

SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Sunak schools snub heralds 'return of austerity'



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SCHOOLS WEEK

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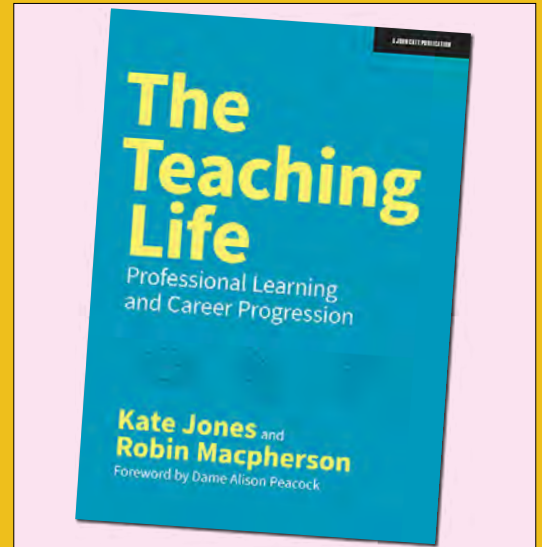
READING GIRL'S SCHOOL - ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL - INCLUSION (SENCO) - L12 - L17

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NEWS

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Persistently absent pupils to be mentored under £5m trial

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

Pupils who are persistently absent will be assigned mentors under a new £5 million trial to boost school attendance in disadvantaged areas.

It comes after new data showed more than a third of secondary pupils have been persistently absent from school this year.

A tender notice published by the Department for Education reveals ministers are seeking an organisation to recruit and train mentors “to provide targeted one-to-one support” to youngsters and their families to “overcome attendance barriers”.

The government announced in its levelling-up white paper that it would target support for issues such as attendance at 55 “education investment areas” across England.

The successful bidder will initially work for one year in one of the areas, supporting between 500 and 1,000 pupils.

But the contract will include the option to “scale up to multiple areas nationally and support larger volumes of pupils in years two and three”.

Mentors will have “conversations” with pupils and families. They may also work with “external local agencies” to improve school attendance.

Many schools and academy trusts already employ attendance leads, or staff who mentor pupils to cut absence rates.

Greenwood Academies Trust recently advertised for an “attendance officer – learning mentor”, while the Redhill Academy Trust sought an academic mentor whose duties include chasing up pupils with low attendance.

But a recent analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation found “not enough evidence” to back mentoring approaches to boost attendance.

The government said the scheme aims to “enhance capacity” for early help and intervention by working with persistently absent pupils or those at risk of “severe” absence – which means missing half of sessions.

Data from Education Datalab showed

PERSISTENT ABSENCE, 2013 TO 2022



persistent absence – the proportion of pupils missing 10 per cent or more sessions – remained high at 26 per cent of primary pupils and 34 per cent of secondary pupils so far this year.

These are down from highs of more than 50 per cent and just under 40 per cent respectively in the autumn term of 2020. But they are still far higher than normal years, when primary persistent absence is usually between 8 and 10 per cent, and secondary is about 13 per cent.

Severe absence – pupils missing over half of sessions – also remains at over 3 per cent in secondary schools this academic year.

The latest government statistics showed 12.1 per cent of pupils were persistently absent and 1.1 per cent were severely absent in 2020-21. The figures are lower because Datalab counts Covid isolation, while the DfE does not.

Datalab found that increases in persistent absence were driven by rises in authorised absence, with unauthorised absence rates remaining similar as in previous years.

Government data shows pupils missed 328 million in-person school days in 2020-21, 270 million because of Covid. This represents a five-fold increase in days missed compared with 2018-19, the last normal year before the

pandemic.

Ministers have said they are worried the pandemic has exacerbated persistent absence. About 12,000 schools now use a new daily attendance tracker pilot.

The latest government attendance data also shows disruption because of Covid is far from over.

Covid-related pupil absence trebled in just two weeks, while almost one in ten teachers was off last week.

Nationally, pupil attendance fell from 92.2 per cent to 89.7 per cent, reversing a recent trend of rising attendance rates.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the ASCL school leaders’ union, said the government “must as an absolute minimum continue to make available free Covid testing for education settings after April 1”.

