felt when someone died beside him in an airless cart, giving him more room to breathe when the body was removed. "A student said to me, I wanted to go up to him and reach out, and just say, 'it's not your fault.'"

It is these human encounters with survivors that make the deepest difference - just as it did when Greenman met Lenga all those years ago. "What sort of textbook could have done that?" she asks. "That young 14-year-old, showing that level of understanding of agony. How could a teacher have done that?"

But, crucially, these survivors will be gone one day. It means the centre's most critical days may yet lie ahead.



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# Opinion

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PAM  
TUCKETT

Chair, Kreston International Academies Group, and head of education, Bishop Fleming accountants

## Academy finances: things aren't as rosy as they seem

**There are a number of uncertainties ahead for the financial outlook of academy trusts, says Pam Tuckett**

As chair of Kreston Global's academies group, publishers of the 2022 Academies Benchmark Report, and head of education at accountants Bishop Fleming, I draw two conclusions from our newly published data. First, that the impact of a second year of lockdowns on academy trust finances is significant. And second, that the sector's apparent financial health is potentially misleading.

The headlines are likely to focus on a second record year of surpluses for secondary academies and multi-academy trusts (MATs). And it's true that gains resulting from temporary school closures, no exam fees and reduced costs for supplies, utilities and facilities management have been bolstered by government grants, exceeding any loss of trading income.

But all is not as rosy as it seems. The long-term impact of Covid, staffing shortages and rising energy prices, at a time when schools are advised to keep windows open to increase ventilation, present uncertainties. And that's before we even get to tackling pupil absence.

### Reserves

As trusts grow in size, their average free reserves per pupil decrease significantly. MATs with fewer than 250 pupils had average reserves of £3,123 in 2021, for example. But this

decreases to £517 for trusts with 5000+ pupils, highlighting larger MATs' abilities to spread risk and make economies of scale.

In November 2021, the National Audit Office (NAO) reported that more than one in five trusts had reserves equivalent to 20 per cent or more of annual income. Our findings suggest this is nearer 15 per cent.

The NAO report also compared the average cumulative surplus per pupil in the maintained sector – £337 – with the per pupil surplus in the academy sector – £689. At first glance this looks like a substantial difference, but we must consider context.

For a start, it's widely acknowledged that primary schools are more limited in their ability to find the savings than secondaries,

and approximately 75 per cent of secondary schools have converted to academy status, compared with only around 33 per cent of primaries.

And given that the academy sector is composed of larger schools on average, you would expect them to hold slightly larger reserves – just as figures from the Academies Benchmark Report suggest.

Nevertheless, it does beg the question of whether nearly twice the reserve is justified.

### Incomes and expenditures

Looking closer at the detail, we find that MATs and primaries have seen an increase in total income per pupil, while secondaries have seen a small decrease. But the movement

“Recovery has hardly begun - this money will be swiftly spent

for MATs is more unpredictable as academies join and leave trusts and capital funding changes. MATs often have larger self-generated income too, which has suffered because of lockdowns.

When it comes to expenditures, we continue to see a fall in education costs that started before the pandemic. However, with energy costs about to soar, academies will need to review their energy use to balance budgets (and to help tackle climate change).

But the biggest challenge the sector faces is staffing, which extra funding alone – substantial though it has been – won't solve. There have been reductions in the per-pupil cost of both permanent teaching and supply staff in secondaries and MATs, highlighting that more has



been spent on non-teaching staff proportionately. But the drop-off in recruitment and concerns over post-pandemic retention loom large.

And finally, maintenance costs have reduced to an all-time low in 2021. However, these will increase again as a result of catch-up programmes.

### Impact on cash

The government has committed nearly £5 billion to helping pupils catch up on lost learning, and £1 billion in catch-up premium and tutoring support has already been received in the 2020/21 academic year.

Although this does not have a direct impact on in-year surpluses, because these extra funds are typically restricted grants, it does have a significant impact on cash balances. This is primarily because a large chunk of funding had not been spent at year-end, resulting in a build-up of unspent restricted funds.

But the colossal effort of recovery has hardly begun, and this money will be swiftly spent. To be clear, no school is in a particularly advantageous position as the pandemic rumbles on.

# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**This new paper on the teaching of reading is so set on its conclusions it has failed to make the best argument at its disposal, writes Tarjinder Gill**

Last week, UCL's Institute of Education published a paper by Dominic Wyse and Alice Bradbury. Accompanied by an open letter with 250 signatories, *Reading Wars or Reading Reconciliation?* represents an attempt to reverse the current government policy of teaching reading through systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programmes 'first and foremost'. Wyse and Bradbury argue instead that the system needs to revert to including whole-language approaches as part of a balanced instruction programme (BIP) in which phonics would be taught not systematically, but in context alone.

Even putting aside the fact that the idea of BIP itself is ill defined, open to interpretation and has no studies to support it explicitly, it's hard to imagine the authors' conclusions weren't foregone. The paper certainly reads like their ability to conduct a critical examination of reading policy and pedagogy was limited.

For example, they make no attempt to review relevant recent literature, such as *Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition from Novice to Expert* by Anne Castles and others, or the contributions made by cognitive psychologists such as Daniel Willingham. And if the authors truly believe that the end goal of reading is comprehension, then it is not clear why E.D. Hirsch is missing from this section.

To robustly disagree and highlight flaws in the arguments of any of these authors would have been a welcome contribution to the field. Instead, the theoretical section of



TARJINDER GILL

Associate director of research and pedagogy, Outwood Grange Academies Trust

## Reading wars: reconciliation will require more truth

the paper is stuck in a research and evidence time warp, where Chall and Goodman are still thrashing it out. If the authors appear out of touch and out of date, it's because they are.

Beyond their selective approach to research, the authors' next attempt

dominant nations in PISA and PIRLS," the paper states. Yet the most recent PIRLS data shows England outperforming Canada. It is true that Canada outranked England in the last round of PISA, but others have persuasively argued

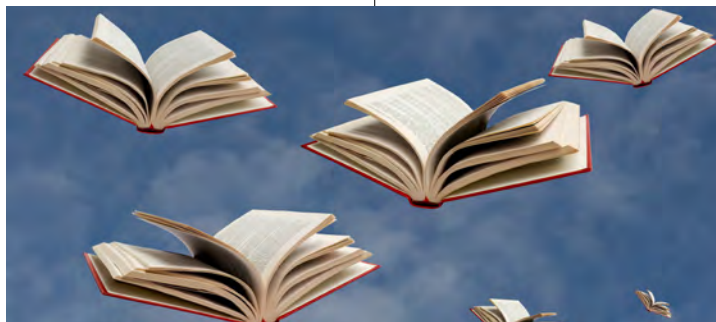
**“It's hard to imagine their conclusions weren't foregone**

to persuade is to argue that England's reading curriculum is an outlier because of its exclusion of whole-language approaches when teaching reading. They claim data proves the superiority of other English-speaking nations who follow a BIP, yet they fail to perform the in-depth analysis required to make their case.

