

SCHOOLS WEEK

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

The head who quit school for sketches



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Profile Pages 21-23

White paper: Fear of large MATs remains barrier



P25

AP: The sector's detractors were wrong on crime



P26

Sewell race report: 8 actions for schools



P7

Put the champers on ice: Cost-cutters unable to find savings



EXCLUSIVE PAGE 4

RETURNER TEACHER SOS FALLS FLAT

- Just a third of ex-teachers who answered call actually in classroom
- 'Cost of DBS checks and paperwork put returners off', agencies say
- New data shows absence is back on the rise as free tests come to end

SCHOOLS WEEK

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Womenpower: RSC adviser results revealed

Page 9



Long read: How the tutoring dream crumbled

Pages 10-11



BETT2022: Britain's road back to world-leading innovation

Pages 27-28



Imagine if ... teachers weren't the problem

Page 29

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NEWS

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Many cost-cutters couldn't find savings, DfE survey reveals

TOM BELGER
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EXCLUSIVE

More than half of schools say cost-cutting advisers did not find them new ways of saving money, according to the government's own research.

A survey found one school accused a regional schools commissioner (RSC) of stepping in to "influence" an adviser's report. Another said their adviser recommended cutting emotional literacy support and dinner staff. Unions said the revelations were "outrageous".

School resource management advisers (SRMAs) have been visiting schools since 2018 as part of a cost-cutting drive under then-academies minister Lord Agnew.

Last year the Education and Skills Funding Agency said a survey showed most schools rated visits as "good", and it ramped up SRMA numbers. It began promoting the scheme again this month.

'I'm sure champagne is winging its way to heads'

But a Schools Week freedom of information request has revealed the survey responses not included in government promotional material.

More than 100 schools, making up 52 per cent of respondents, said SRMAs did not identify any actionable savings or revenue-generating opportunities they had not found already.

One called their input "disappointing, misleading and a waste of time", while another dubbed it a "large time commitment for no workable outcomes".

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT, said the figures were "telling", with visits potentially useful but "not the solution to the funding crisis".

He noted recent analysis suggesting real-terms funding will only reach 2010 levels in 2024.

Agnew famously bet headteachers a bottle of champagne if advisers could not find savings. "I'm sure those bottles are winging their way to heads as I speak," said Dr Mary Bousted, general secretary of teachers' union NEU.



Mike Short



Lord Agnew

She said there was no doubting Agnew's commitment to cutting waste, but it had been a distraction from high-profile academy fraud scandals and inadequate budgets.

"It might be helpful to have someone say you're doing a good job, but it hardly addresses real issues," she added. Agnew did not respond to a request for comment.

Reassurance over savings already planned could explain why some schools valued the visits, new ideas or not.

Schools Week previously revealed advisers telling leaders to cut lunch portions.

RSC 'seemingly stepped in to influence report'

Survey responses include further controversial practices. One school claimed an RSC "seemingly stepped in to question and even influence the report". The process "didn't come across as being transparent or non-political".

Another accused an SRMA of "advertising his own independent services".

Stephen Morales, chief executive of the Institute of School Business Leadership, said RSC interference would be "highly unusual" and SRMAs could signpost services but not promote their own.

One SRMA reportedly recommended cutting a librarian, an emotional literacy support assistant and dinner staff numbers.

Unison's head of education Mike Short called the suggestion "outrageous" and said such staff were "critical".



Andrew Dowsett

But the survey includes no further details. Morales said recommendations should be seen "in the context of the particular deployment".

Trusts can either be invited or ordered to host SRMAs, or request free visits themselves.

London Enterprise Academy (LEA) received a visit after an agency contractor committed fraud in 2018-19. Andrew Dowsett, the chair of governors, claimed the SRMA recommended slashing teacher numbers, ending meal and trip subsidies and reviewing the curriculum.

He told Schools Week: "Small groups of students and a wide curriculum are a great advert for LEA, and we give free lunches to kids not getting meals at home. What else are we going to spend our surplus on?"

Accounts say fraud controls were reviewed by the ESFA and "appropriate action" was taken.

Majority of schools recommend a visit

Some SRMAs were dubbed "brilliant", "exceptional" and "highly experienced", however. Some 77 per cent of schools recommended visits.

One chief executive, new in post and reviewing his trust's finances, called their adviser an "extremely useful, critical friend". He said timing and openness were key. Defensiveness would have made SRMA input a "waste of time".

One trust employee, who worked as an SRMA themselves, praised another adviser's visit, adding: "We should do more peer-to-peer reviews."

Some praised advisers' relevant expertise — though others claimed SRMAs lacked suitable experience or benchmarking data for PFI, boarding or special school settings.

The DfE was approached for comment.

Want to claim your bottle of champagne?

Lord Agnew can be contacted at contactholmber@parliament.uk with the subject line 'FAO Lord Agnew'



COVID

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Just a third of returner teachers actually make it to classroom

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

Only one-third of former teachers who answered ministers' call to arms three months ago to plug Covid staff shortages have actually returned to the classroom.

A Schools Week investigation found dozens of ex-teachers who signed up to the scheme have pulled out amid concerns over bureaucracy, the cost of DBS checks and fears about infection rates in schools.

The Department for Education has also admitted that it overstated the number of people who had registered for the scheme in January, after some initial enquiries were reported as firm registrations.

Ministers boasted earlier this year that at least 585 former teachers had been recruited, 485 through supply agencies and 100 through Teach First.

But in a freedom of information response, the DfE said a company responsible for one-third of reported registrations had actually reported the number of enquiries received instead.

Hays Education initially told the DfE that 158 former teachers had signed up. But the company told Schools Week it actually had 76 registrations. Just 32 of those have returned to the classroom so far.

Paul Matthias, the company's national director, said it received "really positive feedback from both schools and the professionals themselves as they make a real impact in supporting pupils across the country.

"There are still a number of former and retired



teachers who we are working with to interview and place as we continue to support the scheme."

The recruitment drive forms a key plank of government efforts to tackle workforce absence, which stood at over five per cent as of March 3.

Pressed in late January about the issue, schools minister Robin Walker referred to the call to arms and the DfE's workforce fund, which provides money for supply cover to cash-strapped schools.

While absence has been falling since January, data from this week suggests that trend is reversing – signalling more disruption may again lie ahead.

Seven recruitment firms approached by Schools Week said that of 158 teachers who enquired about the programme, just 52 are now working in schools.

Premier Teachers received interest from more than 20 ex-teachers. But none ended up working in schools, with the prevalence of Covid among the main reasons.

"It was the biggest failure ever as an initiative our side," said boss Mike Donnelly. "People retire for a reason. Coaxing them back isn't the solution."

4myschools said eight of 20 people registered

with the agency had pulled out. Chief executive Simone Payne said some did not want to obtain a disclosure and barring service (DBS) check. Others could not retrieve the information needed for vetting and qualifications checks.

However, the 12 teachers who had worked were all "having an impact" in schools, and were "loving being back in the classroom," Payne added.

Marios Georgiou from Step Teachers said of seven who signed up in response to the DfE's campaign, four had been cleared for work and three had started.

He said the call to arms was "welcome, but this is definitely not the solution to the problem. We need to change people's perceptions of education as a career and not simply try and bring those towards the end of their career back."

Key Education had enquiries from between ten and 15 ex-teachers, but just two went through registration and were placed for work.

Director Samantha Dyson said the "paperwork and costs of the DBS puts most of them off as they seem to think it's more of a voluntary scheme". An enhanced DBS check can cost up to £52, and ministers ignored calls to waive the fee.

The DfE has refused to provide updated figures for the number of ex-teachers signed up to the scheme, nor how many in total have ended up in the classroom, describing the data published in January as a "one-off release".

"We are extremely grateful to all the teachers who responded to the call to arms," a spokesperson said. "Every single teacher that did so made a vital difference."

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Covid inquiry must focus on children, MPs urge

The impact of school closures due to Covid on children's mental health and their life chances must be included in the pandemic public inquiry, MPs have said.

Education select committee chair Robert Halfon called for the inquiry to have a "much greater focus" on children.

The terms of reference were put out for consultation last week. Under a long list of public-health decisions to be examined, it states: "Restrictions on attendance at places of education."

There is no further specific mention of education or schools in the two-page

document.

In a letter to inquiry chair Baroness Heather Hallet, Halfon said the "closure of schools and the restrictions placed on educational settings has been nothing short of a national disaster for children".

He wants the inquiry to assess whether closure was an "effective and proportionate response" to the pandemic.

Halfon also urged the inquiry to consider whether schools should be classified as "essential infrastructure", alongside power stations and hospitals, to "ensure that they remain open in any future pandemic".

Speaking to MPs this week, schools minister Robin Walker said it was "right that it [the inquiry] should look into the impact on children across the piece".

Primary pupils lost an average of 2.2 months of learning in maths and secondary students 1.2 months in reading, with poorer pupils the hardest hit.

Hallet, who led the inquest into the 7/7 terror bombings in London in 2005, hopes to begin public hearings in 2023. The prime minister had pledged the inquiry would begin in spring 2022.

The consultation closes on April 7.

COVID

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Pupil absence starts to rise again as free testing ends

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

Pupil absence rates are rising again after a sustained fall, new data shows, prompting warnings over the government's plan to end free Covid testing for the public.

Data from the FFT Education attendance tracker shows absence increased to 8.8 per cent in secondary schools, up from 7.9 per cent last week. Absence in primaries rose to 6.4 per cent, up from 5 per cent previously.

FFT Education said it marks the "first significant increase" since late January. The data is more up-to-date than government figures, which currently only cover up to March 3.

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of the NAHT, said it was "worrying... especially given the currently rising numbers of Covid cases and hospital admissions nationally". He added: "We're not out of the woods yet."

The South West is worst hit, with secondary absence at 9.5 per cent compared to 7.7 per cent in London. Primary absence in the region was also highest at 7.4 per cent, compared to 5.6 per



cent in the North East.

The latest absence rates, which include both Covid and non-Covid absence, also reflect rising Covid cases nationally. The number of new cases was over 170,000 UK-wide on March 14, the highest level seen since early January.

It comes as the government prepares to scrap free Covid tests for the general public and amid uncertainty about how long tests will remain free for schools.

The government ended its advice

that secondary school pupils and staff test twice weekly at home last month. But the recommendation remained in place for special schools, and mainstream schools were told they could still order stocks of free tests to help manage outbreaks.

The Guardian reported that free tests for special schools would end this month.

A Department for Education spokesperson refused to confirm the plans, only saying decisions on testing would be "outlined in due course".

Julie McCulloch (pictured), director of policy at the ASCL union, said her organisation was "extremely concerned" about the government's plans "and the impact this may have on transmission and attendance rates in education settings".

Life was "anything but normal" for many schools, she added.

"Many of our members are telling us that absence levels among staff and pupils remain worryingly high.

Many schools are still having to rely on expensive supply staff, where they can get them, to deliver lessons."



FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

EEF seeks schools to join new study on best ways to boost attendance

Schools with "promising" initiatives to boost attendance are being sought for a new grant-funded study, after a report concluded evidence on what works is currently "weak".

Analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation found contacting parents of persistently absent pupils by letter or text can help improve attendance, and work to tackle the root cause of absence also showed positive effects.

But the jury is still out on other approaches, prompting the EEF to team up with the Youth Endowment Fund for a new study of English schools' initiatives.

Tackling persistent absence is a priority for ministers, who fear the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issue. In 2018-19, 10.3 per cent of pupils were persistently absent. Data obtained by children's commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza suggests this rose to 22 per cent last autumn.

The EEF looked at findings from 72 studies

that aimed to improve attendance. It found "some evidence of promise" for strategies focusing on parental engagement.

For example, one study saw parents supplied with "personalised information" emphasising the "value of regular school attendance" and reporting the number of days their child had been absent. Under another, "nudge letters" were sent to parents of those persistently absent.

The analysis also found a positive impact from approaches that focused on addressing the root cause of persistent absence.

In one study, social workers identified barriers to attendance and intervened to overcome them. Intervention could include, for example, assigning a "walking buddy" for a pupil with high absence due to transport issues.

However, wider evidence on improving attendance is "weak". For example, there was "not enough evidence" to reach a conclusion

on the efficacy of mentoring or behaviour approaches.

Of the 72 studies analysed, all but three took place in the United States, "limiting the applicability of their findings to the English context".

The EEF and YEF will now "find, fund, and evaluate" programmes and practices "that could both keep children safe from involvement in violence and improve academic attainment, by ensuring they attend, positively engage with, and remain in school/college".

They are seeking applications from schools in England and Wales with "promising initiatives that could improve attendance and reduce exclusions". Priority areas include anti-bullying, social and emotional learning and targeted family engagement.

EEF chief executive Professor Becky Francis said teachers "deserve a much clearer picture of how best to support their pupils who are persistently absent".

SPEED READ

Sewell race report: 8 key findings

The government has published its response to last year's Sewell report on race and ethnic disparities. Here's what schools need to know.

1 MODEL HISTORY CURRICULUM BY 2024

Ministers announced plans for a model history curriculum last year to help schools teach about "migration, cultural change and the contributions made by different communities".

The government has now said the curriculum will be developed by 2024 with the help of "curriculum experts, historians and school leaders".

The DfE will also "actively seek out and signpost" resources to support teaching all-year round on black history.

The government has not addressed a controversial suggestion that children be taught that slavery was "not only being about profit and suffering but how culturally African people transformed themselves into a re-modelled African/Britain".

2 SCHOOLS TO REPORT GOVERNOR DIVERSITY

The government said diverse boards would "help ensure that decisions taken are in the interest of all pupils".

As a result, ministers will recommend schools collect and publish data on the diversity of their governing boards.

Once the new edition of the governance handbook is published, "we will reflect this guidance in future iterations of the 'understanding your data' guide".

3 CAREERS DUTY EXTENDED

Although "most" ethnic minority pupils outperform their white peers, they are "more likely" to drop out of university, have lower levels of attainment and earn less.

The government is supporting a draft law which will extend existing duties to provide careers guidance.

Currently it only applies from year 8 onwards. The bill will extend it to all secondary pupils, and to cover academies and alternative provision.

4 NEW AFRO HAIR DISCRIMINATION GUIDANCE

Ministers are "concerned that some black pupils are experiencing discrimination because of their hair", with leaders "increasingly looking for guidance".

Urswick school pupil Ruby Williams won an £8,500 out-of-court settlement over claims she faced discrimination after being repeatedly sent home because of her afro hair.

The government acknowledged the "very real, practical difficulty compliance with some uniform policies may pose to black children and their parents".

The DfE will work with the Equality Hub and leading schools to help create a "resource on pupil hairstyles and uniform policy".

This will "showcase best practice in uniform policy specific to the diversity of acceptable hairstyles in school to avoid

unfair treatment of ethnic minority children whose hair type may not be like the majority".