The Guardian reported that free tests for schools would end this month. The government has refused to confirm the plans.

Meanwhile, Datalab also warned this week that disadvantaged year 11 pupils have missed much more school than their better-off counterparts.

Barton said it was an “extremely challenging situation” as pupils prepared for exams.

LEVELLING UP

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£64m for inclusive grammars – but gap widens

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

EXCLUSIVE

The disadvantage gap between grammar schools handed £64 million to become more inclusive and their non-selective neighbours has widened.

In 2018, 16 grammar schools were given about £50 million to expand. A further six split another £14.3 million in 2019. In exchange, they had to put plans in place to recruit more disadvantaged pupils.

Despite a pandemic surge in the number of pupils eligible for free school meals, figures from the campaign group Comprehensive Future show that grammars have fallen further behind on inclusivity.

The difference between the number of pupils on free school meals across the 22 grammars and their non-selective neighbours grew from 12.2 percentage points to 16.8 in just two years, a rise of 38 per cent.

Although the average free school meals rate in the schools rose from 3.2 per cent in 2019 to 5.2 per cent in 2021, the proportion of pupils eligible for free meals at non-selective schools in the same areas increased from 15.4 to 22 per cent.

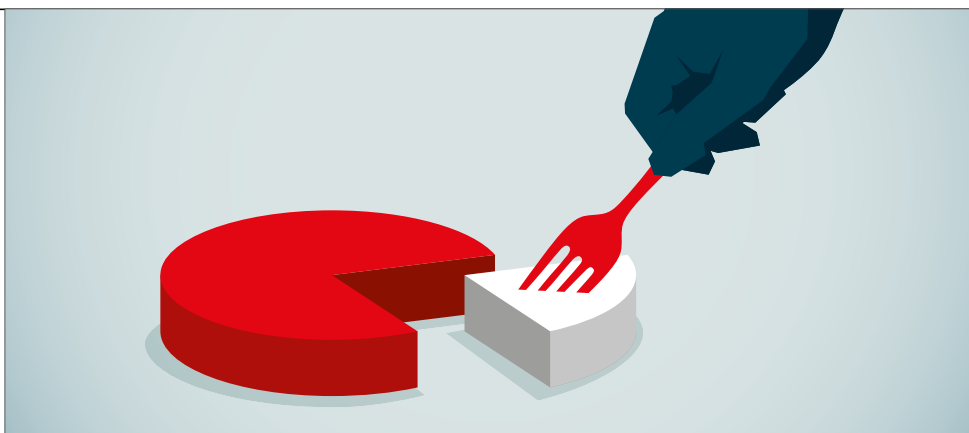
For some schools, the increase in the disadvantage gap was substantial. It rose from 16.3 to 27.2 percentage points at Haberdashers' Adams school in Shropshire, and from 16.2 percentage points to 27 at the nearby Newport Girls' High School Academy.

Most of the 22 grammars were also more likely to admit pupils from fee-paying prep schools than those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Dr Nuala Burgess, the chair of Comprehensive Future, said the figures showed the expansion fund was a "fundamentally flawed idea".

"When you think how much money was given to grammar schools on the condition of widening their access, these figures are shocking."

But leaders said they were starting to see the fruits of their efforts, especially in younger age groups.



At Bournemouth School, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals more than doubled from 2.8 per cent in 2019 to 6 per cent in 2021. But the disadvantage gap rose from 10.7 to 14.3 percentage points, because the free school meals rate in other local schools also rose.

Dorian Lewis, Bournemouth's head, said changes to admissions policies "only impact upon a proportion of the school population, not those in older year groups who were admitted under an older policy".

At nearby Bournemouth School for Girls, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals also rose, from 2.7 per cent to 4.8 per cent, but its gap increased from 10.8 to 15.5 percentage points.

Alistair Brien, its head, said the school remained "absolutely committed to widening access". But initiatives planned for the past year were shelved because of Covid.

The number of pupils eligible for free school meals at St Michael's Catholic Grammar School in Barnet, north London, rose from 2.8 per cent to 4.4 per cent over the two years. Its gap rose from 12.4 to 14.4 percentage points.