“Canada has been the strongest performer of English language-

that this one data point should be put into context: Canada is on a downwards trajectory in terms of reading scores, while England is on an upwards one.

If it is true that whole-language is a necessary component of reading instruction, why is this the case? Wyse and Bradbury skirt around the issue, arguing that the recent rise in reading scores is smaller



than when the national literacy strategy was introduced – and conveniently ignoring the fact that the policy of teaching reading through SSP has enabled those gains not only to be maintained but actually built upon.

Saddest of all, perhaps, is that a strong argument was at their disposal but they ignored it – evidently because it contradicts their central assertion that whole-language approaches are essential components of teaching reading.

PIRLS scores show that the 2001 and 2006 cohorts scored 553 and 536 respectively. The 2011 cohort, who were taught using SSP, scored 552, rising slightly to 559 in 2016. Here, an argument could be made that would be acceptable to whole-language proponents: If SSP is superior, then why are the scores of the 2001 and 2016 cohorts so similar? If anything, it could be argued that schools should be free to select either a BIP or an SSP programme as they produce similar results.

But even this is roundly dismissed by Wyse and Bradbury, who see only 'contradictory' results.

Ultimately, the paper disappoints because the authors clearly don't understand SSP theoretically or pedagogically. They allow their attachment to whole-language instruction to narrow the scope of their research, when it could have truly been a landmark study.

Who knows? It could have reflected the classroom reality that primary teachers are immersing children in rich reading curricula while also teaching SSP discreetly.

Wouldn't that have been something? Reconciliation, indeed.



# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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NEIL MILLER

Deputy CEO, London & South East Academies Trust

## Why an SEMH setting could be a professional's destination of choice

During the pandemic, initial teacher training applications surged. Attributed to labour market uncertainty and the recession-proof nature of teaching as a profession, this boom seems to have been short-lived (applications are down 23 per cent on last year). So once again, we face a serious skills shortage.

This issue is further compounded in special schools supporting children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. The SEMH schools within our own trust are currently seeking to fill vacancies at all levels, and we are not alone in facing this problem. In just one county where one of our schools is located, ten special schools are currently advertising for a total of 50 teaching assistants.

If our trust is anything to go by, retention isn't the problem. Once staff are in, they tend to stay. But demand for SEMH provision is increasing constantly, and our growth simply can't match it if we cannot attract the right people to fill new roles. This means we won't be able to support the increasing number of children who need specialist provision, many of whom are currently awaiting EHCPs in an extremely backlogged system.

Working in the classroom is a genuine vocation. It's rewarding, but it's hard, and nowhere more so than in SEMH settings. We need

**“If our trust is anything to go by, retention isn't the problem**

to be open and honest about the challenges if we want to attract the right people. Because the truth is that not every applicant will be suited to the environment, even if they are excellent teachers.

For example, pupil premium-eligible students in our own SEMH schools represent anywhere

between 60 and 80 per cent of our cohorts, compared with a national average closer to 20 per cent. Often with multi-agency involvement, many of our pupils and their families are dealing with difficult issues at home, including mental health and domestic abuse (which have become worse for many during the pandemic).

In addition, most SEMH pupils are around two years behind academically when they join our schools. All come with ECHPs, around two-thirds have speech and language issues and there are many on the autistic spectrum. This context makes for a challenging and often

unpredictable working environment. So, our staff need high levels of resilience, empathy and an ability to compartmentalise their working life.

And like any school, we need a diverse mix of staff to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. This includes SEN specialists who are experts in personalisation of

learning, alongside subject specialists with strong pedagogy and deep curriculum knowledge – all of whom can set consistently high standards and expectations.

SEMH specialist settings offer the chance to hone those skills, with smaller classes and fewer pupils. Which means staff really get to know every child and offer full, holistic support. They form close relationships with pupils and their families, with positive and tangible impact, really 'making a difference' and transforming lives.

While many new teachers in the mainstream sector are reportedly leaving because they feel their role is closer to that of a mental health or social worker, this is the everyday reality in SEMH schools. The crucial difference is that we recognise it and support our staff to develop the skills they need to thrive in that context – which includes making staff wellbeing a priority.

Staff networks in our own SEMH schools are tight, with peer-to-peer support and genuine understanding of the challenges we share. Therapeutic support and high-quality supervision are the norm, and we structure the year to enable an early end to the summer term, too.

Teaching salaries will never reflect the true level of dedication and hard work that is required in special schools. But that's true of all schools.

What we need to tackle recruitment and retention is better communication and understanding across the sector, so that teachers' skills are not lost to a bad fit but are redeployed to where they will make the most difference and staff will feel the most rewarded.

And for all the challenges, few settings offer the opportunity to transform lives like SEMH schools do.



Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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TOM BURT  
Vice principal,  
Great Yarmouth Primary Academy

Simplifying our behaviour systems changed our culture

A bottom-up approach to school improvement led us from simplifying our systems to a whole new trauma-informed culture, writes Tom Burt

When I arrived at Great Yarmouth Primary Academy it was clear there was work to be done. A few months previously the school had been rated 'Inadequate' by Ofsted following a succession of headteacher and senior leadership changes. Behaviour was highlighted as a real concern, exclusions were high and the attendance rate deeply concerning.

All this happened under Inspiration Trust's sponsorship of the school, and there could be no hiding from that. Poor behaviour was the legacy of rapid turnover in school leadership, as newcomers brought in their own initiatives and left with those half-finished. Some had been quietly dropped while others carried on as baggage even as new leaders came in with their own ideas. The result was staff working in siloes, with no consistency in their approaches and no shared pride or purpose in their work.

Bringing in an entirely new

behaviour system would have just been more of the same, not least because staff knew that for all our new ideas, we might not be there long enough to make a difference. So rather than washing our hands of the past, we engaged with it. We looked at the systems in place, identified what worked and chopped out anything holding us back. We knew less was more, and that instead of bringing in another new system, we could simplify what was already happening.

“We saw a decrease in exclusions from the start

We introduced our chosen routines on our first INSET day, practising them with staff through live role plays. There was initially some resistance from staff, who'd seen any number of initiatives come and go and who were less than keen to engage with the role plays in front of their peers. But they also knew something had to change. Live modelling these sessions means teachers fully understand what they're doing and are comfortable delivering it. It's something that we've adopted

across all CPD sessions now, not just those on behaviour.

After the staff, we were amazed at how quickly our pupils bought in. In our first assembly we spoke about bringing pride back into the school and proving to everyone what kids from Yarmouth could do. This was such a success that we still use this terminology now, encouraging our pupils to show off to the world what they can accomplish. And even though in many cases we were stricter than what had come before, we still saw a decrease in exclusions right from the start as pupils bought

into our work.

What I did find surprising (and in my view the most telling indictment of what had come before) was children coming up to me to say our work meant they now felt safe walking around school. They explicitly referenced our systems as reasons to feel happier in school.