5 MAT STRATEGIES PROBED FOR BEST PRACTICE

The government will investigate strategies used by multi-academy trusts that are "most successful at bridging achievement gaps for different ethnic groups and raising overall life chances".

The lessons learned "will be published in 2022".

6 DfE TO LOOK INTO PUBLISHING MORE DATA

To "drive up" attainment for under-performing ethnic groups, the DfE will also carry out a "programme of analysis in early 2022".

This aims to "understand pupil attainment and investigate whether there are any specific findings and implications for different ethnic groups to tackle disparities".

The government will also investigate the publication of "additional data on the academic performance of ethnic groups", alongside "other critical factors relating to social mobility and progress at school level, in post-18 education and employment after education".

7 SEND REVIEW TO MAKE 'EARLY SUPPORT THE NORM'

Ministers accepted outcomes for pupils in alternative provision were "not good enough", and that "some ethnic minority groups" are over-represented.

The upcoming SEND review will include "proposals for transforming outcomes for young people in AP".

This transformation will make "early support the norm for all young people who need it in mainstream schools and ensure stable and high-quality education is available throughout a young person's time in AP". Reforms will also "incentivise early support in mainstream schools that will help reduce preventable exclusions".

8 NEW EXCLUSIONS GUIDANCE THIS YEAR

The government pointed to claims that black pupils are more likely to be excluded from school because of racial discrimination. But it said data showed black African pupils were less likely to be excluded than white and black Caribbean pupils.

This "does not mean racist attitudes or racist incidents do not exist anywhere in schools", but it "does suggest that other factors play a more significant role in determining different exclusion rates".

The report also warned of "misinformation" because of a "conflation between race and ethnicity".

Poor reporting "also confuses the complex reality that even ethnic groups who share the same race have different outcomes and face different challenges".

The government recommitted to publishing "new and improved" guidance on behaviour in schools and on suspensions and permanent exclusions this year.



Tony Sewell

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Women and CEOs dominate in RSC adviser elections

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

EXCLUSIVE

Two-thirds of academy leaders elected to government adviser jobs this week are female, despite men dominating candidate lists.

Schools Week analysis also shows multi-academy trust chief executives filling virtually all posts on what were previously called “headteacher boards”.

Meanwhile the only standalone trust head elected has vowed to champion “the little guy”.

The Department for Education announced 36 new advisers on Monday, who will support and challenge regional schools commissioners (RSC). Boards debate RSC interventions and decisions over struggling, new or growing schools and trusts.

Advisers were elected under “one academy, one vote” rules, with 164 candidates standing for four posts in eight RSC regions. Mid-election boundary reforms delayed results by 42 days and leave most candidates representing regions where they were not on the ballot paper of every schools.

RSC regions are in the process of being realigned, with London having its own RSC and advisory board.

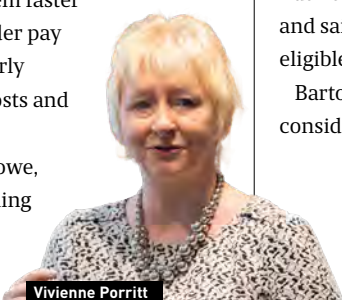
Female success is ‘fantastic news’

Only 43 per cent of candidates were female, despite two-thirds of heads and three-quarters of teachers being female. But 67 per cent of the winners were women, with 24 elected. It marks an increase on advisory boards’ current 59 per cent female make-up.

Vivienne Porritt, global strategic leader at WomenEd, said the number of men standing was something “we have come to expect”. But female candidates’ success was “fantastic news”, and she hoped it marked the start of a trend.

A report by WomenEd and union NAHT last year said that men were overrepresented in senior roles, reached them faster and benefited from gender pay gaps that were particularly pronounced in senior posts and academy schools.

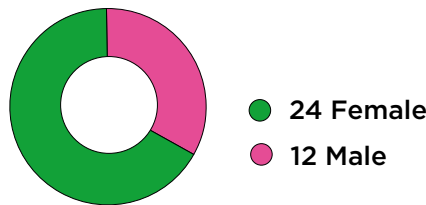
Newly elected Claire Lowe, CEO of the Inspire Learning Partnership, said work by grassroots



Vivienne Porritt



ELECTED RSC ADVISERS



organisations like WomenEd had helped women “believe their voice is valid and can be heard”. She also vowed to show trusts are “anchor organisations” in communities.

But Marino Charalambous, CEO of North Star Community Trust, said he was disappointed by an apparent lack of ethnic diversity on boards. He had stood himself, highlighting his migrant heritage, but was not elected.

Charalambous also questioned why the DfE had not revealed candidates’ vote tallies.

CEOs win big, as heads lose out

This was the first election that CEOs without recent headship experience could contest.

Schools Week analysis shows all but one of the 36 elected are multi-academy trust CEOs and only four also serve as executive heads or principals.

Fifteen multi-academy trust heads and non-CEO executive heads ran for office, but none were elected.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of school leaders’ union ASCL, had previously warned that reforms risk boards becoming “increasingly distant” from frontline challenges. But he acknowledged many CEOs’ experience, and said the results “represent the will of those eligible to vote”.

Barton suggested that RSCs consider ensuring “varied



Claire Lowe

representation” through their ability to appoint further advisers.

Yet larger trusts took fewer posts than might be expected, despite having more academies eligible to vote for their own leaders. Only 10 advisers have 15 or more schools, whereas 23 have less than 10.

But the average winner still had 11 schools, when trusts nationally average under four.

Size varies by region. London’s advisers average four schools each, while their peers in the North East average 18. The North East includes two Catholic leaders managing over 30 schools each, though another adviser in the region has just two.

Trends appear linked partly to academisation rates, with advisers in the three least academised regions running fewest schools.

Former RSC to help trusts ‘take risks’

Paul Heery, chief executive of the White Hills Park Trust, said he was very pleased at his election, adding: “There are an awful lot of single academies and small trusts out there who deserve a voice.”

Mark Thomas, the only single-academy trust head elected, had also promised in his candidate statement to “bring the voice of the little guy”.

Every region will see fresh faces. Only seven current advisers stood again, and only four were re-elected.

High-profile winners include Tim Coulson, a former RSC and Unity Schools Partnership chief executive. He said he looked forward to supporting the “expansion of the best trusts” in the east of England.

His election suggests a mandate for his pre-election call for advisers to set their own “ambition” for trust growth and help leaders to take risks “without one eye constantly over their shoulder”.

Candidates will start work in September.



Paul Heery

LONG READ

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How the flagship NTP is slowly sinking

SAMANTHA BOOTH
@SAMANTHAJBOTH

The flagship scheme to take tutoring from a preserve of the elite and throw it open to the mainstream was supposed to be a game-changer. Less than 16 months later, that original ambition is slowly crumbling. *Schools Week* investigates what went wrong ...

“We were trying to create the gold standard of the tuition sector,” said Ben Gadsby, policy lead at the charity Impetus.

It was one of five charities tasked with founding the £350 million flagship National Tutoring Programme (NTP) in 2020, the government’s big policy to ensure locked-down pupils caught-up.

It was “incredibly clear” that ministers “wanted to spend more money in a high-impact way,” Gadsby added.

Evidence compiled by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), the charity that led the NTP in its inaugural year, shows small-group tuition can boost progress by four months over a year. The big gains were also attached to a “modest” cost.

Reflecting on the set-up, the five founding charities told *Schools Week* there are “very few teaching and learning approaches that are as proven or as scalable as tutoring. This meant we were able to design the programme based on a robust body of evidence, including having strict quality criteria for tutor training, clear processes for monitoring pupil progress and effective communication tools for tutors to liaise with schools,” the charities said.

The key pillar of the NTP would be a tightly controlled approval process – creating a pool of trusted and high-quality “tuition partners”



Nadhim Zahawi



schools could use.

Then education secretary Gavin Williamson said it would mean “every young person... gets the education, opportunities and outcomes they deserve” with measures that are “proven to be effective, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged”.

But less than a year and a half later, that original ambition is in tatters, with schools allowed free rein to organise their own provision, and ministers considering axing the scheme’s current providers – international HR firm Randstad.

So, what went wrong?

Small tutor group cap scrapped

Launched in November 2020, the scheme suffered from the two-month closure of schools in January last year – creating a tutoring backlog with pupils stuck at home.

The *Guardian* also revealed that a tuition provider approved by the NTP was using tutors in Sri Lanka who earned as little as £1.57 an hour.

Coverage was patchy, too. While the NTP reached its target number of pupils in the south-west of England, only 59.3 per cent of pupils in the north-west got their catch-up.

The EEF-run NTP just about hit its overall target

THE WATERING DOWN OF THE NTP

November, 2021: Academic mentors were now targeted at the poorest schools, those with 30 per cent disadvantaged children could get support.

December, 2021: A “clarification note” allowed pupils more than one block of tutoring, rather than encouraging schools to buy extra outside of the subsidised scheme.

March 2021: NTP tutor partners told they no longer have to ensure their catch-up reaches 65 per cent of pupil premium students.

March 2021: The mentor criteria was dropped again to 20 per cent.

March 2021: Academic mentors no longer have to be graduates, instead only needing A-levels to be eligible.

March 2021: DfE allows bigger tutor groups, from a cap of one tutor for every three pupils to 1:6.

March 2021: £65 million of funding shifted from the original two pillars to the school route.

LONG READ

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of enrolling 250,000 pupils at the end of last year. But 44,000 of those (18 per cent) had not actually started their tutoring.

Then Randstad entered the fray. Much to the surprise of many – including ministers – the HR and recruitment agency won the contract to run the NTP this year and the following two.

The firm undercut a bid led by the EEF, despite being rated lower on quality. Randstad's contract was worth £24 million – just 40 per cent of the £62 million that was being offered by government.

The firm had a big job on its hand. This year's target was ramped up – with ministers promising two million tutoring courses.

The government also shoe-horned in at the last minute a new tutoring route – for schools to get cash directly and sort out their own provision.

Many tutoring partners also lost valuable time after being stuck in a contract stand-off with Randstad in September, while many heads said a new online portal to access tutoring was a "bureaucratic nightmare".

By the end of last term, the NTP had met just 15 per cent of the promised tutoring target. Figures from last month show that just over one-third of the promised two million courses have started.

NTP tutor 'deeply concerned'

Amid a backdrop of sluggish progress, ministers have made at least six changes to original tutoring standards since November (see box out).

This includes a cap of one tutor for every three pupils has been upped to groups of 1:6.

Government says the changes allow schools more flexibility. Critics say they are all about ramping up numbers.

The five charities this week said it was "crucial" the NTP "retains its focus on providing access to high-quality tuition for the most disadvantaged pupils".

EEF research shows that once group sizes increased to above six or seven, there is a "noticeable reduction in effectiveness".

But they add the quality of teaching in small groups may be "as or more important than" the precise group size.

Action Tutoring, one of the NTP's own leading tuition partners, went public this week to say it is "deeply concerned" about the changes that are "only serving to water down" the scheme.

But Randstad said with children "now fully integrated" back into schools "it is right that we re-evaluate the service of the programme".

This will "put more power back into the hands of schools and those who know their pupils best where there is capacity," Randstad added.

The majority of started courses – 532,000 – were organised by schools.

Data is patchy

Ministers can't say how many pupils have had tutoring. Schools minister Robin Walker told MPs this week he could not provide a "precise figure" for how many pupils have actually benefited from tutoring.

MPs have also seen demands for statistics on how many poorer pupils have been tutored go unanswered by Randstad and the DfE.

Walker said he aims to publish pupil-level figures "before the end of this month".

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi has also asked for half-termly release of statistics, with more detailed figures in August.

But as most of the tutoring under the NTP is now organised by schools, the founding charities worry the key focus on quality could be lost.

They said schools "need to be confident that the tutoring they're accessing will be high-quality, act as a complement to classroom teaching, and provide support for the pupils that need it the most".

Professor Lee Elliot Major, from the University of Essex, who pitched a "National Tutoring Service" in April 2020, said he supported cash going to schools.

But it would require the current "mixed

approach" being ditched, and "tighter accountability" of how and with whom schools spend their tutor cash.

Ministers explore axing Randstad

It leaves Randstad way off hitting its own targets under the two other tutoring routes.

Just 114,000 courses had started by pupils through the tuition partners pillar – 21 per cent of the firm's 524,000 target for this year.

Meanwhile, only 74,000 courses were started by pupils through the academic mentors route. This equates to 29 per cent of the 252,000 target this year.

The DfE revealed it is now "exploring all options to make sure" feedback is "reflected in the programme next year".

Academies minister Baroness Barran also recently said the contract is a "one year, plus one year, plus one year basis, with break clauses for both sides".

Any change of ownership or focus could also be played up in the new white paper, sources suggested.

Nick Brook, NAHT deputy general secretary, said schools "need clarity" in April so they can set budgets.

Randstad said it is "committed to delivering support to the country's most disadvantaged children and are recruiting and placing tutors every day to ensure that those who need support are able to access it".

Robert Halfon, chair of the education committee and a vocal critic of the catch-up scheme, said Randstad should get "one last chance" but he "wouldn't be upset" if the contract was terminated.

The government insists it will deliver the promised tutoring this year. And since the NTP's formation, hundreds of thousands more children are now receiving tutoring.

But ministers now face a crunch decision that will decide the scheme's legacy. Do they stick, or twist, with Randstad?



Ben Gadsby



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Downgraded head accuses Ofsted inspectors of lacking SEND experience

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

EXCLUSIVE

A special school headteacher has accused Ofsted inspectors of lacking the “contextual experience” to judge special needs provision after they criticised achievement in phonics despite most younger pupils being unable to talk.

Ofsted did not uphold a formal complaint from Newman School in Rotherham, which supports pupils with complex needs, over an “inadequate” judgment published this week.

As well as contesting safeguarding findings, headteacher Paul Silvester said phonics criticism was “inappropriate” as many pupils are “unlikely ever to speak”.

Ofsted’s inspection handbook says inspectors consider whether leaders are “ambitious for all pupils with SEND” and how leaders “develop and adapt the curriculum”.

But Silvester said inspectors had “little or no contextual experience” of SEND schools, which contributed to the downgrading.

The inspection was conducted by two Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMIs) and one Ofsted inspector. Neither of the HMIs’ pen portraits on the Ofsted website refer to SEND experience.

A Schools Week analysis of the 228 schools HMI pen portraits – descriptions listed on Ofsted’s website of sector experience – found just 13 (6 per cent) listed working in a setting for SEND pupils.

But Ofsted said all inspectors get routine SEND training. All HMIs and inspectors visiting special schools must also complete “additional specialist enhanced SEND training”.

‘Some kids are unlikely to ever speak – this is not because of our phonics’

Inspectors found safeguarding arrangements at Newman, an all-through school formerly rated “good”, were not effective and raised concerns about curriculum and behaviour.

Procedures for “identifying and recording concerns that pupils may be at risk of harm ... are not robust”. Some staff did not have “sufficient knowledge of the risks that pupils may face”.