Michael Stimpson, the schools' head, pointed to rising rates of disadvantage in lower year groups.

There was also "no doubt at all that lockdown has prevented us from fully 'getting out there' and so numbers would be lower than we all hoped".

The free schools meals rate at Lawrence Sheriff school in Warwickshire increased from 3.1 to 5.6 per cent, while its disadvantage gap rose from 8.8 to 11.8

percentage points.

Teresa Mpfu, Lawrence Sheriff's head, said the school had prioritised disadvantaged pupils in its

oversubscription criteria and lowered the 11-plus pass mark for poorer children.

But the school faced a "challenge" in ensuring information sent out through primary schools reached poorer families. "We do not have access to lists of such pupils, which would enable us to contact them directly."

A question mark also hangs over the future of the expansion fund. Only half of the £200 million has been handed out and no further rounds have been announced since 2019.

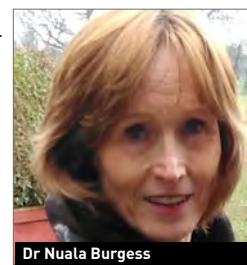
Dr Mark Fenton, the chief executive of the Grammar School Heads' Association, said there was "much more work to do".

A free test familiarisation service for poorer pupils, piloted in 30 schools last year, is now being rolled out nationally.

Fenton said children from poorer backgrounds performed less well than their peers "at every level of education in England".

"It's hardly surprising that only a few of them achieve well enough in primary school to put themselves in contention for a grammar school."

However, poorer children do "substantially" better at grammar schools, "so every extra child we can welcome into one of our schools is a bonus".



Dr Nuala Burgess

LEVELLING UP

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Eton commits £1m annual top-up for each 'elite' sixth form

WILL NOTT

@WILLNOTT1

EXCLUSIVE

Eton College will pump £1 million per year into each of its three proposed elite sixth forms in the north and midlands, declaring current funding levels are inadequate for its lofty ambitions.

The prestigious private school has partnered with the Star Academies trust to open the new sixth form colleges in areas identified for levelling up support by government.

However, Schools Week can reveal Eton is stumping up an “in perpetuity” financial top-up that works out at around £2,000 extra per student, if each college meets its 480-student quota over two year groups. That’s effectively a 50 per cent uplift on top of what students in other post-16 institutions get.

Eton said the extra cash is needed to offer the educational and co-curricular opportunities available at the all-boys school, which charges nearly £50,000-a-year, as government funding rates are too low.

“The kind of provision we envisage is simply not possible under the current per student funding provided by the government for 16 to 19 settings,” an Eton spokesperson said.

The government has pinned its “levelling up” promises on delivering “elite” sixth forms to get pupils in deprived areas into the top universities.

But Lee Elliot Major, a professor of social mobility at the University of Exeter, said: “If that is what it takes, to provide an education that everyone should receive, then for me it begs the question, why aren't all pupils funded at that level?”

Tom Richmond, a former adviser to two skills ministers and now director of think tank EDSK, added the investment was a “curious interpretation of ‘levelling up’, particularly when the government has yet to address the miserly funding settlement for 16 to 19 education in recent years”.

Eton and Star intend to bid in the next wave of free schools, with a view to opening the sixth forms in Dudley, Middlesbrough and Oldham in 2025.

They will provide “knowledge-rich teaching from subject-specialists; access to talks, academic essay prizes and debate clubs; Oxbridge-style tutorial sessions and the chance



Eton cloisters

to learn Latin”.

A Schools Week investigation previously found the best-performing sixth forms taught fewer poorer pupils and recruited heavily from neighbouring areas.

Eton told Schools Week it is drawing up an admissions policy to prioritise pupil premium students, looked after children, those would be the first in their family to attend university and also youngsters from particular postcodes.

But experts have questioned whether the extra cash will create an unequal playing field for student recruitment.

Richmond said the “question is how many potential winners and losers their philanthropy will create. The early signs are not encouraging”.