With these in place, we could then build on them. The inclusive leadership course run by The Difference, which taught us about trauma-informed practice, was of huge importance to that. It helped

us understand the neurobiology behind behaviours, the chemicals released into the bloodstream at moments of high stress and anxiety, and how these are influenced by the different traumas pupils have experienced.

Armed with these physiological facts, our staff could better understand why some pupils reacted to certain triggers, and could then approach them in a more compassionate fashion. This proved so successful at school that we offered it out across the whole of Inspiration Trust, where it has been well received and proven impactful.

At GYPA, that impact is clear for all to see. Exclusions have reduced by more than 80 per cent, while attendance has improved year-on-year to the highest in the local area, and above national average. Meanwhile, our recent 'good' Ofsted specifically highlighted the positive culture across the school.

We're not complacent about behaviour and we by no means see this as a battle won. In fact, with these strong foundations now in place, we are working to make our systems more nuanced and more supportive.

As are Inspiration Trust, whose learning journey just goes to show that in the most effective organisations, culture change is just as bottom-up as it is top-down.



# Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?  
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**Physical education is supposed to instil healthy habits for life in all our young people and it is fundamentally failing to deliver that, writes Gareth Evans**

It's nearly a month since we all made our New Year's resolutions, and for all our intentions, most of us have probably already given up on our ambitions of eating better, getting fitter and being healthier in general. That's because being healthy and active isn't about quick fixes like new gym memberships and juice cleanses. It's about habits and lifestyle. And that's why, since 2018, we no longer teach PE.

Before that change, we interviewed students, parents and teachers to understand why PE was such a 'marmite' subject. Many didn't have fond memories to share. In fact, cold changing huts, aggressively competitive peers and uncompromising teachers had led many to dread it.

While for some the narrow focus on selection for competitive team sports was a much-needed outlet, for too many PE was a miserable experience that put them off being active altogether. In fact, many parents passed their negative perceptions of PE down to their children, and some staff even found themselves inadvertently communicating that PE was a dispensable subject.

So we set out to change all that. Our aims were to encourage all our students to adopt a positive relationship with healthy activity, to celebrate physical, mental and social wellbeing, and to develop the habits that lead to long, healthy, happy lives. We wanted to take PE lessons and transform them from something that benefited a minority while the majority endured it, into a more



GARETH EVANS

Head of Healthy Active Lifestyles,  
Ninestiles, An Academy

## Why we scrapped PE for a healthier curriculum

holistic curriculum for health and wellbeing for life.

The first step was to change the name, which implies a narrow focus on fitness and sporting skills. We wanted our students to realise that what we teach is about so much

reducing stress and depression.

Next, we had to consider progression. While every aspect is touched on every year, every term and in most lessons, we have developed HAL so that year 7 focus primarily on physical wellbeing,

“ For too many, PE put them off being active altogether

more. And the result is Healthy Active Lifestyles (HAL).

Our curriculum now focuses on developing students' knowledge of physical, mental and social wellbeing through physical literacy and sport, so that each has a full understanding of how to look after their minds and bodies. Our drive throughout is to ensure students realise the role of exercise in promoting happiness and

year 8 on mental wellbeing and year 9 on social wellbeing. We regularly talk about the consequences of a sedentary lifestyle and the effects of exercise on the cardiovascular, respiratory and muscular systems, as well as emotional regulation.

And we constantly remind students that they don't have to excel at sport to enjoy it or be healthy.



Our lessons cover topics in depth that we previously only had a chance to skim over: motivation and the psychology of winners, goal setting, body image, skills such as leadership, teamwork, resilience, independence and relationship building. We look at the impact of social media and how to stay healthy online. We examine social barriers to participation in sport and solutions to them.

There is no better place in the curriculum for growth mindsets than the immediate feedback of exercise. And there is little other place to practise relaxation, mindfulness and the power of mental imagery. Of course, our students are still taught sporting skills, tactics and rules through a breadth of activities. But that now better complements the work of other subjects. We examine the links between sporting and academic performance and how mental techniques used by sports people can transfer into other areas of life.

The department still embodies all the things that make up a traditional PE department, including clubs, competitions and links to local teams and clubs. The skills we teach naturally support any student who wants to pursue a career in sport.

But the knowledge gained through HAL also opens up a world of opportunity in the health and well-being sector, such as nursing, nutrition and personal training.

It's a win for all our students. And for us? Well, it's a resolution we've stuck to, and that's all the evidence we need that it was the right thing to do.



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# Reviews

## BOOK REVIEW



### About Our Schools: Improving on Previous Best

**Authors:** Tim Brighouse and Mick Waters

**Publisher:** Crown House

**Reviewer:** Laura McNerney, co-founder, Teacher Tapp

Since the pandemic started, my makeshift home office comprises a monitor sitting atop the largest book I own, *The Oxford Handbook of Happiness*. When I first saw *About Our Schools*, which weighs in at a whopping 641 pages, my first thought was that it might be time to switch my screen's crutch. Then I started to read it. This book isn't going anywhere that I can't immediately reach it.

I should've known it would be good. Years ago, I wrote a profile of Brighouse for *Schools Week* that started with this line: "The longer you talk about a problem in education, the more likely you tend towards the solution 'Clone Tim Brighouse'." His track record of school improvement is stellar, and his warmth is legendary.

Waters is also near-mythical in status. A former headteacher who went into teacher training before becoming a curriculum god of the 2000s New Labour era, he is internationally famed. As Peter Wilby once said, he is ubiquitously referred to as "the charismatic Mick Waters".

Beyond such star power, the front cover boasts 100 names of the best-and-brightest in education, running the gamut from

progressive heads (Peter Hyman) to hardline trades (Katharine Birbalsingh), and education secretaries of all hues and eras. Each was interviewed by Waters and Brighouse for the book, and the breadth of thinking really shows.

The culmination is a clear-eyed, comprehensive overview of the knotty, practical realities involved when trying to educate millions of children in little organisations called schools. It is told with the depth of detail that only two people who've spent entire lifetimes thinking through these issues could achieve.

If I sound surprised, it's perhaps because I was expecting the book to be more polemic than a sociological and historical account. Having a foreword by Danny Dorling, an academic not known for pulling his punches, added to that expectation. But the book actually reads like a brilliantly detailed education policy textbook rather than a series of opinion columns.

The first section describes the influence of politics on education and gives an overview of how academies came to be as they are now. Parts two and three untangle complex sector problems: teacher training, school improvement, special needs, admissions.