Silvester lodged a formal complaint. He claimed inspectors’ lack of SEND experience



contributed to the downgrading as they did not appreciate the school’s context.

He pointed to inspectors stating pupils “do not consistently achieve as well as they could in reading and phonics” and some older pupils “still struggle to read”.

He felt this was “inappropriate” as three-quarters of primary age pupils at the school can speak only 10 words or fewer.

“Some of my kids are unlikely ever to speak, so unlikely ever to read – that is not because of a phonics programme,” he said.

However, the report had found an inconsistent approach for assessing knowledge gaps for “pupils who are able to make academic progress”.

The school commissioned an independent safeguarding review from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. It was more positive and concluded school leadership was “an excellent example of safeguarding teamwork”.

But Ofsted did not uphold the complaint. It said the lead inspector had “completed all Ofsted’s mandatory SEND training”.

Ofsted say inspectors are “curriculum experts, able to evaluate the quality of education in any setting”.

‘SEND training is not the same as SEND school experience’

Of the 228 school HMIs with pen portraits on Ofsted’s website, fewer than one in five refer to SEND in some way – either training, expertise or inspection knowledge. Just 13 mention working in a specialist setting.

Further analysis of 20 recent special school visits found that seven were conducted by HMIs with no SEND expertise listed. This included six section 5 graded inspections – four of which resulted in “inadequate” grades.

Adam Boddison, former chief executive of the National Association for Special Educational Needs, said it was “essential that Ofsted inspectors have significant knowledge, skills and experience of SEND” to “make accurate judgments”.

Ofsted could not say how many of its inspectors had worked in SEND schools. But it said “enhanced” training for inspectors of SEND schools, which includes an annual refresher course, “ensures that all special schools are inspected by an appropriately trained inspector”.

Pen portraits were “simply snapshots” of an HMI’s career and “not meant to be exhaustive lists” of areas of expertise.

A watchdog spokesperson said inspectors who conducted the analysed inspections all had up-to-date SEND training, including new modules on communication with SEND children and understanding their family’s experience.

Special schools face ‘coin toss’ on inspectors

But Silvester warned “experience level is not the same as training level”.

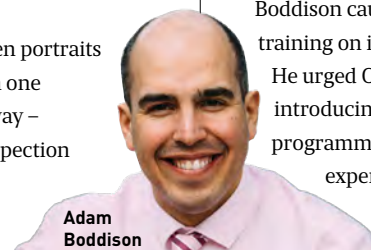
A SEND leader from the north of England, who wished to remain anonymous, said the lack of special school experience among inspectors was “deeply worrying”.

Schools faced a “coin toss” on the level of experience an inspector will have. “If you aren’t inspected by people with the lived experience of the work we do, there’s a serious risk for Ofsted that they’re going to introduce individual biases.”

Silvester said inspections of SEND provision should only be conducted by inspectors with relevant experience.

Boddison cautioned against this but said training on its own was “insufficient”.

He urged Ofsted to “seriously consider introducing a SEND capacity-building programme” to give inspectors “direct experience and insights into effective SEND provision”.



Adam Boddison

Parents protest as largest trust lined up for troubled Holland Park

SAMANTHA BOOTH
@SAMANTHAJBOTH

England's largest academy trust is facing another public protest after it was named as the preferred sponsor to take over troubled Holland Park School.

As Schools Week revealed, the west London school's governing body has entered a "due diligence process" after naming United Learning its preferred partner.

Holland Park, a single-academy trust, was ordered to cut the salary of its highly-paid bosses and consider joining a multi-academy trust in a government finance warning. The school is also being investigated over allegations of a "toxic" working culture and "public shaming" of students.

New chair of governors Jane Farrell said the school's future was "best secured and stabilised" by joining a MAT.

She said United Learning's values matched those of the governors – namely to "preserve the unique identity of the school as a flagship in the London education system" and ensure it remains a "key player in wider work".

But she added: "Governors realise some parents and carers may not agree with our decision. We are also aware that a change like this causes uncertainty."

A group of around 250 parents claim they have been "kept in the dark" over the decision.

The Holland Park School Parent Collective said they were "concerned that if the school is absorbed" by United "it will lose its distinct character, autonomy and ties to local community".

Parents staged a process outside the school on Tuesday. A petition to stop the school joining a MAT has received 1,200 signatures.

Opponents appear to include Sarah Vine, estranged wife of Conservative politician Michael Gove, who turbo-charged the academy movement while education secretary.

She tweeted: "Why is a company based in Peterborough being put in charge of a school in west London? How can they possibly have



Parents protesting outside Holland Park School this week

any idea what's best for our students?"

It means United Learning, which has 75 schools, is facing another public takeover challenge.

In 2019 trust chief executive Sir Jon Coles had to publish an open letter to strongly rebut claims from campaigners at the John Roan School, in south London, that the trust was more interested in "assets than our children".

The school joined United Learning in September of that year.

Holland Park parents say joining local school Kensington Aldridge was a "more attractive" option. The "outstanding" rated secondary, which sits next to Grenfell Tower, had proposed forming a local MAT with Holland Park.

A spokesperson said they were "disappointed not to be chosen" as they felt their bid "had real potential". It is understood Ark Schools was also in contention.

But a campaign group of former students set up in the wake of safeguarding allegations at the school has "publicly distanced" itself from the parents' collective.

The Student Collective questioned why parents appeared to be less outraged about the "public shaming" allegations. The school "desperately needs oversight and regulation", it added.

Writing to parents, United Learning said each of its schools had "its

own identity and ethos that chime with the community it services – context matters, and one size does not fit all."

They said in areas where a school is "already excellent, our role is to encourage and facilitate it to continue to thrive". It has 15 schools in London.

But the trust was "very conscious" it needed to ensure the process of joining was "managed calmly and effectively and that it does not interfere with successful completion of this academic year".

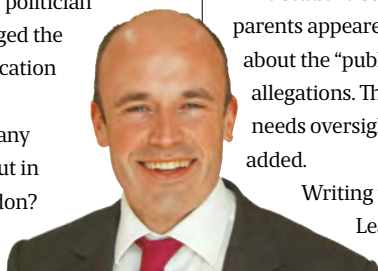
A "stakeholder engagement programme" has been launched, with the aim for the school to join by September.

However, Cllr Josh Rendall, education chief at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, said a "local option" should still be considered. "Not enough time was given for community views to be heard," he added.

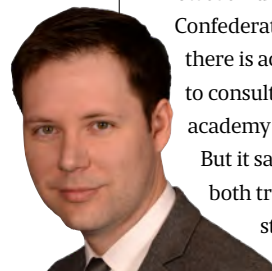
Government guidance requires a formal consultation for stakeholders in such conversions. It advises that involving people "early improves the likelihood of a smooth transition".

However further guidance from the Confederation of School Trusts suggests there is actually "no formal statutory duty" to consult specifically on transfers from academy to academy.

But it says, "as a matter of public law", both trusts "should consider" consulting stakeholders.



Sir Jon Coles



Cllr Josh Rendall

NEWS

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Single-school head becomes second boss to break £300k salary barrier

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

EXCLUSIVE

The head of a single-school trust has become only the second academy chief executive to break the £300,000 salary barrier, while another well-paid boss secured a £19,000 pay rise.

The news comes as the National Governance Association (NGA) launches a salary benchmarking tool, saying many boards struggle to get hold of high-quality data when setting executive pay.

The Thomas Telford School in Shropshire and Brampton Manor Trust in east London were “named and shamed” by the government after receiving letters warning them over executive pay in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

But accounts show that the pay of Thomas Telford’s employee rose to between £300,001 and £310,000 in the year to last September. It makes head Sir Kevin Satchwell the second academy trust boss to pass the £300,000 mark.

The pay of Dayo Olukoshi, executive principal at two-school Brampton Manor, rose from £252,136 to £271,360 in 2020-21. Olukoshi, who was the country’s fifth-best paid academy chief executive last year, has now had 8 per cent pay rises two years running.

Ministers have proposed pay rises for experienced teachers of 3 per cent next year.

Dr Mary Bousted, co-general secretary of the NEU, said: “For every charismatic, wonderful leader, it’s important to remember evidence shows it is good teachers who deliver excellent results.

“I believe in leaders being paid well, but there



has to be moderation. You can’t have their [teachers’] pay held at 2 or 3 per cent and CEO pay go through the roof.”

Satchwell’s salary is second only to Sir Dan Moynihan’s £450,000 a year at the Harris Federation, which was frozen in 2020-21. Another unnamed Harris employee earned at least £300,000.

Satchwell was one of only three of the 10 best-paid leaders running fewer than 20 schools in Schools Week’s CEO pay league table last year. The average was 31 schools. Harris has 51.

While leading a single-school trust, Satchwell does also oversee the five-school Thomas Telford Multi-Academy Trust as an “executive adviser” without extra pay.

The Thomas Telford School has previously topped national GCSE league tables. The City of London-backed school also has the highest reserves of any academy.

Brampton Manor Academy is also regularly praised for securing more Oxbridge offers than Eton in a deprived part of east London. Both trusts were approached for comment.



Kevin Satchwell receiving a knighthood in 2001

Holland Park School was the only other small trust with a chief executive among the 10 best-paid last year.

Colin Hall continued to earn between £280,001 and £290,000 in 2020-21, but he has now left after the “socialist Eton” was ordered to rein in executive pay last November.

Geoff Barton, general secretary of school leaders’ union ASCL, said pay awards typically reflected trusts’ different sizes and challenges, with trustees considering fairness and affordability “very carefully”.

Sector leaders have previously warned that decision-makers lack detailed data to inform executive pay awards. Next week the NGA will unveil a partnership with data firm Pay in Education to offer benchmarking tools to members.

“A very small minority of outlier trusts paying excessive salaries have been distorting the public perception of how the sector uses public money for some time,” said NGA chief executive Emma Knights.

Data that lets governors compare pay for “similar-sized organisations working in a similar context” will help the sector to “manage executive pay responsibly”.

Meanwhile, the Department for Education’s wider crackdown on “excessive” trust pay remains under review. No trusts have received letters since 2020, when officials retracted them over data errors and announced a rethink.

Officials were awaiting 2021 accounts to confirm next steps, but they are yet to do so since the accounts deadline 52 days ago. The DfE was asked for comment.

JAMES CARR | @JAMESCARR_93

‘No plans’ to engage with Russia over school energy supplies

The government’s public sector buying agency has said it has no plans to engage with Russian energy firm Gazprom after it closes its school switch service at the end of this month.

A *Schools Week* investigation last week revealed that schools and councils were attempting to cut ties with the energy giant in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Education secretary Nadhim Zahawi told the House of Commons on Monday that “Gazprom is no longer on the roster of suppliers to the government and the

Department [for Education]”.

The DfE later clarified that Zahawi was actually pre-emptively referring to the closure of school switch, which is run by the Crown Commercial Service [CCS].

School switch acts in a similar way to price comparison websites and allows schools and academies to obtain bespoke energy supply quotes and switch their supplier. The DfE announced on Wednesday that the service would close on March 31.

However, CCS appeared to support Zahawi’s statement and told *Schools Week* that it had “no plans to engage with Gazprom

following the closure of school switch”.

CCS will instead support schools and academies to join its “main aggregated agreements”, the DfE said. Such agreements allow organisations to harness greater economies of scale.

The DfE explained that the utility switching service agreement, which facilitated the service, was “only scheduled to last four years” and “will not be extended or renewed”.

The closure of the service has no impact on any contracts signed on or before the last day of March.

DfE urged to update guidance after 'disturbing' strip-search of schoolgirl

SAMANTHA BOOTH
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Ministers must urgently revise school search guidance that is overly-focused on discipline, an inquiry has ruled after a "deeply disturbing" strip-and-search of a black schoolgirl.

The Metropolitan Police has admitted carrying out the "humiliating" search of a girl who "smelled of cannabis" at a Hackney secondary school in December 2020. It said the incident "should never have happened".

A safeguarding report found the 15-year-old's intimate body parts were exposed, without an appropriate adult present and "with the knowledge" that the child was menstruating.

The Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review also found racism "was likely to have been an influencing factor" when deciding to search the girl.

Staff at the good-rated academy should have "been more challenging to the police", had "insufficient focus" on safeguarding needs and deferred to police authority, the report found.

Two of the report's 14 recommendations call for the Department for Education to "review and revise" its 2018 guidance on "searching, screening and confiscation". They said parts of it could "run the risk of promoting poor practice".

The report states: "As framed, its tone is largely about discipline and is likely to lead front-line staff down this path of practice."

Girl was not 'allowed to clean herself'

Teachers told the review they believed the child was "smelling strongly of cannabis" and suspected she might have been carrying drugs, which she denied.

Nothing was found after a search of her bag, blazer, scarf and shoes, but teachers sought advice from the Safer Schools Police Officer who was not on site because of Covid restrictions.

The officer recommended that the school ask a female officer to attend. The child was then pulled out of a mock exam and strip-searched. No drugs were found.

Her family said she was "made to bend over, spread her legs, use her hand to spread her buttocks cheek while coughing". They said the child had to take her sanitary towel off and put the same one back on "because they would not



Hackney town hall

allow her" to use the bathroom.

Her mother said the incident "was not treated as a safeguarding issue" but as a criminal one, adding that her daughter is now a "changed person".

Guidance 'runs risk of poor practice'

The review found it "unlikely" that the school was informed by police of their intention to strip-search the child.

It said the DfE's guidance could be "strengthened by including much stronger reference to the primary need to safeguard children".

The guidance "worryingly" contains "outdated terminology", such as "child pornography", that should be "urgently corrected".

There was also little thought given to the importance of contacting a family member. The guidance is "light on the inclusion of parental consent as an issue of importance".

While the panel agreed that schools are not required to inform parents before a search, the statement that "no legal requirement" to keep a record of the search is "permissive" and "runs the risk of promoting poor practice".

DfE guidance says schools should inform parents where illegal substances are found, but there "is no legal requirement to do so". The panel said this risks "schools not doing anything".

"In Child Q's case, she was the one who had to tell her mother she had been searched by the school and strip-searched by the police. In the

opinion of the review, this 'legally permissible practice' is not good practice."

A staff member is quoted as saying: "In hindsight I put my trust in the law. I know now that I need to understand the law better."

They added: "This is the hardest thing that we've had to go through and for anyone to think that the school might be complicit is very stressful and difficult to deal with"

'Lack of school challenge appalling'

Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Hackney's deputy mayor, and the mayor Philip Glanville said the "lack of challenge by school toward police" was one appalling aspect of the case.

An investigation by school governors led to a review of which staff should deal with police and an external safeguarding evaluation.

Detective superintendent Dan Rutland, of the Met's central east command, apologised and said the incident was "truly regrettable" and "should never have happened".

A government spokesperson said annual Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance had been strengthened so staff "should receive regular safeguarding training to improve their confidence in managing sensitive situations". They made no mention of the criticised search guidance.