He said “far from expanding opportunities, they are seeking to limit the beneficiaries of their plans to the tiny number of students ‘lucky’ enough to attend these new institutions.”

Bill Watkin, chief executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, said private institutions like Eton are free to target resources at a tiny number of high performing students, but this is “unlikely to make a significant contribution to the governments levelling up agenda”.

“If Eton really wants to make an impact, it should invest in, and work in partnership with, existing sixth form providers that are busy transforming the lives of students of all abilities and doing so with a much lower unit of resource,” he added.

Eton told Schools Week that it intends to increase opportunities for young people over and above those who might attend the new sixth forms.

“For example, EtonX future skills courses will be offered for free to all 11 to 16 partner schools in these towns, as will other digital content via our Eton Virtual platform,” a spokesperson said.

The institution will offer opportunities for those in partner schools to access career education, society speaker and academic enrichment programmes run by Eton and Star. Eton will also host a free residential Eton Connect summer school for year 10 students from these areas.

Many multi-academy trusts have benefited from philanthropist investments in the past.

But Sam Freedman, an ex-government adviser now at Ark Schools, said Eton’s proposed level of investment is “quite unusual” particularly in the post-16 space.

He added that he has no problem with Eton taking money from rich parents and giving it to kids who need more help, but added: “I just wish they were offering these schools to a wider range of students, rather than just those at the top.”

A DfE spokesperson said the department welcomes proposals for new sixth forms “where they are most needed to ensure that talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the opportunity to progress to leading universities” as part of its levelling up agenda.



Sam Freedman

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Secret talks on future of tutoring programme

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

EXCLUSIVE

Government officials have started secret talks over reshaping the flagship National Tutoring Programme (NTP) next year, suggesting ministers are looking to cancel Randstad's current contract.

Schools Week understands that "market warming" discussions have begun between the Department for Education and would-be bidders about next year.

It is understood Randstad – the international HR company that runs the scheme – did not know about the discussions.

The company has a "one year, plus one year, plus one year" agreement with the government, but has come under heavy criticism over its performance.

NTP reached just one third of the promised two million courses last month, but the Department for Education insists they will reach that target this year.

Randstad has yet to be told of its future, but the DfE must give 60 days' notice if it plans to extend the contract.

Richard Moore, a partner at Clarke Willmott LLP, said the market warming discussions would suggest the DfE is "thinking about not extending the contract further and looking at procuring again".

"Market warming is a useful test to assess the demand for a new contract from potential bidders. It can also help a contracting authority plan for and scope a new procurement process."

Crown Commercial Service documents states that pre-tender market engagement can "give suppliers an understanding" of requirements.

No tender has been published so far, but sources suggest next year's NTP could instead focus more on schools-led tuition.

A new schools-led pillar – where cash is given directly to schools to organise tutoring – has proved popular after being introduced this year, accounting for three-quarters of started courses.

The two original arms organised by Randstad – tuition partners and academic mentors – have seen much slower take-up.



The two are both in Randstad's contract for next year and beyond.

The DfE did not confirm whether these discussions had begun. A spokesperson said schools had continued to "provide feedback to the department over the course of the year – in particular regarding the need for a programme that is as simple for schools to navigate and implement".

"The department is exploring all options to make sure that feedback is reflected in the programme next year."

Since November, a raft of changes have watered down criteria to use the programme.

Robert Halfon, the chair of the education committee and a vocal critic of the catch-up scheme, said last week that Randstad should get "one last chance" after previously calling on the government to "seriously enact the break clause".

Karen Guthrie, Randstad's senior programme director for the NTP, said it continued to work in "partnership" with DfE to "evolve and develop" the catch-up programme.

She said "it has become apparent that school-led tuition is proving the most attractive

option".

"Randstad has placed more academic mentors into classrooms than last year and directly engaged over half of the schools in England since the beginning of the academic year, which has significantly contributed to the success of school-led tuition," she said.

No data has been released on how many academic mentors have been placed, nor how many schools have been reached.

Guthrie added: "Monitoring and progressing the NTP has always been an integral part of our engagement with the DfE, in order to provide and shape the best possible service to our schools and children as the pandemic's impact transitions."