Using extensive quotations from their interviews, the authors weave a picture of the complexity of policy decisions. They give a solid overview of reforms

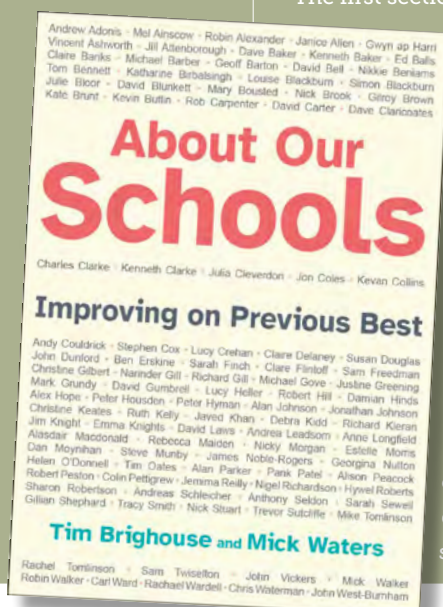
and they mainly succeed in using other people's voices to temper or challenge their own, though a slight anti-academisation and a definite anti-Gove tone permeate the book.

For me, the impassioned parts caused no problems. I enjoyed alternately nodding along or arguing with them in my head. If you only want to read books you entirely agree with, however, you may need to steel yourself.

If there's a section of the book that will cause disagreement, though, I would suggest it's the fourth part, which is full of recommendations for the future. Some solutions are easier to sell. For example, Brighouse's idea for a virtual 'Open School' (a smush of Open University, Bitesize and Oak) feels timely and harmless. Others are more complex and hark back to the 'personalised learning' agenda of the 2000s. It always sounds utopian, especially when narrated by the charismatic Mick Waters, and the truth is that it tends to exhaust teachers, leaders and (especially) timetablers.

Nonetheless, the book would be worse without the recommendations. At least Brighouse and Waters have the guts to lay out several detailed policies. At present, no political party is achieving that.

Ultimately, this is a meaty, beautifully written book. Clear, detailed and likely enough to be regularly referenced that it shall escape the fate of becoming a monitor stand. I'll keep it close to hand in case I ever need to hit a burglar over the head. They would likely come away all the smarter for it too!



## Reviews



**Penny Rabiger takes over our 'blogs of the week' slot once every half-term to point to the best of the education podcasts**

@Penny\_Ten

### Haringey Vanguard BME LGBTQ+ history project

@hgeyVanguard

There has been a consistent lack of interest in uncovering certain histories. This applies to LGBTQ+ people's histories, which have been wilfully clouded in obscurity by illegality and taboo - and even more so for people of colour. Yet LGBTQ+ people of colour have made important contributions to Britain. From fighting for women's rights to fighting the World Wars, and from science and technology to the arts.

Where documentation exists, it is often sidelined in archive collections and not readily accessible. Haringey Vanguard aims to reverse that. All of the episodes are lovely, but the one I have chosen is particularly so. Here, Cat Lewis-Shand talks about her experiences as a dual heritage, lesbian woman growing up in an adoptive white family, her experience of schooling and how she gradually came to embrace her identity.

How many like her are in our classrooms today, and how different is their experience?



### London's revolutionary kiss-in

@bbcworldservice

This podcast is part of the BBC World Service *Outlook* series and documents Ted Brown's moving account of his time as a Black LGBT rights pioneer who helped organise the UK's first Gay Pride march in 1972. The march featured a mass 'kiss-in' that, at the time, would have been considered gross indecency, and illegal.

So, too, had been Brown's homosexuality, and the only person he came out to was his mother. She cried and told him he'd have to battle not just racism but homophobia too, both of which were rife. It's a poignant slice of historical testimony that shows how Brown found hope in Britain's Gay Liberation Front and became a key figure in fighting bigotry in the UK.

### Heinemann podcast

@HeinemannPub

This podcast series describes itself as "for teachers, by teachers" and is linked to the US publishing house, Heinemann. Recorded on America's National Coming Out Day in October, this episode hears from two teachers discussing how educators can make their classrooms a safer place for LGBTQ+ students and why it is important for LGBTQ+ teachers and students to see schools as safe places.

The pair draw on their own experiences of interacting with students, colleagues and the wider school community and explore how, at times, leaning into the discomfort is a necessary part of making it easier on everyone.

### Such Stuff podcast

@The\_Globe

This podcast series from Shakespeare's Globe Theatre covers a range of educational topics connected to programming, gender, race, social justice and their relationship to Shakespeare, and more. In this episode, drama teacher Lucy catches up with eight former students to find out more about their experiences of being LGBTQ+ in school, how important drama was in giving them a safe space to explore, and why role models like her matter.

They also discuss why inclusive curriculums and proper LGBTQ+ education and celebration are so important in those formative years. Lucy later chats to Dr Elly Barnes about the work her charity Educate & Celebrate is doing in schools. Lucy and Elly have both been working in educational spaces as educators, teachers, activists and champions of LGBTQ+ rights for years, and together they reflect on how far we've come and how far there is still to go.

### Un-erasing LGBTQ History and Identities podcast

@HistUnErased

In this podcast series, teachers and school leaders share their experiences of creating LGBTQ-inclusive learning spaces and offer real-world insights and practical strategies for use in classrooms. The 11-minute episode I have chosen brings in American education policy expert Dr Steven LaBounty-McNair, who shares his expertise on the everyday opportunities teachers have to create and sustain more inclusive environments for all.

Making our schools truly LGBTQ-inclusive takes time, and it requires systemic change. But creating LGBTQ-inclusive learning environments doesn't always require major policy shifts, especially not before there have been shifts in awareness, consciousness and behaviour by staff and students themselves.

With understanding comes change. So here's hoping these podcasts and February's LGBTQ+ History Month bring yet more change for the better.



# Research



Leeds Beckett University Carnegie School of Education will review a research development each half term. Contact @EducationLBU if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

## How can schools begin to face up to systemic racism?

**Dr Shona Hunter, founder, White Spaces Project**

Racism is firmly back on school agendas in 2022. The profoundly unequal impact of the pandemic demonstrates without a shadow of a doubt the systematised nature of racial inequality and its intersection with other systemic disparities such as disability, gender, class and age. An early analysis in 2020 demonstrated that this was the case for morbidity and mortality, and we now also know that these systemic inequalities extend to access to schooling, food and healthcare.

But these issues are only heightened by the pandemic: they are not new. What is new is that we can no longer ignore that these disparities are racialised. That is, these inequalities are produced through the social organisation of race and ethnicity in modern Britain, rather than the result of a deficit already present in some communities.

Many of us have been more available than usual to hear calls from staff, students and parents to diversify the school workforce, leadership teams, governing bodies and to challenge a Eurocentric curriculum. But there is ongoing controversy, and the governmental framing and policy response is not straightforwardly in line with the incontrovertible evidence of disparity. The recent publication of the Sewell Report demonstrates this. In part because of these contradictions, considerable fear and misunderstanding circulate around issues of racialised inequality within organisations, including schools.

Since 2009, the White Spaces project at Leeds Beckett University has been exploring how to make systemic diversification of the curriculum and the education space stick.

The project's key lesson has been to shift the conversation about racialised inequality away from deficits, problems and gaps that need to be filled (consider the oft-cited



'disadvantage gap', or the Covid experience of the digital divide). Instead, we should re-focus our attention on how cultural power is consolidated through our institutions – including schools.