They said it was "vital" that the Independent Office for Police Conduct concludes its investigations and any findings "are acted on swiftly".

Sex, drugs and alcohol claims at 'inadequate' Ampleforth after DfE drops intervention

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

The Department for Education has ruled out immediate intervention against a high-profile private school despite Ofsted uncovering more shocking safeguarding failures.

A damning Ofsted report found that vulnerable pupils "engaged in penetrative sexual activity during the school day" at the £37,905-a-year Ampleforth College in North Yorkshire, previously at the centre of an historic child abuse inquiry.

The Ofsted report, published on Wednesday, reveals that one pupil was treated in hospital for "excess alcohol consumption". Another was found "unconscious and alone in an orchard" after 81 pupils snuck out of their dorms to stage a secret booze-fuelled party.

Inspectors also found a risk that "monks of concern" were able to be on the school site "without the knowledge of the headteacher".

The new findings pose questions for ministers, who had dropped previous intervention measures at the school despite safeguarding concerns.

The government ordered the school to stop admitting new students in 2020 after an emergency inspection by Ofsted found the school was failing to meet safeguarding standards.

The ban was lifted in April last year, despite Ofsted inspectors raising ongoing concerns. But in a new report, published four months after the inspection in November, the boarding school has been rated "inadequate".

The school claims the watchdog's findings contain "factual inaccuracies". Headteacher Robin Dyer said it had made "repeated attempts to correct the facts before the report was published".

The school, known as the "Catholic Eton", was previously at the centre of a historic child abuse inquiry which found decades of "appalling sexual abuse" inflicted on children as young as seven.

A spokesperson said the DfE had asked the school to prepare a new action plan by the end of March. It "will consider whether any further enforcement action may be necessary in light of



Ampleforth College

the school's new plan".

DfE intervention dropped despite concerns

The DfE lifted its pupil ban despite an Ofsted monitoring report the same month warning of a spate of recent safeguarding incidents.

The department said enforcement action was dropped because the school had "committed to a formal action plan to sustain a strong safeguarding culture and meet the independent school standards in full" by its autumn Ofsted inspection.

The school failed to meet this commitment.

The report published this week states that the school's safeguarding arrangements "remain ineffective".

Whistleblowers told Ofsted they feared for pupils' safety after 81 year 13 pupils left their boarding houses at 2.30am on their final day to stage an unofficial graduation party.

Pupils disabled locks and alarms and took a route which avoided CCTV cameras to an agreed destination where they consumed alcohol which had been smuggled onto the site, the report stated.

One student was found unconscious and alone in an orchard," inspectors said. "Another student was hospitalised because of excess alcohol consumption."

Ofsted ruled that staff who were "alert to the possibility of end-of-term celebrations were not sufficiently vigilant" and "did not take action to prevent these dangerous behaviours".

Ampleforth said that the pupil was not unconscious and, while traces of class A drugs were found, "there was no evidence of drugs

being consumed".

It added the secret party was a "matter of great regret" and additional safety measures had been introduced "long before Ofsted's inspection".

SEND pupils had sex in front of classmate

Ofsted also identified an occasion "very recently" where "younger pupils with identified SEND engaged in penetrative sexual activity during the school day while not supervised sufficiently well".

The activity was witnessed by one of their peers and inspectors found school staff "knew of risk factors in relation to these children". Yet they "did not take proper account of the information they had when organising changing facilities" for PE lessons.

Staff "remain unsure about how to protect vulnerable children who show overly sexualised behaviours".

The school said that no sex took place and that a police report found "no implication of penetration". Instead, it states that a witness described "a three-second incident in which both [students] were laughing".

Leaders also moved to deny Ofsted's finding that "monks of concern", defined as those accused or found guilty of any child sexual abuse, could still live at the adjoining abbey.

While the school has "no right to control who lives in the nearby monastic community", it has a safeguarding protocol in place by which it could confirm there are "no monks currently subject to a police investigation or without a current enhanced DBS check in place living at Ampleforth Abbey".

Bett firm to exit Russia after sector pressure

JAMES CARR
@JAMESCARR_93

The organiser behind the upcoming Bett show has pledged to exit the Russian market after exhibitors and attendees threatened to boycott the London event.

The British Education Training and Technology Show is a series of global education events organised by the Hyve Group showcasing the biggest and latest innovations in EdTech.

However, its flagship London show, scheduled to take place at ExCeL London next week, came under fire as exhibitors and attendees voiced intentions to ditch the event.

Hyve Group pulled its events in Ukraine following the Russian invasion. But it planned to go ahead with 14 events it runs in Russia, including international security exhibition Securika.



It announced via the London Stock Exchange on Tuesday that "as the invasion escalates further, the Board has made a decision to formally exit the Russian market".

A statement sent to *Schools Week* said the decision-making for the events will be led by a "local leadership team" to "safeguard 206 colleagues in Russia and the long-term future of the local business".

The firm would not provide further information about this arrangement.

But Hyve said it will "no longer be profiting from events in Russia nor investing in or receiving cash from Russian operations. Hyve branding will be removed from all Russian events going forward."

In his statement, Hyve chief executive Mark

Shashoua said the invasion of Ukraine has caused human suffering beyond words and called for it to end immediately.

Its "primary focus" has been on the "safety and welfare" of staff in both countries. Over 200 staff are based in Russia, and Shashoua added: "The invasion of Ukraine is not their fault, and we have been determined to find an outcome which offers stability for them as quickly as possible."

It was reported the firm posted revenues for the year to September 30 of £55 million – with a profit before tax of £20.8 million, up from £18.1 million for the previous year.

Russian events made up a quarter of its revenues in 2019.

EdTech expert Joshua Perry received a mass of support earlier this week via social media after he vowed to boycott the show unless Hyve ended its Russian activities.

Schools Week understands a number of exhibitors may also have boycotted the event if the company failed to exit Russia.

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EDITORIAL

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Returner teachers won't solve further disruption

With Covid rates rising again across England, leaders are understandably concerned about the continuing impact of staff absence rates on their schools.

What's clear from our story today on the returner teacher scheme is that former teachers cannot be relied upon in large numbers to fill schools' staffing black hole.

While there was no harm in the call to arms, ministers are now using it as a defence against accusations they have not done enough to help school short of staff.

While those who have come forward are to be commended, it always seemed inevitable that the scheme would be limited in its effectiveness. As one supply agency pointed out this week, teachers retire for a reason.

It is welcome that the workforce fund has been extended several times. It would be helpful if the DfE provided clarity on its future up to the end of this academic year. It's very clear schools are not yet out of the woods.

And if they are serious about returner teachers, they should remove barriers like paying for DBS checks.

Ministers need to commit to a tutoring vision

The original vision of the National Tutoring Programme excited many in the sector.

The evidence for tutoring, in small groups, was strong. The scheme would allow them to turbo-boost that intervention, with hundreds of millions of pounds, while also having oversight to ensure quality remains high.

This year's sluggish catch-up roll-out has contributed to a gradual chipping away of that vision. Most of the tutoring has now moved away from the vetted providers under the NTP. Encouraged by problems with this year's NTP, schools are just organising their own provision.

Meanwhile tutoring can be done in larger groups, and there's not as big a focus on ensuring it reaches the poorest pupils.

It all leaves ministers in a bit of a pickle, and with a big call to make. They either stick with Randstad, and hope the numbers improve, or ditch them and rebadge the whole scheme. The latter option is a big gamble. While it would allow a reset, it would also mean a new organisation starting from scratch, again. And that did not work well this year.

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Feature
JESS STAUFENBERG | @STAUFENBERGJ



‘Teachers weren’t finishing their books – we needed something different’

Education’s best-known illustrator, Oliver Caviglioli, is a one-time Olympics trainee, bodybuilder, sandal-wearing PE teacher and son of a Corsican communist. He talks to Jess Staufenberg about quitting headship for his pens

Oliver Caviglioli is one of the only people I instantly recognise on Twitter from a logo-like drawing of themselves, rather than their actual photo. So I’m not sure what to expect on my screen when an inquisitive face in trendy glasses looks curiously back at me, surrounded by evidence of a love of design. A Stuart Davis painting (an American modernist) hangs beside him, and an abstract hanging mobile spins overhead. Caviglioli crackles with

energy and barely draws breath in over one hour of us talking.

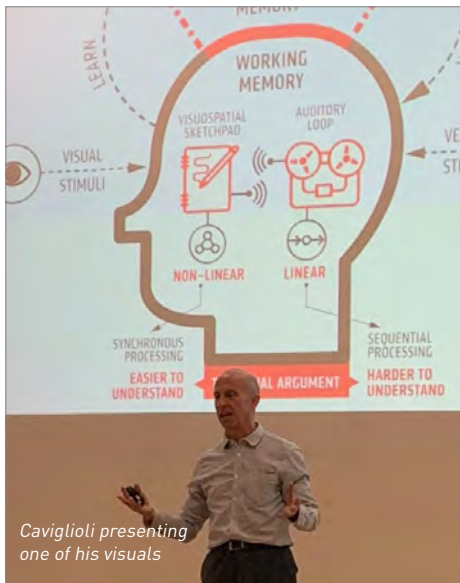
You may know Caviglioli for his illustrations in education books, most recently in collaboration with teacher Tom Sherrington. His standing desk is where the magic happens – on a 27-inch Mac, at home in Basildon, Essex, where he grew up. A career move from special educational needs headteacher to illustrator already sounds like a fascinating story, but I’m not prepared for

quite how fascinating.

“I was born in Algeria to a French Corsican father and a Scottish mother,” he begins. “My mother had escaped her upper-middle-class background to live with this bearded, divorced, communist. And my father was politically active in supporting the liberation of Algeria from French oppressors.”

Caviglioli’s father was an architect, doing drawing work for the mujahideen who were fighting the French Army – “it’s work

Profile: Oliver Caviglioli



Caviglioli training for the Olympics with French junior international Guy Druet who later became Olympic (1976) 100 metres hurdles champion

that would have got him arrested, if not murdered, if he'd been discovered". Caviglioli was only young, but some of his siblings – he has two sisters and a brother – remember his parents destroying his father's work in haste one day, and applying for British citizenship. Caviglioli found himself relocated to Basildon, aged just four, with a "well-known communist" for a father.

"We know all about McCarthyism in America, but we forget what was going on here. He found it very hard to get a job." To make things tougher, his father couldn't speak any English, and so extraordinarily, when he got a job at the University of London, his mother rewrote his lectures phonetically, so he could read them out loud, non-comprehending, in his thick French accent.

The family were outsiders in their new Essex neighborhood, and Caviglioli was a "mini anthropologist", as he puts it. "I went

EXTERNAL MEMORY FIELD

Diagrams increase the capacity of working memory to organize ideas. To understand why and how, we take a wider and longer view than usual.

Merle Donald *paraview.com*

Merle Donald is a neuroanatomist, psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist. Such a background allows him to present an evolutionary perspective on the development of human cognition. Within this perspective, we learn that while the last stage in our evolution is the dominant it is not the most important impact on our brain – cognitive architecture in psychology space. Examining our thoughts helps to expose the same limitations of our biological working memory and, by so doing, extend the capacity of our thinking.

STAGES IN THE MAKING OF THE MODERN MIND

EPISODIC	IMPLICIT	EXPLICIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair • Fair to non-fair • Specific, not general • No representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early human • Representational, not • Concrete, not abstract • No communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External storage of info • External memory field • Verbal, not pictorial • Shared with others • No communication

Development through the ages

When considering the evidence changes in Donald's schema, we should remember that, with cognitive architecture a human memory system has been evolved as a fully functional organ!

Consequently, we see many instances of mimetic behaviour in some aspects of learning – think of how you can be watching and imitating someone perform a skill. But among the range of incremental enhancements through the ages, the most significant, Donald considers, is what ideas were captured in an external medium and made public. Now ideas could be shared on an individual life span and, consequently, be subject to ongoing revision and refinement.

Merle Donald

EXTERNAL MEMORY FIELD

Merle Donald

TEACHING SPRINTS

Teaching sprints are short bursts of learning that focus on a specific skill or concept. They are designed to be used in a classroom or training environment. The sprints are structured as follows:

- PHASE 1: PREPARE** - The teacher sets up the sprint by providing a clear objective and a list of resources.
- PHASE 2: REVIEW** - The teacher reviews the sprint with the students, providing feedback and support.
- PHASE 3: IMPACT** - The students complete the sprint, demonstrating their understanding of the skill or concept.
- PHASE 4: NEW HABITS** - The students practice the skill or concept regularly, making it a habit.

“Everything was subject to aesthetic evaluation”

to school and they didn't understand what I said, and I looked different – I had hair over my ear, and theirs was short. I didn't understand the habits.”

But standing on the outside and looking in, with a critical eye, would go on to define him. As do his parents' values.

“Everything was subject to aesthetic evaluation,” he explains. “Everything: newspapers, clothes, socks, TV programmes. It would be, ‘that’s too big, they should have done it like this.’” Caviglioli recalls with admiration his father's design abilities. The light switches, for instance, were in the skirting boards, so that if your hands were full, you only had to nudge it at foot level. All the doors slid back into the walls. His father even made a huge mural of Yuri Gagarin's flight into space in the house, which “completely bamboozled” visitors. It explains why, when a tree crashed into his garden as an adult, Caviglioli sought a way keep it as a work of art.

“I was used to looking in different ways. There was a domain called creativity, and you carved that out.”

This influence, coupled with the 1960s hippie movement, would lead Caviglioli to seek out unusual contexts. At grammar school, he and his peers followed an “alternative curriculum” of their own devising, he says, bringing in records and reading Marx, psychologists and philosophers. When his schooling ended, Caviglioli tried out everything from training for the Olympics to becoming a bodybuilder in a “shady underground gym”. Eventually, a nudge from his languages teacher mother saw him join a teacher training college in Brighton, doing PE and French.

“I hated the culture in the PE department – it was like the bloody army.” Caviglioli has a delightful way of phrasing things in extreme terms, while sounding completely even-keeled and entertained at the same time. “They had no regard for anyone not PE-oriented.” His popularity with the PE staff wasn't helped by him wearing flares and bright green sandals.

But then he got a job in a special educational needs school, and “suddenly my view completely changed”. In those days, “it was like a circus – no rules, no curriculum,

Profile: Oliver Caviglioli



Caviglioli's father's house



Drawing of a house Caviglioli's father designed and had built in Algiers

nothing. It was embarrassing". But Caviglioli had found a domain of creativity. By 1994, he was headteacher at Woodlands special educational needs school in Chelmsford. The passion with which he talks about it is infectious.

One enjoyable aspect of Caviglioli is he does genuinely defy categorisation in the tribal world of education beliefs. At first, he tells me how working with pupils with additional needs led him to become "obsessed" with cognitive science, an interest that deepened further when his son was born with Down syndrome. But this hasn't made him a zealot for a knowledge-retrieval-oriented curriculum.