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the school leaders' union ASCL, said heads would have to know next academic year's NTP arrangements "as soon as possible so that they can begin planning" as the "mechanics...are complex".

"The school-led tutoring route has proved to be by far the most popular of the three routes this year and we hope this will be reflected in the funding allocations for next year."



Geoff Barton

NEWS

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Sunak's schools snub marks 'return to austerity', warn heads

SCHOOLS WEEK REPORTER

@SCHOOLSWEEK

Rishi Sunak's school funding snub in his spring statement heralds a "return of austerity", leaders have warned, as the cost of living will push half a million more children into poverty.

The chancellor was widely criticised for the few policies to help families as living standards dip to their lowest level since the 1950s.

Analysis by the Resolution Foundation think tank found a further 1.3 million people will fall into "absolute poverty" in 2022-23, including 500,000 children.

It is the first time poverty has surged outside recessions in Britain, with inflation due to reach a 40-year high.

But schools – which, as the hub of communities, will have to pick-up the pieces of rising poverty – are barely mentioned in the 54-page statement.

Dr Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, said the "refusal to increase education funding in the face of this inflation surge signals a return to the austerity of the 2010s. The chancellor has missed an opportunity to protect our children's futures."

The government last year announced an extra £4.7 billion school funding by 2024-25. This would restore per-pupil funding to 2010 levels in real terms.

Rising energy prices are a key cost concern. An investigation by *Schools Week* last year revealed school leaders were setting aside tens of thousands of pounds as electricity and gas costs were set to rise by 50 per cent.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the ASCL school leaders' union, said he was disappointed that the chancellor did not address "the financial pressures facing the education system amidst soaring inflation".

"We are gravely concerned that they are facing a fresh funding crisis."

The government said such costs account for just 1.4 per cent of school budgets, claiming energy rises would have a "relatively small impact".

Schools will also have to fund teacher pay

rises from their current budgets, with proposals for a 5 per cent rise for experienced teachers and a 16 per cent rise for new starters over the next two years.

But the rise in inflation means "many experienced teachers and leaders will see the real value of their pay fall", Barton warned.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 5.5 per cent in the 12 months to January 2022. The Office for Budget Responsibility warned the Ukraine war fall-out and rising energy prices could push inflation to 8.7 per cent later this year – a 40-year high.

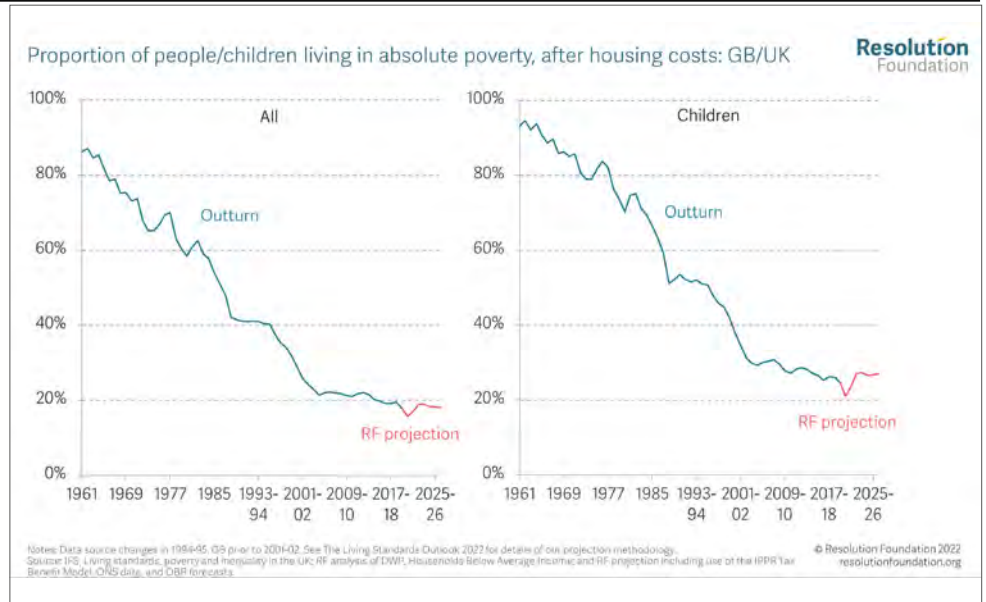
Meanwhile, England's largest councils also say that spiralling fuel prices are impacting school transport services.