Part of the uniqueness of the White Spaces project is that it traces how this distribution of power and inequality is coded as white and how this coding relates to other forms of social inequality, like those of income disparity, ability, gender and sexuality. In doing so, it uncovers the particular and contextual social, institutional and emotional processes that create whiteness as a cultural force in British society (and globally).

In schools, social processes might include assemblies, classroom organisation, behaviour management and any number of other professional practices. Institutional processes include the policies that uphold these social processes. And emotional processes are present in a range of interactions, in the staffroom and the playground as well as in the classroom.

Unpacking these different layers facilitates an understanding of the historical and social processes by which our educational institutions have come to accept whiteness and take it for granted over

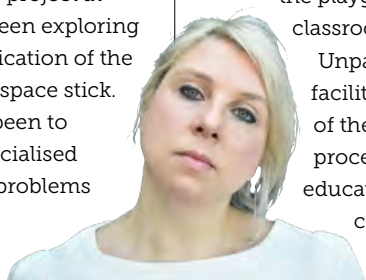
time. One just published open access article, part of a special edition of the Ethics and Social Welfare journal on the topic of 'Ethical Relations to the Past' focuses on articulating how long-ago histories frame whiteness and continue to shape our practices and behaviours today.

Articulating the relationship between our past and our educational present is challenging work. This is because many of these social processes are hidden. They feel natural, and exposing them produces fear and stress for organisations and for the individuals of whom the organisations are made up.

Of course, teachers and schools are already under considerable stress and strain. But the majority of Black pupils say they've experienced racism at school, and a quarter of all pupils say this has worsened since lockdown. Black teachers also consistently report experiencing racism. Schools don't just have an opportunity but a duty to change this reality.

The good news is that the White Spaces project busts two key myths: that whiteness is only about white people; and that it is somehow automatic or natural, and cannot be unlearned.

That takes some of the fear out of facing up to it, because it means teachers and schools can learn new processes – as they surely must, for the benefit of all.



Week in

# Westminster

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

## FRIDAY:

Kudos to the *TES* for getting it out in the open that the Department for Education holds a *Strictly Come Dancing*-themed Christmas contest for charity. WiW recently heard this has been going on for "years" and was apparently introduced by Ed Balls back when he was Labour's education secretary.

Present incumbent Nadhim Zahawi's glitterball trophy for coming second back when he was children's minister proudly sits on his sideboard now he's top dog at Sanctuary Buildings.

One would hope there has been no contest in the past two years, but we'll await Sue Gray's report to find out ...



## MONDAY:

Zahawi was shouting about how his department would phone round schools who weren't following his (unenforceable) order to ditch masks in the classroom, but maybe he should have been speaking to those closer to home?

An internal DfE memo, seen by WiW, tells staff they should respect the wishes of colleagues who want to continue to wear face coverings. The department pledged to "support" mask wearers and even offered a "printable sign" for those who "need to continue practising social distancing".

It also turns out the Nadz has got his top civil servants wearing his fancy new T-levels badge (see pic). Both perm sec Susan Acland-Hood and John Edwards, the interim chief executive of the

**I need to continue practising social distancing.**

**Thank you for supporting me by keeping a safe distance.**



Education and Skills Funding Agency, had them proudly on display at the public accounts committee today.

(We "assume" they stand for T-levels. Or maybe, given that the DfE's naughty Covid Xmas bash is being investigated, it could be some Derren Brown-like mind control in case Sue Gray was watching and mean 'it was Totally Legal!')



\*Disclaimer, while Acland-Hood has admitted she was at the party, Edwards was not (as far as we know).

\*\*\*

In a blast from the past, former academies minister Lord Agnew was back making headlines today – resigning from his role as minister for counter fraud.

Agnew could barely contain his rage after the government wrote off £4.3 billion on fraudulent Covid loans (enough to pay 113,000 teachers' salaries!). Before storming out of the Lords he said the oversight was "nothing less than woeful" and beset by

"schoolboy errors".

For someone who spent years at the DfE standing by advice to give kids less food for lunch and pocket charity donations to save money, it must have been a hard pill to swallow.

## TUESDAY:

Nick Gibb has all but vanished on Twitter after his sacking as schools minister last year. But if there's one thing that can bring him back to (social media) life, it's those bloody progs.

In his first tweet since early November, Gibbo had six words for us all: "Resist the 'progressive' attack on phonics."

He then linked to an opinion piece he wrote for *The Telegraph* in response to that dodgy UCL study last week that claimed phonics were a load of crap.

## WEDNESDAY:

We all know "Simply M&S", but what about the new slogan in town: "Clearly Ofsted". A job ad for the watchdog's copy editing team says it needs an "advocate for clear writing, assisting with the 'Clearly Ofsted' clear writing campaign". All clear.

## THURSDAY:

Ding ding: It's round two of the Robert Halfon V Careers Enterprise Company fight. Announcing another inquiry into careers education, Halfon said this one will be a "root and branch review" of the current system. Readers will remember the rollicking he gave CEC a few years back. And on the agenda again is to explore "whether organisations like the Careers Enterprise Company provide value for money to the taxpayer". Popcorn at the ready!





The 12th annual

# FESTIVAL OF EDUCATION

at Wellington College | 7-8 July 2022

## TICKETS ON SALE NOW

2 DAYS | 200+ SPEAKERS | 5,000 + ATTENDEES

The Festival will return to its home,  
**Wellington College**, next summer.

Join us for the biggest and most  
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Visit [educationfest.co.uk](https://educationfest.co.uk) for more info

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Save at least 20% on all tickets booked  
before the end of January 2022.

[EDUCATIONFEST.CO.UK](https://educationfest.co.uk) | [#EDUCATIONFEST](https://twitter.com/educationfest)



# **PiXL**

## **PRIMARY ASSOCIATE** HOME BASED

[www.pixl.org.uk](http://www.pixl.org.uk)

### **WHO ARE WE?**

PiXL is known for its aim of wanting to improve life chances and outcomes for young people and its focus on equipping school leaders to make that happen. Whether it is a focus on reading, oracy, writing, numeracy, character education or establishing strong cultures, PiXL is committed to providing practical support and strategies to make an impact.

Our company culture is based on integrity, kindness, humility and pursuit of excellence, and those four things are at the heart of what we do and how we behave. The central leadership approaches that we talk about to schools are the ones we also use ourselves.

### **THE ROLE YOU WOULD PLAY**

As a PiXL Primary associate you will provide high-quality support to a designated group of partnership schools, working with school leaders and their teams to implement PiXL strategies and resources to support their identified Wildly Important Goal and school priorities.

In addition, you will support the Regional Leader and the work of the Regional Teams to further strengthen and personalise the offer to our partnership schools.

### **WHAT YOU WILL BRING**

Experience as a senior leader, demonstrating a high-level of skill in communication with the range of stakeholders you will work with.

An ability to work flexibly, creatively and with skills to lead and support associate meetings both face to face and online.