"I think the only criteria for special needs schools is post-school life. I recognise that in mainstream school, learning something and parroting it back is bloody useful, because it gets you through exams. But it has absolutely no value in special schools." Instead, Caviglioli introduced a curriculum in which pupils built up "evidence of success" of them applying their learning in real-world situations, through videos and annotations. "Everything else I did subsequently, which brought me more fame and fortune, was nothing compared to the profundity" of that work, he says.

And it speaks for a wider system issue, too. "I suggest we take seriously an educational trajectory that is not heading towards university." He points to the "magnificent" work done in FE colleges with students "hurt and disenchanted with their experiences

"I was in pursuit of the magazine-ification of books"

in mainstream schools", and says we are "lily-livered" around allowing pupils earlier choice about their education pathways. "The conversation about cultural capital is a legitimate conversation, but it is at the expense of other more tractable conversations. We harm children by refusing to make a choice sooner."

But after ten years there was "too much admin" in the headteacher role, says Caviglioli, and he went firstly part-time, and then in 2004 left the role altogether, to pursue an interest in writing and illustrating books. His first two books, called *Mapwise* and *Thinking Skills & Eye Q*, were on visual teaching strategies. Then he developed the 'How To' series, which depicted different teaching techniques, and also wrote and illustrated his *Dual Coding With Teachers* book, which shows teachers how to combine words with visuals in their teaching.

A key drive for Caviglioli has been subjecting books for teachers to the keen "aesthetic evaluation" he learnt as a child. "We all want teachers to be evidence informed, but there's this phenomenon of teachers buying books and never getting round to

reading them. Obviously there's something wrong with the books!"

So Caviglioli studied magazines such as *Wired* and *Monocle* for inspiration on page layout, noting the "aspirational" and non-patronising style of the content. "I was in pursuit of the magazine-ification of books," he grins. The work lets him join up his multiple loves: cognitive science, teaching and aesthetic perfection.

The approach has clearly worked. The first two volumes of the popular 'WalkThru' series with Tom Sherrington (the third is out next month) give "modules" of teaching techniques. Each is illustrated so the teacher can clearly remember the approach, such as 'checking for understanding' or 'cold calling' on pupils for answers. The idea, says Caviglioli, is that an A-level teacher in school, or a teacher of horse husbandry in FE, both have a common language to discuss the "core essentials" of teaching, no matter their context. Now 2,000 organisations use the WalkThru volumes, across 36 countries.

From headteacher to illustrator, Caviglioli is by far one of the most interesting interviewees I've sat down with. It only seems a shame he's not still leading what would presumably be the most colourful special educational needs school around.

Yet his blunt response that "too much admin" caused him eventually to leave headship shows that even outside mainstream, the domain for creativity is squeezed in teaching. Caviglioli has moved to a space where he is freer – and able to explain how other teachers can be, too.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Policy makers looking to secure an all-academy system risk putting a jet engine on a bicycle – with predictable consequences, writes Hugh Greenway

A white paper is due soon and, let's be honest, dealing with our fragmented, make-it-up-as-we-go-along system is a priority. But as the famous joke goes: to get to our destination, we probably shouldn't start here. And where is here? Well, slightly more than half of students are educated in academies while slightly more than half of schools remain under local authority control – which has significant funding implications for continued reform.

Ideally, we need a single, coherent system with common rules for all and a regulator empowered to act on underperformance.

There are three options: get rid of academies and return schools to LA control; make all schools academies and reimagine a role for LAs; or get all schools into new school-operating organisations run by MATs and LAs that are legally and operationally equivalent. None of these end states is easy or cheap to achieve, but the first is probably the most expensive.

There are lots of policy ideas circulating but they can be simplified into groups. The first aims at clarity – a single arm's length regulator to act equitably over all schools. That is to be welcomed, but merging the ESFA and the RSCs' offices risks concentrating too much power in one place and creating conflicts of interest. Better to separate the funding agency from the regulator and to require all actors in the system to be more transparent about their plans and approaches. Above all, setting a clear strategic direction for the system as a whole is a must.



CEO, The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust

White paper: beware the unintended consequences

The second group of ideas involves giving more power to different agencies. But there is no shortage of power to intervene in our current system. In fact there is probably a surfeit of it, but a lack of coherence for exercising that power. There are

the organisations over which they exercise authority.

We do not need supercharged RSCs to conceive, create, direct and dissolve MATs. This completely subverts the idea of school trusts, and any regulator that needs those

“Adding more powers will only cause more damage”

simply too many organisations for the ESFA and RSCs to regulate: 152 LAs and some 2,390 MATs and SATs, which gives each RSC less than half a day per year to even think about

powers is de facto not a regulator but tantamount to subsuming the entire school system back into direct administration from Westminster. Can we really expect it to have the



capacity to exercise this degree of power? This very real risk is that adding more powers into a fragmented system will only cause more damage. You can't put a jet engine on a bicycle and act surprised when you're picking up teeth from the road.

The third group of ideas are false incentives to encourage both schools and LAs to move to an all-academy system without adequate funding. Giving individual academies the right to appeal to the regulator to change MATs seems sensible at first glance, but it is actually an invitation to chaos. It allows schools to opt out of school improvement and requires legal contortions to apportion rights to a body that no longer exists.

Worse still, it incentivises charities to act against their organisational purpose of giving oil to the squeakier wheels, because making people like you is easier than improving outcomes for children. All to encourage schools to join MATs by giving them the impression that they can leave if they don't like it.

A more dangerous idea is that LAs should be given additional powers following the SEND review. Again it seems innocent and logical, but conceals a divisive intent. LAs don't need more powers in SEND they need more money. With no Treasury support, that money will have to come from efficiencies elsewhere, and giving LAs more power will simply encourage them to pass the blame on to mainstream schools to meet unfunded SEND needs.

Above all we should resist the urge to legislate for legislation's sake. A white paper to sort this mess out is long overdue, but starting the engine without consulting the system thinkers we haven't yet lost to previous reforms will only see us picking up teeth later.

Opinion

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EMMA KNIGHTS
Chief executive,
National Governance Association

White paper: the all-MAT system needs governance buy-in

Governors and trustees still have valid reservations about large MATs, writes Emma Knights, and the white paper must account for those to deliver its vision

Many column inches have been dedicated of late to what might be in the imminent schools white paper. In particular, these are concerned with the secretary of state's vision of all schools being within a strong multi-academy trust. But there's been little on how we get to that vision, and even less from the viewpoint of those making the decisions to join a MAT.

The National Governance Association's membership includes trusts of all shapes and sizes. We talk to trustees on a daily basis and provide services for those governing academies (SATs or MATs) and maintained schools. So we know the experience from every angle and we take care to listen.

The feedback we receive all points in the same direction. First, there is a huge attachment across the piece to locality and the importance of local collaboration. And relatedly, there is a generalised fear of being 'taken over' by a large organisation that does not have the interests of 'their'

school and their community at the heart of their decision making in the way the current board has.

We can debate what constitutes a large MAT (and in fact we've been frustrated over the past few years at the lack of appetite within the sector

to have this debate). But while all efforts to date to find the optimum size of trust have floundered, the response to the imminent policy document raises a slightly different argument about participation, connectedness, understanding of community, risk and in effect who 'owns' our state schools. These are principles that surely should be at the heart of a vision for England's schools.

Third, and perhaps most pertinently among the feedback we've gathered, governing boards have found a lack of persuasive evidence for the benefits to pupils of joining a MAT. And this includes from MATs with whom they'd had exploratory conversations – sometimes even extensive negotiations!

Of course, these three main factors



are nuanced and overlapping, and the strength of feeling differs from place to place and school to school according to their history and relationships. Given competing pressures, together they lead to boards and leaders unwilling to

that have carefully crafted groups of schools to come together or painstakingly negotiated with a local small or middle-sized trust made it very clear they didn't want to see those trusts completely outgrowing their locality or being subsumed into a much larger trust within just a few years.

We've been sharing our intelligence with the Department for Education and were thrilled last week to see them going public with their intention to strengthen governance at local level within MATs. Without doubt, this is the right move. Of course the board of trustees remains the MAT's decision-making body, so on its own this won't persuade everyone.

To have a chance of achieving his vision, the secretary of state also needs to assure those governors and SAT trustees of two things: that his vision is not to create huge trusts but by 2030 to have more middle-sized trusts (preferably defined by the number of pupils they educate and with an emphasis on geography); and that there will be a mechanism for ensuring MATs are held to account for promises made during a negotiation.

We have suggested a number of routes. We await the outcomes like everyone else – with bated breath.

“There is a huge attachment to locality

prioritise the work of joining a MAT.

The views of headteachers usually carry a lot of weight with boards. The change of leadership positions, especially to heads of school, can be substantive and for some unappealing, especially experienced headteachers joining an existing MAT now, with very little scope to shape it.

NGA was an early adopter of the benefits of families of schools. In 2015, with ASCL and Browne Jacobson, we published the first edition of guidance on forming or joining a group of schools. We presented it at the Houses of Parliament with a response from then-minister, Lord Nash. Its title, *Staying in control of your school's destiny*, resonated across the sector.

And that is why the issue of size of trust is still deeply relevant. Boards

Opinion

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New research disproves the damaging tropes about alternative provision's link to crime, writes Steve Howell, so let's ditch them and back best practice

Last week the Department for Education and the Ministry of Justice published a wide-ranging dataset on education, children's social care and offending. The data focuses on those children who have been cautioned or sentenced for an offence, for committing serious violence or have been prolific offenders.

There are some predictable findings; the fact that 76 per cent of pupils who commit serious violence have had free school meals shouldn't be a surprise to anyone. The links between poverty and criminality are obvious for all to see. The fact that 82 per cent have been persistently absent from school should also not surprise many.

It's fair to say that things get a little less predictable, at least for some, when we consider the data around exclusions, suspensions and attending AP.

For some years now it has been a well-accepted 'fact', perpetuated by segments of the British press and social media pundits, that being excluded from school and attending a PRU or AP is an inevitable precursor to a life of criminality and, ultimately, prison. The catchphrase "PRU-to-prison-pipeline" is now common parlance. The previous children's commissioner, Anne Longfield, was a particularly loud voice in this argument.

Within the AP/PRU sector we have long been certain that the link just doesn't add up as simply as stated. Correlation doesn't mean causation, and we know we make a difference. Our work with pupils and families may be under-appreciated, but pupils often come to us embroiled in criminality and our work can – and does – disentangle

STEVE HOWELL

Headteacher, City of Birmingham School



APs prevent criminality - so let's look beyond the tropes

them.

But for all that, we could be forgiven for expecting that the data would provide cast-iron proof that children attending APs were committing violent crimes, or that being permanently excluded is an inevitable

learn that a higher proportion of pupils who have been cautioned or sentenced have been suspended from school than permanently excluded. For 74 per cent of offenders, this period of suspension happens more than a year before offending.

“Data puts our sector squarely in the prevention space

precursor of persistent offending. After all, up to February 2020 we had seen 18 months of regular attacks on the sector, with multiple national newspapers running headlines with variations on "All PRU kids carry knives" and "PRUs are recruiting grounds for gangs".

They were wrong. Instead, we

We can draw from this that we are missing significant opportunities within mainstream schools to identify and intervene with those young people who go on to be involved in criminality. It indicates a period of time where we may be seeing escalating behaviours in schools. SAFE taskforces will



hopefully, in time, begin this work.

When it comes to pupils attending alternative provision, including PRUs, of those committing any offence, more than half did so before they joined the setting. This securely refutes the belief that attending AP leads to criminality. A further eight per cent joined AP at around the same time as their first offence – perhaps because they offended.

For serious violence offences, 52 per cent of offenders joined AP before their first offence – far from the overwhelming majority. We have to accept, however, that pupils in this bracket are probably well-placed in AP. There is a strong argument that we specifically exist for pupils who are out of mainstream for significant reasons. We are no longer a sector catering for those with persistent disruptive behaviour; more regularly we are meeting the needs of children with complex challenges.

It's naive to think that pupils in APs are not at risk of offending behaviours, whenever it happens. But this data puts our sector squarely in the prevention and intervention space.

Now we know this, what's to be done?

AP taskforces with the express aim of reducing youth crime have started to see the benefits of the approach. Once evidence points to successful outcomes, we will need to see widespread investment in the programme beyond these 21 areas.

The data already suggests that being in AP actually reduces the chances of committing serious violence once permanently excluded. So it's time to ditch the misleading and damaging tropes and back the interventions that make a real difference.

BETT 2022

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There is a thriving market of start-ups offering educational solutions, writes David Jaffa, but a fragmented system means schools lack confidence to invest wisely



DAVID JAFFA

Founder,
SAM Learning



We can and must do better at scaling up innovations

While our overall model of education has tended to lag behind the changes in wider society, many still feel that innovation in education is a painful process. Teachers and school leaders rightly feel they were very innovative during the pandemic, implementing remote learning, dealing with disruption to attendance and exams. Nevertheless, innovation often feels either like something done 'to' rather than 'with' us, or like something we're being sold. And when we do find good innovations, we often lack the means to scale them up.

To me, innovation is about finding new solutions that produce improved or more consistent results in ways that are easier or cheaper. Innovation can involve improving something that already exists, devising entirely new educational programmes or connecting stakeholders in new ways. My experience suggests that, no matter what the innovation is, it typically goes through two stages: an early-adopter phase and a scale-up phase.

The early-adopter phase

In the early-adopter phase, high-potential ideas are tested and refined in different contexts while providers scramble to fix problems and prove the value of their solutions. It's a highly iterative process, involving constant problem-solving and a high fall-out rate.

A flourishing ecosystem of innovation involves hundreds of solution providers and many centres of innovation where these solutions

can be tried out. Today, our networks of innovation centres are fragmented. They include edtech demonstrator schools, teaching schools, city projects

scale up, it has often been simplified to the point that it is 'plug and play'. But that's also the point at which its benefits have been rarefied to what

“Our networks of innovation centres are fragmented

such as Damien Allen's 'talent and innovation ecosystem' in Doncaster, and MATs such as the Oasis Hub. It takes years for high-potential ideas to be turned into practical solutions while others fall by the wayside. But this fragmentation means it can take just as long to cross-pollinate success across the system.

The scale-up phase

This month's 2022 BETT show will showcase some 1,200 suppliers. Many are people with minimal experience or funding but plenty of vision for how to improve aspects of education. A number of them are ex-teachers who know the inner workings of the education system and have experienced first-hand the need for change. Many of these solutions are looking to scale up, but how many are really ready to do so?

By the time a solution is ready to

feels like a sales pitch. So how are school leaders with tight budgets to know what will prove a good investment?

What works

Scepticism about new innovations is healthy. But whether you happen to love it or hate it, edtech has gone from educational fringe to classroom mainstream over the past couple of decades. And how this happened holds lessons for the best ways to approach innovation now.