Cash-strapped authorities face paying providers significantly more, or leaving thousands of pupils unable to access free transport.

The County Councils Network authorities that supplied data for the study transported 248,000 pupils free last year, a fifth of whom had special educational needs.

The only statement announcement that might impact schools is a pledge to review the apprenticeship levy as part of a new Treasury tax plan, to be finalised in autumn.

The levy is paid by academies and trusts with a payroll bill of £3 million or more, and by councils on behalf of local authority-



maintained schools. Schools can then draw down funds from the levy to pay for apprentice training.

But the schools sector has struggled to make use of the scheme, with some leaders saying there are no courses they can spend the money on.

Schools have also been criticised for paying apprentice teaching assistants as little as £4.30 an hour, leading to claims that some could be "exploiting" the apprenticeships for cheap labour.

Following widespread criticism, Sunak hinted more support could be announced later this year to tackle rising energy bills. But he said he could not solve "every problem".

Spring statement announcements such as the 5p fuel duty cut and a national insurance threshold rise, would "put money in the pockets of hardworking British families", he said.

CEO pay: Signs of restraint (but not for the best-paid)

TOM BELGER
@TOM_BELGER

The country's best-paid academy trust leaders enjoyed bigger pay rises than their peers last year, new figures reveal.

Schools Week's annual CEO pay investigation also reveals a £15,000 pay gap between top-paid male and female leaders.

The findings have sparked fresh calls for the government to revive its paused clampdown on "excessive" pay, although the findings suggest many trusts are using CEO departures to review their executive pay.

However, with a looming white paper expected to accelerate the drive to an all-trust system, Emma Knights, chief executive of the National Governance Association (NGA), said the government needed to "get a grip" on outliers to avoid fuelling anti-academy sentiment.

Average £6,655 rise for best-paid

Schools Week's annual investigation into chief executive pay reveals that salaries among the best-paid have continued to rise.

We analysed 2020-21 annual accounts for 258 trusts that were previously sent letters by government concerning high pay.

Thirty-two CEOs earned £200,000 or more - four more than in 2019-20.

The top 20 earners saw their wages rise an average of £6,655 to almost £255,000, a 2.7 per cent increase - similar to the 2.75 per cent average teacher pay rise that year.

The best-remunerated CEO remained the Harris Federation's Sir Dan Moynihan, who earned £455,000. Accounts state that three other unnamed staff earned over £210,000, including one person on £300,000-£310,000.



Sir Kevin Satchwell, who leads both the Thomas Telford School and Thomas Telford MAT, became only the second trust CEO to breach the £300,000 mark.

'Outrageous' gap with staff

Moynihan's salary is 13 times his staff's average £34,940 earnings last year, while the top 20 best-paid average nine times their employees' pay.

Mean staff earnings ranged from £22,716 at primary-only trust REACh2 to £42,390 at standalone London secondary Holland Park.

Schools Week calculated this metric by dividing wage bills by headcounts, as listed in annual accounts. Many trust accounts lacked full-time equivalent figures, which would mean smaller pay gaps.

Mike Short, head of education at Unison, said staff would be "nothing short of outraged" by the gap, and urged ministers to "act now to curb

excessive pay".

The National Governance Association recommends that trusts consider linking executive pay to median or lowest-paid FTE employee wages. Some trusts already do this. REACh2 caps leadership pay at ten times that of newly qualified teachers.

Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee, said: "Clearly, pay needs to be competitive and judged on results, but I believe this money could be better spent on teachers and frontline support staff."

Rises follow 'excellent performance'

Analysis shows 29 leaders' minimum pay bands jumped by £15,000 or more, and 71 jumped by £10,000 or more.