A willingness to 'buy in' to the PiXL principles and work with the wider PiXL Team to be actively involved in further advancement of One PiXL in schools.

A demonstration of interpersonal skills that focus on building positive and effective relationships with evidence of PiXL's Character and Competency Markers of Integrity, Kindness, Humility and the Pursuit of Excellence.

### **REWARD PACKAGE**



- Salary: £46,000 (full time equivalent)
- Annual leave: 32 days annual leave, plus bank holiday days
- Flexible working
- Pension scheme – employer contribution 13%, employee contribution 6.5%
- Life assurance
- Health and Wellbeing initiatives including internal support, employee assistance programme and health cash plan
- Virtual GP service
- Discounted gym membership

If you want to find out further information, or to apply for the role, please email [hr@pixl.org.uk](mailto:hr@pixl.org.uk).

The closing date to apply is **Monday 28th Feb 2022**.



**BETTER FUTURE BRIGHTER HOPE**

## Encourage your teachers to become an examiner for Pearson!

Becoming an examiner has many benefits, for both schools and colleges, and teachers.

- Develop a deeper level of subject understanding
- Flexibility to work remotely around other commitments
- Help your students to progress
- Network with educational professionals
- Sharing expertise
- Progression and CPD

**To find out more, visit our website**  
[quals.pearson.com/pearsonexaminersw](https://quals.pearson.com/pearsonexaminersw)

PEUK C0023 Image: ©wavebreakmedia / Shutterstock

## Director of Primary Education

**Grade: L28 – L32 (£81,942 - £90,379) | Full-Time 52 weeks per year**  
**Generous 40 days Annual Leave Entitlement**  
**Location: Trust Central Team Office with travel required to all ELP academies**  
**Reporting to: Chief Executive Officer**  
**Responsible for: Academy Principals and Academy Improvement Roles**



The Directors of Exceed Learning Partnership are looking to appoint an outstanding strategic leader to develop and articulate the vision, values and ethos of the Trust and to inspire and empower others to share in achieving these. This is a great opportunity for an exceptional individual to join a highly successful and rapidly- expanding Team, taking accountability and responsibility for academy performance and with a commitment to creating optimum educational opportunities for all pupils across the organisation.

### The ideal candidate will have:

- A record of outstanding and inspirational strategic leadership
- A strong background in Teaching and Learning
- The drive and commitment to improving the life chances of all pupils across the Trust

### The Director of Primary Education will work closely with:

- CEO
- Deputy CEO
- Academy Principals and teaching staff
- Central Trust leadership team
- Directors and Local Governing Bodies
- Local Authority, Department for Education and other educational partners

### The Trust will offer:

- A dynamic, driven and supportive team of colleagues across the Trust
- A comprehensive programme of professional learning opportunities
- A commitment to providing the very best possible opportunities for the pupils within our care

For further information including the Recruitment Pack and Application Form please visit the Trust Website

<https://www.exceedlearningpartnership.co.uk/vacancies/> or contact the trust office via [admin@exceedlearningpartnership.com](mailto:admin@exceedlearningpartnership.com) or 01709 805175

Informal meetings can be organised with the CEO prior to applying by contacting **Janine Tuke (PA to CEO)** on [pa@exceedlearningpartnership.com](mailto:pa@exceedlearningpartnership.com) or by telephone on: 01709 805175

**Closing Date for Applications:**  
**Monday 21st February 2022 at 12.00 noon**

## Academy Lead (Head of Academy)

### Youth Challenge Secondary Academy

Permanent full-time position

Salary Leadership Scale 11-15 £54,091.00 - £59,581.00



Thank you for your interest in the post of Academy Lead at Youth Challenge Secondary Academy, part of the Bolton Impact Trust.

We are a 70 place secondary Alternative Provision Academy situated in Smithills, Bolton. We work with Key Stage 3 and 4 students who are either at risk of permanent exclusion or have already been permanently excluded from school.

Youth Challenge has been judged Outstanding by Ofsted in three successive inspections between 2008 and 2019. We are extremely proud of the work that we do with our students and celebrate all of their achievements with them.

We are now looking to appoint a dynamic, innovative and compassionate leader to take over from our retiring Academy Lead. We believe that the post offers a fantastic opportunity for the right leader.

We hope you will accept our invitation to visit us, to experience the sense of purpose and commitment felt by all of our visitors. There is an exciting buzz in Youth Challenge; our children feel safe and thrive and our exceptional staff team work tirelessly on behalf of our students.

You can find out more by visiting our website at

[www.boltonimpacttrust.org.uk](http://www.boltonimpacttrust.org.uk)

To visit Youth Challenge, please contact Ruth Jackson on 01204 333872 in the first instance.

More details can be found in the attached job description and person specification.

Applications should be submitted via the attached form no later than **Friday 11th February 2022** to our Executive Principal Paul Hodgkinson at [hodgkinsonp@boltonimpacttrust.org.uk](mailto:hodgkinsonp@boltonimpacttrust.org.uk)

Shortlisting will commence in the week commencing **14th February 2022**

Recruitment and Selection Activities will commence in the week commencing **21st February 2022**

Bolton Impact Trust is committed to safer recruitment and pre-employment checks will be undertaken before any appointment is confirmed. The post is subject to enhanced Disclosure Barring Service clearance. The Bolton Impact Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Academies Trust

## Chief Education Officer

Contract type – **Permanent | full time**

Salary range – **£121,574 to £131,006**

Location – **West Yorkshire (Hub Office located at BD10 9BG)**

Closing date – **February 10, 2022**



We're seeking an experienced senior education leader with the ability to further improve our existing 14 academies in West Yorkshire by drawing on the principles and values of cooperation. You'll lead, manage and work alongside Executive Headteachers, Headteachers, Academy Governing Councils and the Trust's range of educational partners to drive forward educational progress.



Any candidate must have an outstanding proven track record of school leadership and school improvement, and be able to demonstrate expertise in the primary phase in particular. This is vital for developing a high challenge and high support culture within the Hub in line with the overarching aims of the Trust. With a deep understanding of

effective school/academy improvement processes in both primary and secondary phases being essential, you'll have a positive approach to work and significant educational issues with a genuine desire to make a difference in some highly diverse and challenging communities.

You'll lead the Hub support team in West Yorkshire and be the ambassador for the Trust and cooperative values and principles in the region. You'll report to the Trust's CEO, and be expected to provide timely and well-considered advice and guidance to members of the Trust Board.

### Contact

For an informal discussion about this post, please contact Chris Tomlinson, Trust CEO, on **07870 727825** or [chris.tomlinson@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:chris.tomlinson@coopacademies.co.uk)

If you are interested in applying, download and return your completed form to [centralrecruitment@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:centralrecruitment@coopacademies.co.uk) by **Thursday 10 February | 4pm**





# Trust School Improvement Lead

L11-15 (£54,091 - £59,581)

As our current postholder is leaving to become an Ofsted Inspector, we are now seeking to appoint an excellent Trust School Improvement Lead, who can continue the improvement of teaching and learning across the Trust. This post is to commence at the start of the summer term 2022.