In the early 2000s as now, innovation largely took place within centres of innovation that wanted to experiment with new solutions. Then, it was the local authority network of ICT advisors that provided the proving ground for solutions like my own venture, SAM Learning. Crucially, this protected the majority of schools from risk and unwanted

change. (After all, as Todd Rose says, it's not that change is hard, it's that "change nobody wants is really hard")

But the biggest difference between then and now, and the one that really worked, was to separate the early-adopter phase from the scale-up phase. By the time the DfE provided schools with ring-fenced funding for online learning resources, many solutions had already been through years of refinement. This was evident in that many schools outside centres of innovation adopted these solutions before the funding became available. Solutions were ready to scale up, and the money merely accelerated their roll-out, ensuring these 'in-a-box' solutions were available consistently to all schools.

As the number of exhibitors at this year's BETT shows, we have a thriving market of education solutions. However, our system is slowing the pace of scaling up. Only a more connected and systemic approach to centres of innovation will give school leaders the confidence they need to invest in the solutions they are being offered.

BETT 2022

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EMMA SLATER

Head of education,
GCSEPod



Let's learn from Estonia and say goodbye to the old normal

Instead of romanticising our education system, we would better serve teachers and pupils by following the example of new global leaders, writes Emma Slater

Heading into a BETT event delayed by Covid is a timely reminder that, though the DfE may want schools to operate as normal, we are not there yet. Meanwhile, a highly anticipated schools white paper is struggling for front page space against a backdrop of conflict in Ukraine that has brought the states of the former USSR to the fore.

In that context, if asked to name a country with one of the highest-performing education systems in the world, it's unlikely you would answer 'Estonia'. But according to PISA, Estonia is in fact a world-leader, and one of the key ways they've achieved that is by thoroughly embedding technology in schools and classrooms. In Estonia, lessons are available online as standard. Even prior to the pandemic, students did digital home-learning days.

Estonia had the challenge and opportunity to reinvent itself after the fall of the USSR, allowing it to rebuild its education system from scratch. As a result, its government

became one of the forerunners in equipping schools with solid digital infrastructure. Now, Estonian students are accustomed to online exams and timetables, with teachers setting tests and homework digitally. All of which massively reduces the

hours teachers have to dedicate to marking, something British teachers consistently flag as a huge drain on their time.

Here, a workload crisis long predates Covid, and has only been worsened by it. Staff had to invent whole new ways of working at the height of the pandemic and are now feeling the burden of ensuring children catch up with what they missed. Reports tell us they are close to burn out, their physical and mental health is suffering and many are questioning whether to stay in the profession.

The threat of an exodus is real, and morale across the sector is reaching crisis point. The 2020 Teacher Wellbeing Index showed that almost two-thirds described themselves as stressed and almost three-quarters said they'd experienced behavioural,

psychological or physical symptoms due to their work. Our children won't receive a top-quality education if those providing it are run ragged.

Our education system has been idolised and romanticised across the globe for centuries, but with that heritage comes baggage. There's a

“ With our system's heritage comes baggage

sense here that technology is about cutting costs or corners, and it's often viewed with suspicion. But looking to countries like Estonia, the value digital classroom tools add when used to complement traditional teaching methods is clear.

Taking advantage of everything technology has to offer should be exciting. Used imaginatively, it opens up all sorts of possibilities for students and teachers. It can't replace what teachers bring to the classroom, but it should be a core part of their toolbox. As a former teacher, I'm convinced that better integration of technology into our classrooms can help ease the burden.

The workload of teachers in Estonia has decreased consistently over the past seven years and they have almost twice as many teachers

per pupil as England. In addition, they have no problems with teacher retention. In fact, a 2018 report from the OECD highlighted that 94 per cent of teachers in Estonia felt satisfied with their jobs. Another report found that they had high levels of job satisfaction due to a decent pay-to-workload ratio and low amounts of administrative work.

Our government's go-to solution for retaining teachers is to raise their salary. But how can any increase now compete with a cost-of-living crisis? And anyway, how will it help retain all those who decided, during the pandemic, that life was about more than money?

The DfE has published an updated version of its education staff wellbeing charter. But while it acknowledges that protecting wellbeing is essential for improving morale and productivity, the government urgently needs to do more to deliver an improved workplace experience and a better work/life balance.

Re-examining our relationship with edtech can only help with that. And if the white paper doesn't spell out a plan to do it, the government will only have to come back to it eventually.

How broken do we want our system to get before we choose to rebuild it?

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW

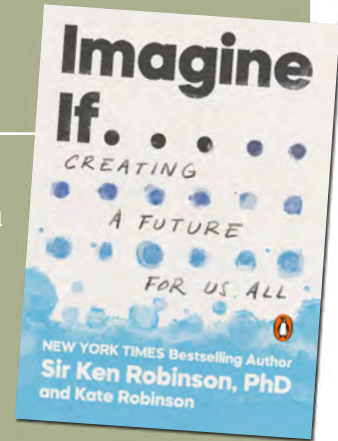


Imagine If

Authors: Sir Ken Robinson and Kate Robinson

Publisher: Penguin

Reviewer: Stephen Lockyer, primary teacher



(Rapturous applause)

Welcome to my TED Talk. Like others before me – most famously this book’s author – I will try to distil a large and complex idea into a small, shareable clip.

(Photo of Sir Ken Robinson)

Of course, filleting away the flesh of our arguments risks diluting our message. And we all know where that leads.

(Growth Mindset slide. Knowing audience laughter)

Ken Robinson achieved fame by evangelising to educators about how their system – and therefore their practice – stifled creativity. Amazingly, as many bought into this idea as challenged it.

(Picture of Sir Ken’s daughter, Kate)

Winning over the doubters has fallen to Kate Robinson, who took over completing the book her father had begun. The result is this ‘long letter’, distilling a lifetime’s work into a pocket-sized book.

(Photo of a book in a small pocket)

Now, it is hard to write concisely, but even harder to read concisely. So for those of you with only minutes of reading time (i.e. teachers), just leap to page 25 where the book actually starts. You’ll miss nothing more than the authors’ thanks to Overlord of Automation, Jeff Bezos. Yes. Really.

(Photo of a megalomaniac cartoon)

The meat of this essay is Ken/Kate’s passionate argument that ‘anything’ can involve a level of creativity – not just the soft, artsy subjects we think of as creativity catnip. A good premise. I found myself nodding along

enthusiastically.

(Text on screen: The Education Chapter)

Then this line appeared: “Children love to learn, they do it naturally; many have a hard time with education, and some have big problems with school.” I thought: you could put any two teachers together and productive debate about this would effortlessly ensue. *Imagine if* that was the purpose of this book... But just as McAfee needs there to be viruses on computers, the Robinsons need us to be the problem.

(Cartoon building with ‘Amazon Prime-ary’ signage)

The book stops short of one trope, at least: “preparing students for jobs that don’t yet exist.” But one line asks for schools to foster better partnerships with the world of work. I can confirm from experience that it’s easier to uncover KFC’s secret recipe than find a teenager a week’s work placement. *Imagine if* someone wrote a book encouraging businesses to form better partnerships with schools.

(Picture of Oliver Twist, holding a bowl out, marked ‘real world partnerships’)

Sentiments like this make this vaulting, evangelical read feel sadly out of touch with grassroots teaching. Yes, there is a decline in creativity. Yes, some teachers use formulaic lessons and copied resources. But why? *Imagine if* this book had drawn on those true creativity heroes in real classrooms to find out their secret recipe. But I guess Jeff Bezos has bought it regardless, so why bother?

(Photo of a North Atlantic tree octopus)

Instead we are offered a curriculum composed of eight core competencies: curiosity, creativity, criticism, communication, collaboration, compassion, composure, citizenship. I have

no problem with these. I love them and work to instil them in my own children (those in class and the freeloaders at home).

Imagine if we knew whether they meant the same to you as to me, and what that looked like in the classroom.

(Slo-mo footage of a farm)

Instead we are presented with another trope: the ‘school-as-industrial farm’ model - a cliché so infuriating I have created a ‘schools-as-Greek-style-yoghurt’ model in response.

(‘Schools-as-yoghurt’ graphic)

Robinson is/are on the money about one thing: One size doesn’t fit all. What they’ve missed is that in just half a generation’s time we’ve already seen a huge transformation towards personalisation. And it’s not clear any of it is down to being derided from the relative safety of a viral YouTube video.

Overall, this is an interesting and thought-provoking book. Its lasting message that “the system is broken. You are the system” may win a new generation of disheartened teachers around, but not me. Like so many, I work on the eight C’s daily from within the confines of ‘the system’. It’s no educational panacea, but it’s all we can do some days without running into a corner and sobbing. *Imagine if* that wasn’t the reality.

But then how would TED Talks go viral? Thanks for coming to my TED Talk.

Reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is **Mary Hind-Portley**, assistant subject leader (English), Hillside High School, Bootle

@Lit_liverbird

No more teaching tips and tricks

@overpractised

Last year, a tweet I put out to the effect that CPD shouldn't be about tips and tricks was roundly condemned. So I was heartened to discover Sarah Cottingham's blog on that theme this week. In it, she explores the culture of tips and tricks and why they seem attractive, backed by her own experience of being swayed by them.

Attractive by virtue of being bite-sized and easy to use immediately, these pedagogical shortcuts, Cottingham warns, end up being like education's equivalent of 'disposable fashion'. "We don't put a lot of thought into picking them up, we try them on for a bit, then we ditch them when something newer comes along."

I agree with Cottingham that we do ourselves and our pupils a disservice if we rely on this as our improvement approach, and I am taken with her alternative too. Cottingham suggests we focus on techniques instead, defining these as "skilful or efficient ways of achieving something" that require us to know our end goal and how we will go about achieving it. Her sequence of steps to do that makes for a very helpful blog for anyone planning



lessons, but also for CPD leaders to ensure participating colleagues benefit on a deeper and more sustainable level.

What makes effective assessment?

@DavidDidau

This is a blog about assessment in English but it's useful to consider whether extended responses are effective assessments in other subjects too. Here, Didau presents his thinking about the use in key stage 3 of extended responses drawn from GCSE. Are they really assessing our taught curriculum?

Didau categorically states that "making KS3 assessments similar to GCSE assessments is not only unnecessary, it's actively harmful." That may seem a little dramatic, but it did make me question whether our assessments tell us what pupils have learned or whether the information generated from assessments tells us something else entirely.

His focus on the precision of the curriculum and the use of 'curriculum-related expectations' is one that I will be discussing with our English team – and other subject leads.

Why is teaching torturous?

@EnserMark

In this older post, Mark Enser explores how teaching can become an exhausting grind "when you remove teacher agency from the process" and leave teachers feeling that change is out of their control. He explores what teachers find draining and frustrating, while recognising that, in the main, few are the professionals who complain about workload when they are engaged in something they find meaningful.

Enser points out that while some decisions may be made with workload in mind, such as a centralised curriculum, such reductions may not result in an engaged and fulfilled staff. The core principle here is our human need for agency, and it's an evergreen reminder to leaders to keep that at the heart of any drive to make teaching less of a 'Sisyphean task'. There's only so far that a focus on consistency in our policies can take us.

On cultural capital

@stoneman_claire

My final blog this week is from the always-inspirational Claire Stoneman. In it, she responds to the recent *Guardian* article about the value (or lack thereof) of museum visits. Robustly repudiating the piece's reductive view of cultural capital as measurable by impact on GCSEs, Stoneman pens an evocative and celebratory description of her culture-infused childhood.

This blog resonates with me because my childhood was similar: our parents found ways to enrich our lives using our home towns' (free) delights. But more than that, this deserves a close read for its lyrical evocation of her childhood which should inspire us all to provide a rich diet of curricular and extra-curricular experiences for those children who don't have access to the opportunities we had.

So let's think again about cultural capital and lift it from "the fog of fads and tick lists and school improvement". With Stoneman, let's instead give "careful, considered thought about what we want for all our children."

Research



Education Endowment Foundation will review a research development each half term. Contact @EducEndowFoundn if you have a topic you'd like them to explore

How can we improve attendance in the wake of Covid?

Kirsten Mould, EEF senior associate and assistant headteacher and SENCO, Mary Webb School and Science College

Aisha is in Year 6 and has not been attending school due to anxiety. She is sick every morning and gains deep-rooted comfort from being in her bedroom and close to both of her parents, who work from home and support her.

This is a real challenge some young people and their families face every day, and it can be difficult to know what schools can do to get their pupils back into the classroom, where we know they learn best.

Covid-19 has exacerbated absenteeism, and, on a national level, attendance is still well below pre-pandemic levels. The DfE has published new guidance to support schools to increase attendance, including asking them to consider what targeted support they have in place.

Quick fixes such as reward vouchers, attendance certificates and penalty fines can be successful in supporting some school refusers. But what can be done for those who are persistently absent from school, for whom such measures just don't work?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Every young person who is struggling like Aisha is facing a different set of barriers. However, the EEF has recently published a rapid evidence assessment that examines the best available research to find out our 'best bets' for improving attendance.

The review looked at the evidence for eight different approaches – including incentives, disincentives and mentoring – to identify strategies that could help. Overall, it found that the research on how to improve attendance is weak. But it did find some evidence of promise for the following approaches:



Monitoring attendance

Proactively monitoring and identifying pupils in need of extra support is crucial. In schools, this may be carried out by the education welfare officer, attendance officer and key member/s of the senior team and teaching staff as part of their safeguarding procedures. Establishing the reasons underlying a pupil's low attendance, looking for patterns and changes in their attendance and drawing comparisons is key.

Responsive and targeted approaches

The review found positive impacts for responsive and targeted approaches, where schools aim to address the individual causes behind a pupil's persistent absence. One example highlighted in the report involved a social worker identifying barriers and intervening to overcome them. This could mean assigning an older "walking buddy" for a pupil with high absences due to transport issues.

Communicating and engaging with parents

Parental engagement can take the form of a wide range of 'light-touch' approaches such as communicating the importance of regular attendance to parents via emails, phone calls or letters. Whatever the format, these

communications can encourage attendance by informing parents about their child's absence rate and comparing this to the national average.

Parental engagement could also involve discussions to gain further insights from pupils and their families about low attendance. These conversations could lead to an increased understanding of each child's individual barriers and, in turn, helpful remedial steps such as referrals for school counselling, support for parents/carers, substance misuse intervention groups and so on.

While there is little evidence to indicate exactly what shape parental engagement ought to take, the strategy shows real promise, making it a key area for future research to explore. The EEF's guidance report, *Working with parents to support children's learning*, offers practical advice on this area of teaching and learning.

To support Aisha, the school invested time in improving their connections with her family through regular meetings attended by the deputy headteacher. This same member of staff made it a priority to be present at the school gate each morning, meeting with parents informally at drop-off.

As a result, Aisha has recently achieved a half-term of full attendance; she knows the road is getting smoother for her every day. Regular communication between home and school continues.