The successful candidate will work in partnership with the Headteachers across the Trust to lead on an exciting journey to help all Schools within the Trust provide an inspirational education for all, helping every child to achieve the very best that they can.

Ad Astra Academy Trust in early 2022, will have grown significantly to 8 primary schools across the Tees Valley and the successful candidate will work in all of our schools. This is a unique opportunity for an ambitious school leader to undertake this key strategic role.

This post would ideally suit a teacher or leader that has led on teaching and learning; co-ordinated assessment or curriculum development within their own school, an Academy Trust, Local Authority or have been a Specialist Leader in Education for example.

The post provides the successful candidate with an opportunity to add significant experience of working for a developing, innovative and forward-thinking academy trust to their portfolio. If the successful candidate aspires to be a headteacher we would fund any leadership development such as NPQH or Future Leaders.

Please see our promotional Trust video "Thrive with us" via [https://youtu.be/Apps8\\_Q1W5I](https://youtu.be/Apps8_Q1W5I)

For a confidential, informal conversation about this exciting role, please contact Andy Brown OBE, Chief Executive Officer via: [Andy.Brown@adastraacademytrust.com](mailto:Andy.Brown@adastraacademytrust.com)

Candidates must only apply using the application form provided; CV's will not be accepted.

*Ad Astra Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As such the successful candidate will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.*

**Closing date for receipt of applications – 9am, Monday 7th February 2022.**

**The interview process is to be undertaken on the 14th and 15th February 2022.**

#### **Requesting an application form**

Application forms and further details are available via the Ad Astra website site:

**<http://www.adastraacademytrust.com/careers/>**

Completed application forms to be emailed to **[recruitment@adastraacademytrust.com](mailto:recruitment@adastraacademytrust.com)**

# Kernow Learning

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Salary: £150k maximum total package  
(includes employer pension contributions and non-consolidated performance-related bonus)  
Start Date: September 2022

Due to the retirement of our current CEO, the Board of Trustees is seeking an inspirational strategic leader to take up the role of CEO, who will continue to grow the Trust's regional reputation as an outstanding primary trust. Our new CEO will have a passion for, and demonstrable success in, school improvement, and will build on the current position of strong senior leadership and thriving schools. They will not only be a team leader, but also a team player, engaging all stakeholders to build excellent schools together.

Our ideal candidate will be a qualified teacher with school leadership experience, and Trust-wide leadership experience at senior level. They will have a broad understanding of school finance and academy trust operation. They will join our Trust at an exciting juncture as we move to open our new free school, Sky Primary, in partnership with the Eden Project.

### We offer:

- A competitive salary
- Generous Employee Pension scheme
- Contribution to relocation costs (by negotiation with successful candidate as appropriate)
- A committed Board of Trustees
- A culture which seeks to be fair, developmental, and supportive of staff and pupils
- A focus on staff wellbeing, with access to our wellbeing services
- Generous holiday entitlement (35 days rising to 40 days) plus bank holidays
- Cycle to work scheme

There will be an opportunity to tour some of our schools at a date to be arranged (COVID-19 guidance dependent).

### Application Process

Please refer to the **Information for Candidates** brochure for further information. If you require any further information or would like a printed copy of the brochure, please contact our Trust HR Manager, Jane King, on 01637 303106 or e-mail [HR@kernowlearning.co.uk](mailto:HR@kernowlearning.co.uk). Our CEO, Jennie Walker, is happy to have an informal conversation with potential candidates prior to applying. If you would like to arrange a conversation, please contact Jennie's PA (Bernie Blacklaw) on 01637 303106 to arrange.

**Closing Date:** Wednesday, 9th February, 2022

**Shortlisting:** Applications will be reviewed w/c 14th February, 2022.

**Interviews:** The interview process is planned to take place over two days on 28th February and 1st March 2022.

Application form can be downloaded from our website [www.kernowlearning.co.uk](http://www.kernowlearning.co.uk)

**Please send completed applications to the HR Manager, at the address below**

*Kernow Learning is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and follows the Safer Recruitment process; the successful applicant will be expected to share this commitment and will be subject to checks including an enhanced DBS and prohibition checks. We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all.*

The HR Manager  
Kernow Learning  
The Old Cricket Pavilion  
Treninnick Hill  
NEWQUAY TR7 2JU

# Director of School Improvement - Secondary

**L25 - L29 | £76,903 - £84,81 | Full Time, Permanent**



**Bishop  
Hogarth**

Catholic Education Trust

We are seeking to appoint an outstanding senior leader as our Director of School Improvement Secondary Education. Reporting to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, you will lead on the school improvement strategy, develop leadership capacity and provide clear support to the Headteachers of our five secondary schools and also organisational leadership as part of BHCET School Improvement team. Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust currently comprises 30 academies, rising to 35 in May 2022 across Darlington, Stockton, Billingham, Hartlepool and the Durham area.

BHCET is a highly successful and vibrant organisation that provides exceptional education across our family of 30 schools across the Teesvalley and South Durham. Established in 2013, teaching and learning is at the core of all our work, underpinned by an extensive programme of professional learning for our staff.

BHCET has a recognised reputation for supporting schools both regionally and nationally through its DfE accredited school support programmes such as SCITT, Behaviour Hub, Research School, Teaching School Hub, Maths Hub, Science Learning Partnership and Computing Hub.

This is an exciting time to join BHCET and lead on school improvement and quality assurance strategies across our five secondary academies, 3 of which have Post-16 provision. Recognised for our collaborative and aspirational culture and success in improving the outcomes for the children of our region, BHCET is an ambitious Trust that welcomes those who want to inspire, develop and enhance the life-chances of children.

The post holder will be based at one of the schools within the Trust to be agreed to suit the requirements of the Trust and the successful candidate. For more information or to discuss the role please contact the DCEO, Mike Shorten on 01325 254525. **Applications forms should be returned by 2 February 2022, 9 am** to Mrs H Wooding PA to the CEO/DCEO, Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust, Carmel College, The Headlands, Darlington, Co Durham, DL3 8RW.

**Application forms are available from <https://bhcet.org.uk/vacancies/> and should be returned to [recruitment@bhcet.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@bhcet.org.uk)**

**Closing Date: Wednesday 2 February 2022, 9 am**



**Elaine  
Primary School**



**Inspire  
Partnership**

## Headteacher - Elaine Primary School (Rochester, Kent)

**September 2022 Start or sooner  
Competitive salary**

The Inspire Partnership is a successful and thriving education Trust proud to serve diverse communities in Medway, Croydon and Greenwich. We have recently reviewed our leadership structure to provide the Partnership with greater education capacity resulting in the requirement to recruit a Headteacher for Elaine Primary School.

Our core values of Collaboration, Excellence, Friendship, Resilience, Respect and Responsibility, define the way we care for, enrich and teach every child. What sets us apart is the opportunity to work at the cutting edge of educational thinking and practice, supported by excellent training and development, and opportunities to take part in ground breaking research projects and collaborative work, both at local and national level.