The EEF's rapid evidence review offers practical suggestions for how schools can approach poor attendance. It also indicates that there is much more for us to learn in this area to ensure pupils and their families have adequate access to support and schools have the clarity they need to help map a path back into the classroom.



Week in

Westminster

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



SATURDAY

Education's own Her Maj followed the example of her lesser-known namesake by keeping calm and carrying on today.

Despite having Covid and sounding really unwell, Ofsted chief inspector Amanda Spielman delivered her keynote address to the Association of School and College Leaders' conference.

It meant a hasty rewrite of her speech, where she had planned to tell leaders "how happy I was to be with you in person". She did the speech over Zoom instead.

But she cheerily noted: "I do hope we are now free of the Covid restriction cycle, if not free of Covid itself!"

MONDAY

As the government starts work on deciding the next 300 schools to get swanky new rebuilds, education ministers might have to buy bigger diaries.

In parliament today, schools minister Robin Walker was asked a couple of times by MPs if he would visit schools in their constituency in "desperate need of urgent building works".

Walker responded to one such request: "It sounds as though my diary will be very full, but I would certainly be delighted to come to my hon friend's constituency."

Daily Mail columnist Sarah Vine took to Twitter to complain about the academy trust chosen to take over Holland Park,

the west London school attended by her son.

"Never heard of them," she said. The trust is United Learning – the country's largest with 75 schools.

She then kicked off about a "company based in Peterborough being put in charge of a school in west London".

"How can they possibly have any idea what's best for our students?" she asked.

The takeover of struggling schools by academy trusts – outside of local authority control and often their boundaries – was turbo-charged by Michael Gove (pictured) while he was education secretary and, at the time, also the husband of ... Sarah Vine!

TUESDAY

Education committee chair Robert Halfon has Big Love for education secretary Nadhim Zahawi. But that was put on hold after the Nadz delivered what Halfon said was a "Sir Humphrey on tranquilisers" response to concerns about the Covid inquiry not focusing enough on the impact of school closures on children.

Sir Humphrey Appleby is a politician in the Yes Minister TV show, known (according to Wikipedia) as a master of obfuscation and manipulation in giving long-winded answers to questions.

The same question was put to Robin Walker at the committee today.

The schools minister said he "doesn't want to repeat a Sir Humphreyish line", before then explaining at length why the inquiry's really vague terms of reference actually mean it will look at the impact of children.

Perhaps realising the "Sir Humphreyness" of his response, Walker then gave his backing for the committee to kick-off about the issue in a letter to inquiry chair Baroness Heather Hallett.

Meanwhile, Halfon put in a contender for the "most bizarre declaration of interest award". After mention of the American School in London (recently slated by Ofsted for its approach to social justice), Halfon made MPs aware that he had once played the donkey in Don Quixote in a play held at the school's hall.

Maybe other MPs can take note and be as rigorous when declaring interests about their second jobs?

WEDNESDAY

Ofqual board minutes from May, published today, show exams regulator officials advising before teacher grades were issued last year there was "nothing in the design of arrangements that would systematically advantage any particular centre type".

Fast forward a few months and the results actually showed private schools had filled their boots with top grades – seeing a 9 per cent rise, more than any other school type. D'oh!





Assistant Principal

We are looking to appoint an inspirational and dedicated Assistant Principal – Inclusion (SENCO) to join our successful and expanding school.

Reading Girls' School is a dynamic and welcoming community, serving the educational needs of girls from the ages of 11 to 16 from a diverse local community. Standards and progress are high, and it is performing at the 'top 1% of all schools nationally' (Department of Education, November 2019).

A focus on excellent teaching and learning is the driving force behind our success. Our students are polite and thoughtful individuals who play an active role in shaping and leading the school, through the Senior Student Leadership Team.

Our aim is a very clear one: to provide the best possible life-chances for every student. To that end, we challenge our students to the very edge of their academic capabilities whilst providing wrap-around support towards those goals.

You will find a refreshingly collaborative culture here, underpinned by respect and mutual trust. We are not afraid to challenge each other in an open, honest and supportive way. Teachers are genuinely recognised and valued.

We want someone to work closely with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that all student groups and vulnerable students make significant progress, which is at least in line with all other students.

The successful candidate will be able to

- Proven experience and knowledge in leading inclusion across the whole school
- To have responsibility for Special Educational Needs and EAL students leading whole school initiatives
- To demonstrate experience of alternative education provision
- To manage Child Protection and Safeguarding

In addition, you will contribute to the development and delivery of

the school and Trust vision and values as determined by The Thames Learning Trust.

We are committed to staff continuous professional development (CPD). Ofsted (November 2021) highlighted that "Leaders consistently prioritise the professional development of their staff. This includes a focus on making sure teachers have the most up-to-date and relevant specialist knowledge in their subject areas."

We also offer a forward-thinking Employee Assistance Programme, no lesson cover and generous non-teaching time allocation. As we are close to the centre of Reading, travel connections are first rate, with the M4 and M3 within easy reach, as well as the mainline railway station (with fast connections to London).

To find out more about Reading Girls School visit: www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk

The closing date is noon 2nd April

To apply for this position, please visit www.readinggirlsschool.co.uk

Applications will not be considered without a completed application form.

Visits prior to application are warmly welcomed. To arrange a visit, please contact, Ms Clacey jclacey@readinggirlsschool.net, PA to the Principal.

The Thames Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. For this post prior to appointment, The Thames Learning Trust will apply for an enhanced disclosure certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service.



HEADTEACHER VACANCY

Northumberland Heath Primary School



Role: Headteacher
Contract: Full time/permanent
Salary: Starting salary L18 (£67,495) but negotiable dependant on experience
Start Date: 1st September 2022

Woodland Academy Trust is thrilled to be currently recruiting for a Headteacher at Northumberland Heath Primary School.

As Headteacher, the successful candidate will have the courage to lead the school with compassion and keep the children and community at the heart of all decision-making.

We are looking to speak with candidates who have vision, drive and ambition to build on the school's journey so far and help the school to reach its vision for excellence. The successful candidate will work closely with other members of the established leadership team to provide the highest quality education throughout the school.

The successful candidate will have a proven track record of leadership experience and demonstrate their skills in successful school improvement and motivating colleagues through change.

As a Headteacher within our Trust you will work collaboratively with other leaders across the Trust to come together as a united team of educational professionals to develop the vision of the Trust across our entire community.

To find out more information and to apply please visit our recruitment page:
www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk/join-us

Application Deadline: Friday 8th April 2022
Interviews: Friday 22nd April 2022

For more information about Woodland Academy Trust please visit:
www.woodlandacademytrust.co.uk

Visits to our school are warmly encouraged. Please contact recruitment@watschools.org.uk to arrange.





Department
for Education



School Teachers' Review Body Member - Educationalist (Primary Education)

The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) is an independent body which makes recommendations to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Education on the pay and conditions of school teachers in England.

The STRB assesses evidence from Government and organisations representing schools and the teaching profession, and visits schools and local authorities to develop its understanding of issues facing teachers. In addition to providing recommendations on annual pay awards for teachers and school leaders, the STRB has been asked to report on a variety of matters in recent years, including moving toward a pay structure with higher starting and early career salaries and relatively flatter pay progression and providing additional guidance to schools through advisory pay points.

The STRB also meets schools and local authorities to talk directly to teachers and school leaders and so develop its understanding of the issues they face.

Further information on the STRB is available at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/school-teachers-review-body

The STRB is now seeking to fill a vacancy, and is looking to recruit an educationalist member that demonstrates the following criteria:

- Knowledge of providing effective leadership at a senior level within a maintained primary school or within a multi-academy trust including one or more primary schools.
- A good knowledge and understanding of pay, remuneration, performance management, labour market and reward issues and a strong understanding of the policy, financial and operational constraints that impact on remuneration decisions.
- The ability to analyse and interpret a large amount of complex and sensitive information, providing insight and a working knowledge over the impact of any potential decisions on the workforce.
- An ability to communicate effectively in collective decision making, assessing/debating conflicting opinions across a wide range of perspectives and attitudes to form a coherent set of recommendations.

Appointment

This position will provide an influential and intellectually stimulating challenge for the right individual, who will contribute to the recruitment, retention and motivation of an effective teacher workforce. As a member of the STRB you will bring your own expertise, alongside a high degree of analytical ability, strong communication skills and, ideally, an appreciation of public sector reward issues.

The time commitment for this position is approximately 25 days per year, for which an attendance allowance of £300 per day is payable, no additional fee is paid for any time spent in preparation or travelling.

This is a ministerial appointment and will initially be for up to three years.

The competition opens on 11 February 2022

The closing date for applications is 21 March 2022.

For more information about this role and how to apply, please visit the public appointments website at: | [Current Vacancies \(cabinetoffice.gov.uk\)](http://Current Vacancies (cabinetoffice.gov.uk)) and search 'School Teachers' Review Body'



School Improvement Officer

First Federation Trust

Full-time, permanent position. Payscale: L16-20

A rare and exciting opportunity has arisen for those senior leaders who wish to take the next step in their career

We are seeking a passionate School Improvement Officer with a proven track record of leading improvements in an educational setting, to join our skilled senior leadership team.

The successful candidate will work with school leaders across our diverse family of 16 schools, to provide professional support for all staff to ensure that they attain the highest standards and rates of progress possible.

Applicants must have recent experience as a Headteacher (minimum 3 years), evidence of sustained school improvement impact in one or more schools, and relevant leadership qualifications / designation: NPQH, NPQEL, LLE, SLE.

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Paul Walker, Trust CEO paul.walker@firstfederation.org.uk

Closing date: April 7, midday

Apply here <https://www.firstfederation.org/vacancies/>



Humberston Park
Special School

Headteacher

Required for September 2022.

Salary Range L24 – L39 dependant on relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

HPS is an all age school providing Education Therapy and Care for pupils with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

The school's Governors are seeking applicants with the ability and commitment to lead effectively in a specialist setting to maintain and develop the schools quality of provision.

It is strongly advised that applicants arrange to visit the school. Please also contact the current Headteacher if you have any questions about the post.

Email – head@hpark.org.uk

Telephone Number – 01472 590645

Address – St Thomas Close, Humberston, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN36 4HS.

Humberston Park Special School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

An Enhanced DBS certificate will be required.



HEADTEACHER

Salary: L15- 21

READY TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY?

We are looking for an inspirational and inclusive Head to nurture the children and lead the staff to excel in our delightful setting in Abingdon, South Oxfordshire. You will share a strong vision and passion to build on recent progress, ensuring that Thameside Primary School (an Ofsted 'Good' 1FE school and Nursery) continues to provide an engaging curriculum whilst raising aspirations for all learners.

Your drive and vision will maximise the personal, social and academic development and achievements for all pupils, whilst contributing to our local community.

The school serves a mixed catchment with higher than average levels of need. As part of the Vale Academy Trust, you will actively benefit from being part of a wider network.

To apply please visit:

<https://www.vale-academy.org/current-vacancies>

Closing date: Noon 1 April 2022 - Shortlisting will also take place on this date. Formal Interviews: 7 April 2022



ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER (ASSESSMENT, DATA AND ACHIEVEMENT)

(L12 – L16)

We are seeking to appoint an exceptional leader who is passionately committed to promoting the highest standards of achievement for all to the position of Assistant Headteacher for Assessment, Data and Achievement.

We are currently on an exciting journey to develop our school into a truly great place for all to learn, regardless of their ability or background. We are seeking an inspirational leader to build upon our current successes and be a major player in realising our ambition to be an outstanding school. Applicants must themselves be outstanding classroom practitioners with specific expertise around assessment, data and achievement and a proven track record of implementing change and school improvement in this area. They will need to demonstrate strategic vision, energy and enthusiasm and a strong determination to make a difference to the lives of the young people we serve.



EDUCATION – TEACHING

Full time
Permanent

Job Title: Executive Head – Secondary, permanent

Location: Essex region

Salary: TKAT leadership scale L35–L39 (£98,170 – £108,822)

Closing date: Midday on Wednesday 23rd March 2022

Interview date: expected to be on Monday 4th April 2022

Start date: 1st September 2022 or sooner if available

Are you an experienced, successful head looking for a role where you will have wider impact?

The Kemnal Academies Trust is currently looking for a secondary Executive Headteacher to join part of our school development work across the Trust. In the first phase of this role, the successful candidate will initially work in one school alongside an existing Headteacher to rapidly improve the provision and outcomes. The next phase will broaden the remit of the Executive Head to another school or a role with wider Trust impact.

We are looking for a candidate who can demonstrate a track record of sustained school improvement whilst operating within the Trust's ethos of working inclusively, respecting and caring for others, and having ambition and aspiration for all. You will be able to demonstrate the ability to develop, motivate and empower teams, work with agility to achieve the best outcomes for students, and employ high levels of emotional intelligence to galvanise school communities to bring about sustainable change.

Experience of successful headship, particularly in challenging situations or areas of deprivation, is essential to this role.

If you would like to know more about this post or to organise an informal discussion, please contact Matt Batchelor, Senior Director of Education at matt.batchelor@tkat.org

The closing date for applications is midday on Wednesday 23rd March 2022.

We reserve the right to close the vacancy early should we receive a significant number of applications.

If you have not had any communication within 10 days of the closing date please take this as confirmation that on this occasion your application has not been successful.

Safeguarding

TKAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Offers of employment will be subject to the full Safer Recruitment process, including an enhanced disclosure and barring service check.

Our Commitment – Equal, Inclusive, Diverse

TKAT is committed to inclusion, diversity and equality of opportunity by encouraging and welcoming differences, listening to individual experiences, aspirations and accomplishments and learning how to grow better together. We welcome applications from all suitable candidates, regardless of any protected characteristic; this includes applicants wishing to work flexibly.

Access to interview – should you be selected and invited to interview please let us know if you require us to adapt the interview environment. If we can accommodate practical workplace adjustments to assist we will.



HEADTEACHER

Required in Bristol for September 2022

Salary Range: £69,029 - £76,140

The Board of Trust in Learning (Academies) are looking to appoint an outstanding school leader to be Headteacher at Parson Street Primary School in Bristol. We are seeking a person with vision and one who can inspire young people and staff to deliver their very best. Parson Street Primary School is a mixed primary school 3-11 age range serving a diverse community in the south of the city with approximately 400 students on roll and growing. The school was judged as requiring improvement by Ofsted in 2018 and is awaiting an inspection.

You will have a strong track record of improving performance, driving change and raising aspirations as well as standards. You will need to be dedicated, passionate and committed and someone who is able to see the possibilities for success for all students. You would be building upon the current strengths whilst being able to effectively analyse how the school can and should improve in order to realise its vision, and that of the Trust, to deliver outstanding education.

This is a fantastic opportunity for someone who has the skill, imagination and tenacity to lead the school on its next crucial stage. You will be leading a talented and dedicated team of staff who are supported by the Trust's Central Team and CEO.