Elaine is a two-form entry school with a specialist resource-based provision providing education for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. We are seeking an innovative and enthusiastic Headteacher who will build on the school's existing strengths, to lead and motivate a team who are passionate about all pupils in our care.

Recognising that great teaching is the most important lever schools have to improve life chances for our children, we are focused on providing the best teaching that we can. Our teaching staff at Elaine are an experienced group with a culture of sharing learning: bringing curriculum and pedagogy together to deliver improved outcomes for our children. We are looking for a Headteacher who has a passion for teaching and learning and will be relentless in their pursuit of excellence for our school community.

For information visit <https://www.inspirepartnership.co.uk> or contact [mcarpenter@inspirepartnership.co.uk](mailto:mcarpenter@inspirepartnership.co.uk).  
For school visits email [awong@inspirepartnership.co.uk](mailto:awong@inspirepartnership.co.uk).

**Closing date: Monday 31st January 2022 at 9.00am**

**Interview date: Tuesday 8th February 2022**

*We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to a DBS check. As an equal opportunities employer, we welcome applications from all backgrounds, including disabled candidates.*





## DEPUTY HEAD (PASTORAL & BOARDING) COMPETITIVE SALARY

Ryde School is looking to appoint someone with clarity of vision, a creative mind, excellent management skills, good humour and strong on empathy to the new role of Deputy Head (Pastoral & Boarding). The post is likely to suit someone looking towards Headship in a few years' time. She or he will be an experienced teacher and be expected to teach around 1/3 of a timetable. No particular subject background is required but some experience of boarding and/or pastoral roles is likely to be an advantage.

Applications, which should include a short letter of application, should be addressed to Mr M A Waldron, Head Master, by post or emailed to [shrw@rydeschool.net](mailto:shrw@rydeschool.net)

If you have any further questions or require further information about this post please contact Mrs Samantha Webb on 01983 618346 or [shrw@rydeschool.net](mailto:shrw@rydeschool.net)

**Closing date: 9am Tuesday 1 February 2022**

For the role and person specification and further details of how to apply, please visit the Employment Page of the School's website at: <https://www.rydeschool.org.uk>



## Westerton Primary Academy



### Principal Permanent Salary: Group 5 (L23-29)

Closing date:  
**7 February 2022**

Interviews:  
**10 & 11 February 2022**  
Required for **1 September 2022**

Westerton is an educational centre of excellence where we pride ourselves on our ability to develop all aspects of our learners. We are a large three form entry school at the heart of a supportive and welcoming Trust, looking for an inspirational and innovative leader to build on the

existing successes which our current Principal will leave as her legacy.

We can offer an opportunity to use your skills and knowledge to make a real difference to the children within our community. Our school is inclusive, valuing each and every person, embracing diversity and addressing individual needs through personalised approaches. We have confident and enthusiastic children who respect and encourage one another. In addition, we have skilled and knowledgeable staff, experienced Governors and Trustees.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



## Headteacher (Secondary)

Leadership Range - L27 - 33  
To commence April 2022 or September 2022

The governors, staff and students are looking to appoint an inspirational and passionate leader to join our successful and rapidly improving Church of England School. Working closely with the Leadership Team, staff and governors, the successful candidate will have a key role in shaping the future of the Secondary school building on its success. The post offers a tremendous opportunity for a visionary and collaborative leader to drive the school forward through the next exciting stage of its development within the Cornerstone Federation.

We are looking to appoint a Headteacher who:

- Is dynamic, motivational and has a proven track record of raising standards and creating a learning environment in which staff and students can thrive.
- Is strategic in their thinking.
- Is an excellent communicator who can develop strong relationships with students, staff, parents and the wider community.

- Can articulate a clear Christian vision, founded on Christian values focused on providing a world-class education for the students they serve.

We can offer a welcoming school, committed to providing the very best education and care for the children. The Bay CE is an all through (4-16) school that aims to transform the lives of all our children who attend the school.

Visits are warmly encouraged. For more information please contact Duncan Mills, Executive Headteacher on **01983 403284**.

**Closing date:**  
Monday 7th February  
at 12 noon

**Interviews:**  
Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th  
February

For more information please visit our website [bayceschool.org](http://bayceschool.org) or contact [recruitment@bayceschool.org](mailto:recruitment@bayceschool.org)

The Cornerstone Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to obtain an Enhanced DBS clearance.



## Head of School

Leadership Scale 7-11  
Required for April 2022

The Governors and Executive Headteacher of Niton Primary School are looking to appoint a highly effective and dedicated teacher to lead Niton as our Head of School from April 2022.

The post offers a tremendous opportunity for a visionary and collaborative leader to drive the school forward through the next exciting stage of its development within the Cornerstone Federation.

We are looking for a Head of School who will be:

- Passionate about learning
- Strategic in their thinking
- Resilient and flexible
- FUN!

We can offer a welcoming school, committed to providing the very best education and care for the children at our community school.

Travel and relocation package available.

For further information on the post please contact Duncan Mills, Executive Headteacher on **01983 730209**

For an application pack please email [recruitment@niton.iow.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@niton.iow.sch.uk) or download via our website [www.nitonprimary.org](http://www.nitonprimary.org)

Visits are welcomed and encouraged

**Closing date: Friday 4th February 2022 at 12 noon**  
**Interview dates: Thursday 17th and Friday 18th February 2022**

The Cornerstone Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to obtain an Enhanced DBS clearance.



**Best  
Practice  
Network**

## Online Leadership Performance Coaches and Mentors

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

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

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

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

### Roles

**Online Leadership Mentor – NPQ Specialist Route**

**Online Leadership Performance Coach – NPQ Leadership Route**

**Location:** Remote

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

**Salary/fee:** Competitive

For more information and to view the full job descriptions, please visit: [www.bestpracticenetwork.co.uk/programme-associate-vacancies](http://www.bestpracticenetwork.co.uk/programme-associate-vacancies)

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

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



## Principal The John Roan School, Greenwich

**Closing date:** 6th February 2022

**Interview dates:** 2nd and 3rd March 2022

**Start date:** September 2022

**Salary:** Competitive salary and benefits package

The John Roan School has a long and distinguished history of educating the young people of Greenwich since its founding in 1677. Today the school remains at the heart of the community, and is part of United Learning, a successful national group of academies and independent schools.

The John Roan School is brimming with potential, and we are looking for a principal with a clear vision, the focus to drive improvement at pace and shares the Trust's determination to do their best for young people.

The position is a great match for someone with the highest expectations, determination, resilience, audacity and compassion in equal measure. We are seeking substantial and sustainable improvements under the leadership of a principal committed to the long-term success of The John Roan School's pupils and community.

The school is also part of a cluster with two other Southeast London United Learning schools, Bacon's College, in Southwark and Sedgill Academy, in Lewisham.

Find out more and apply <https://unitedlearning.org-careers.co.uk/>

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