The school and the Trust place no limits on their aspirations for our pupils/students and we all believe strongly in the importance of opening horizons and opportunities for those less well placed to see it for themselves. Parson Street Primary School has a history of building upon excellent relationships between staff, pupils, parents and the community. Pupils take pride in their school and respond positively to high expectations.



You will:

- Be an inspirational leader, strategic thinker and creative problem-solver
- Want to make a difference and help transform opportunities for children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Have experience of consistently delivering high standards of achievement
- Have excellent motivational and communication skills to lead successfully
- Be committed to professional development and improving yourself and others

Supporting you:

- Trust in Learning (Academies) is committed to high quality professional development and career opportunities for all staff
- You will work closely with a highly experienced CEO who will fully support you in this role
- You will work in collaboration with other leaders across the Trust helping to develop the MAT as well as Parson Street Primary School

Trust in Learning (Academies) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments will be subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure.

We would encourage potential applicants to visit the school and to arrange a visit please contact Fiona Price, School Business Manager on 0117 9038377 or by email FPrice@parsonstreet.com

Key Dates:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 21st March 2022 | - Deadline for applications |
| 21st March 2022 | - Shortlisting |
| 28th March 2022 | - Information Gathering Day |
| 4th and 5th April 2022 | - Assessments and Interview |

A full application pack is available on www.parsonstreet.com/current-vacancies/ - Please send your completed application by email to recruitment@tila.school by **12 noon on 21st March 2022**



'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark



ACADEMY PRINCIPAL (FULL-TIME ROLE)

Grade: L24 (£74,295) to L28 (£81,942)

St Gregory's Catholic School is a Catholic secondary school and part of the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership (KCSP), a multi-academy trust (MAT) established by the Archdiocese of Southwark for Catholic education across Kent. Currently a MAT comprising 24 academies (19 primary and 5 secondary), KCSP is seeking to appoint an inspirational and dedicated Academy Principal from September 2022 due to the retirement of the current post-holder.

St Gregory's Catholic School is an over-subscribed seven-form entry secondary school located in Tunbridge Wells and is a popular destination for pupils from our Catholic partner primary schools in Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Sevenoaks.

St Gregory's Catholic School is an inclusive academy. Its dedicated staff, helpers and governance committee members work hard to ensure that every student is supported and challenged to be their very best. Each individual is encouraged to grow spiritually and intellectually, so that unique and positive contributions can be made to society and the world. Its most recent denominational inspection in March 2018 judged it as 'Outstanding' and its most recent Ofsted inspection in March 2013 judged the academy to be 'Outstanding' in all areas. St Gregory's Catholic School are seeking a new Academy Principal who will continue to build upon and further develop the excellent work and foundations that the school has in place.

Reporting to the Executive Principal, the Academy Principal will be responsible for the day-to-day leadership and management of the academy and will lead a team that strive together for children under the school's motto of 'St Gregory's students make the world a better place'.

The successful applicant will take the lead role in providing inspirational Catholic education based on our shared Gospel values, and will be seen by pupils, parents and carers, and the wider parish as the person directing their learning, and as the academy's pastoral leader. We are therefore seeking to appoint a practising Catholic to this role.

Visits to the academy are warmly encouraged and will give you the opportunity to see all that this wonderful setting has to offer. Mike Wilson, Executive Principal, is keen to talk informally and confidentially with interested candidates via the telephone or MS Teams. Either can be arranged by contacting Katy Huitson, hr@sgschool.org.uk

Closing date for applications: Midday 28th March 2022

Interviews to be held during the week commencing: 27th and 28th April 2022

Start date: September 2022

St. Gregory's Catholic School and KCSP are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and require all staff, helpers and governance committee members to share this commitment. Offers of employment are subject to an enhanced disclosure and barring service check and a section 128 check.



Regional Development Lead

Home based to cover the South East, London and East of England regions.

Starting Salary: £39,000 (negotiable for exceptional candidates – depending on experience).

Annual inflation increase (subject to affordability) + annual incremental rises.

Home based with occasional travel to Birmingham and within the region

Do you have a proven track record in partnership development and creating opportunities?

Do you have an in-depth knowledge of school governance?

Are you passionate about improving schools by developing effective governance?

If you have answered YES to these questions, then we would like to hear from you.

We have an exciting opportunity for right person to join NGA as Regional Development Lead for London, South-East and East of England. You will join the newly formed Governance Development team who share a passion for developing opportunities with new and existing partners and being the face of NGA within the regions. As part of our flexible working commitment, we

are willing to be flexible in terms of the shape of the region and will consider part time for one of the regions or full time for all of the regions.

Benefits include:

- 25 days annual leave + bank holidays (increasing to 27 at 6 years continuous service)
- 7% employer contribution pension

How to Apply:

Candidates must complete an Application Form. Please do not send a CV or include a CV to support the Application Form.

Candidates are asked to submit the monitoring form. The information provided is confidential and used for monitoring purposes only.

If you have any questions about the role, please email jobs@nga.org.uk

Applications should be sent to jobs@nga.org.uk with "Regional Lead" in the subject line **by 12 noon Friday 8th April 2022.**

NGA is an equal opportunities organisation and Disability Confident employer. We encourage applications from all backgrounds and communities.

Closing date for applications: Friday 8th April 2022

Shortlisted candidates notified: Monday 11th April 2022

Interview Date: Wednesday 20th April 2022

We will aim to offer alternative interview dates if shortlisted candidates are unavailable on this date.

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

since 1958

Headteacher, Holland Park School

Reports to: Chair of Governors
Salary scale: Highly competitive and commensurate with experience
Duration: Permanent
Start date: September 2022

Are you a collaborative and ambitious leader with a proven track record in educational leadership?

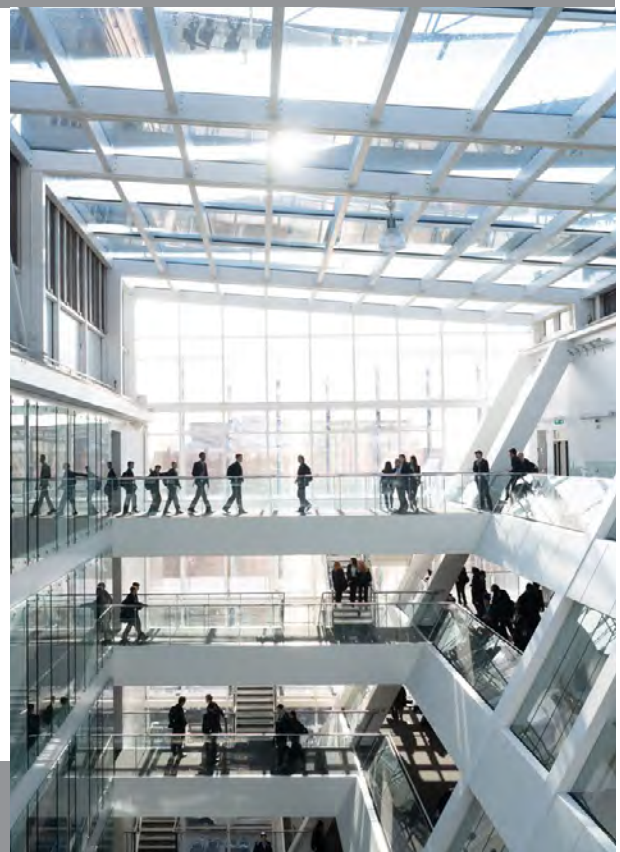
Do you have a deep commitment to the education of young people, and want to make a difference in your next role?

Would you be able to build on the successes of the past, as our School looks to move forward?

The post has arisen following the retirement of the previous headteacher, and as the School reaches an exciting point in its history. Holland Park School already has a reputation for excellent educational outcomes – and we are looking for a headteacher to take this forward, building on past successes and developing the School further.

We are seeking an outstanding and committed Headteacher for Holland Park School in West London.

Holland Park School has a long-standing reputation and this role has the opportunity to make a real difference on the national stage, in the interests of all young people.



Further detail available at www.hollandparkschool.co.uk/vacancies/headteacher.



HEAD OF ESTATES AND ENVIRONMENT

Salary: Salary: L1-10 (£42,195 - £52,723) (negotiable for an exceptional candidate)
 Pro rata: 37 hours per week, Flexible to meet the needs of the Trust

BDAT is a Trust, a family of 17 schools. The 17 schools have close working relationships supporting each other every day, you will become an integral part of the family. This post offers a unique opportunity for an ambitious applicant to join a growing and well-established Trust.

We are seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person to join our busy team and oversee the buildings and estates.

The role includes responsibility for Health and Safety and supporting academies in this critical area of our operation. As Head of Estates and Environment you will be leading and supporting a team of academy business managers, site managers and Headteachers on a broad range of building and estates projects to support education environmental improvements which will facilitate improvements in learning.

To learn more about this exciting role and BDAT, or for an informal discussion please contact the office on 01274 909120. Please return your completed application form via email to: recruitment@bdac-academies.org.

BDAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All staff are subject to an enhanced DBS check which will form a condition of any employment offer.

Closing Date: 12.00pm, 30th March 2022
Starting Date: Required to start as soon as possible



Are you a dynamic, creative solution focused professional who believes passionately that every pupil deserves the best educational experiences?

Do you believe that you can inspire young people who have experienced challenges, difficult experiences and trauma to dream big and achieve positive outcomes?

Are you determined to create the best possible opportunities for our amazing young people by authentically meeting their individual needs?

Are you resilient, determined and up for a new and exciting challenge?

We are looking for two exceptional candidates to join our specialist team:

Inclusion and Safeguarding Lead: £48,000 - £50,000- as part of the SLT you will Leading and Developing Inclusion and safeguarding across both Hopewell sites

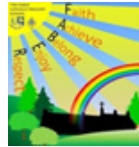
Motor Vehicle Lead Tutor: £38,000- £44,000- responsible for the delivery of City & Guilds Motor Vehicle.

Hopewell is a small independent special school for children and young people who have an EHCP for social, emotional, mental health and complex needs.

We provide child centred specialist education and therapeutic support across our two sites the school based in Dagenham and our vocational centre motorvations@hopewell in Romford.

We believe passionately in supporting and nurturing our pupils as well as aspiring to provide them with outstanding and creative learning opportunities.

By empowering our pupils, building their self-confidence and enabling them to develop their individual strengths we endeavour to provide them with the skills they need to lead constructive and fulfilling adult lives.



Head of School

Full-time, Permanent position: September 2022
Salary Range L5 – L9

This is a wonderful opportunity both for the school and your own career development. We are looking for a highly-motivated, outstanding leader, who has energy and enthusiasm to make a positive difference to young children's lives. We want to appoint an exemplary teacher who can share excellence and expertise to develop the school, through effective communication and a commitment to maintaining and raising standards. There is a strong focus on continuing professional development with unique opportunities offered as part of a large multi-academy company, which includes a Teaching School Hub.

The position will offer the successful candidate the opportunity to take the school from good to outstanding. Full support will be given by the Executive Leadership Team of the Painsley Catholic Academy.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)



Achieving excellence together

PRINCIPAL WEST VALE ACADEMY

Halifax, West Yorkshire

It is an exciting time for a new Principal who can benefit from and contribute to the on-site Research School, English Hub and Initial Teacher Training provision.

An opportunity has arisen within Great Heights Academy Trust for a Principal based at West Vale Academy. We are keen to work with leaders who wish to be a part of our growing trust network of academy schools, benefit from internal MAT support structures and who can see the potential at West Vale Academy.

We are seeking to appoint an inspirational leader with drive and motivation to ensure the best outcomes for the children at West Vale Academy.

'Great Heights Academy Trust strives to always provide an inspirational, positive and welcoming environment where there is a sense of pride and fun and where everyone works together with confidence, enthusiasm and mutual respect'



Principal

Full-time, permanent position: September 2022
Salary Range L10-16

This is an excellent opportunity both for the school and your own career development. We are offering this non-teaching position to a highly motivated, outstanding practitioner, who has the vision to lead the school from good to outstanding. We believe that, in our family-orientated school, every child should be developed to their full potential in terms of social, spiritual and academic formation. We are sure you will love the school just as much as we do! There is a strong focus on continuing professional development with unique opportunities offered as part of a large multi-academy company, which includes a Teaching School Hub.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)



Headteacher Redland Green School

If you are an innovative leader and strategic-thinker, we'd love you to join our School. You will be someone who feels an affinity with our values and vision, with an impressive track record of school improvement. Our ideal candidate will have superb leadership skills and credibility to motivate and empower others.

You will already have significant whole school impact in a Headship or Deputy role and be ready to innovate and lead. We have ambitious priorities for the school and look to be at the leading edge of curriculum

development by showcasing our innovation and outcomes.

GGLT has a collaborative working culture and supportive school leadership team. To facilitate development and growth you will need to build system-wide leadership capacity at all levels through actively developing strategic governance, staffing structures, roles and responsibilities.

Closing date:
21 March 2022 at 9:00am

Interview Dates:
24 March 2022 and
25 March 2022





**EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHER - PRIMARY
(Essex region)**

Are you an experienced, successful head looking for a role where you will have wider impact?

We are looking for a primary Executive Headteacher to join part of our school development work. The successful candidate will initially work in one school alongside an existing Headteacher to improve the provision and outcomes. Then they will broaden the remit of the Executive Head to another school/role with wider Trust impact.

We are looking for a candidate who can demonstrate a track record of sustained school improvement whilst operating within the Trust's ethos of working inclusively, respecting and caring for others, and having ambition and aspiration for all. You will: demonstrate the ability to develop, motivate and empower teams, work with agility to achieve the best outcomes for students, and employ high levels of emotional intelligence to galvanise school communities to bring about sustainable change.

Experience of successful headship is essential.



Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy, in Ashton-under-Lyne in Greater Manchester, has a strong and caring community. Following the retirement of our Headteacher, we are seeking an inspirational leader who will build on our strengths and take our school to the next stage of our adventure.

The successful candidate will be a child-centred professional with a strong track record, and a commitment to ensuring that Rosehill Methodist Primary continues to be a happy and thriving environment where children can flourish.

This is a fantastic opportunity to:

- Be welcomed into a strong community
- Help shape the lives of pupils with positive attitudes to learning who are hardworking, caring and proud to attend Rosehill
- Lead dedicated staff who are committed to delivering the very best for pupils
- Benefit from the support of the Epworth Education Trust, a caring and inclusive MAT

For more information, please visit www.joinrosehill.co.uk

Deadline for applications is: 9:00am on April 4 2022

Epworth Education Trust and Rosehill Methodist Primary Academy are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people. An enhanced disclosure from the DBS will be required for this post.

DID YOU KNOW?



As a recruiter for an MAT of 34 Academies, I have been very impressed with the professional support we have received from Schools Week and the quick turnaround time they provide for our advertised vacancies.

David Ross Education Trust

As a Schools Week subscriber, your organisation receives a **20% DISCOUNT** on recruitment advertising.

Online listings, classified advertising, and package options available.

Click here to contact our team