Dr Jim McAtear of the Hartismere Family of Schools saw the largest increase, at almost £54,000. Accounts state he received around

Best paid:
Sir Dan Moynihan, Harris Federation
£455,000

Biggest pay rise:
Dr Jim McAtear
£54,000

Biggest pay cut:
Andy Goulty
£80,000

Continued on next page

INVESTIGATION

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£44,000 as the four-school trust's CEO, with most of the rise in his separately listed £157,000 earnings as head.

The rise is understood to be a one-off payment reflecting his headship of two schools in recent years without further pay at the time. It was paid last year as the schools' and the trust's finances had improved.

Dr Nicholas Capstick, The White Horse Federation CEO, saw the second biggest raise. His salary rose from £220,000-£225,000 to £256,000. The trust said he was also head of a primary, and received no pension contributions.

St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust paid its highest earner at least £280,000 – a £30,000 minimum salary band jump for a second year in a row.

This makes chief executive Ged Fitzpatrick the country's third best paid, up from 13th two years ago.

All the trusts declined to comment.

But other trusts were more forthright. Paul Tarn, chief executive of Delta Academies Trust, saw his pay rise from at least £205,000 to £225,000. Ormiston Academies Trust saw the pay of chief executive Nick Hudson increase £6,000 to £212,000 – putting him in the top 20.

Both trusts said the increases reflected "excellent performance" at some of the country's largest trusts, and followed "robust review and market benchmarking".

Clampdown paused...

In 2017 the government began writing to trusts seeking justifications for having £150,000-a-year leaders, or two £100,000-a-year earners. It also publicly named them.

But by 2019 only a quarter of trusts had reported cuts, and data errors halted letters altogether in 2020 as officials awaited new accounts.

Two months after the accounts deadline, the clampdown itself remains under "review" and the Department for Education tight-lipped.

The NGA's Knights said letters should resume, while Halfon backed "stringent" trust inspections to tackle pay.

The pause means a growing number of other trusts are not facing the same scrutiny.

Schools Week found 12 trusts running more than 20 schools are absent from DfE lists of trusts under scrutiny.

Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust had the highest earner among them, with its

accounts revealing that one employee earned at least £200,000 – up from at least £170,000 in 2020. Its CEO is Dame Maura Regan. The trust did not respond to request for comment.

...but there are signs of restraint

Experts welcomed signs of restraint outside the top earners, however.

At written-to trusts, 23 no longer have any earners above £100,000.

Among the remaining 235, a majority – 145 – have none earning £150,000.

Their average pay rose by only 2.2 per cent, lower than average both for the top 20 and for teachers. Sixty-four trusts froze executive pay, and 33 slashed it.

Some trusts have slashed existing CEO pay, with the Rodillian MAT cutting Andy Goulty's from at least £225,000 to £140,000-145,000 – the biggest fall. The trust did not comment.

The Kingsdale Foundation's unnamed highest earner's minimum pay fell by £70,000 to £150,000-£160,000. The standalone academy, led by Steve Morrison, did not comment.

Meanwhile, many trusts are using the departure of high-paid bosses to rein in pay.

THE HIGHEST PAID ACADEMY BOSSES

TRUST	CEO OR TOP LEADER	ACTUAL/ MINIMUM PAY 19-20	ACTUAL/ MINIMUM PAY 20-21	DIFFERENCE	PUPILS	PAY/PUPIL	SCHOOLS	HOW MANY TIMES HIGHER THAN AVERAGE EMPLOYEES' PAY ⁴
Harris Federation	Sir Dan Moynihan	£455,000	£455,000	£0	37890	£12.01	50	13.0
Thomas Telford School + MAT	Sir Kevin Satchwell	£291,000	£300,000	£9,000	6242	£48.06	6	10.5
Holland Park School	Colin Hall ²	£280,000	£280,000	£0	1396	£200.57	1	6.6
St Cuthbert's RC Academy Trust	Ged Fitzpatrick	£250,000 ¹	£280,000 ¹	£30,000	4032	£69.44	8	11.5
Brampton Manor Trust	Dayo Olukoshi	£252,000	£271,000	£19,000	4841	£56.05	2	7.3
Star Academies	Sir Mufti Hamid Patel	£250,000	£264,000	£10,000	15362	£16.92	28	9.6
The White Horse Federation	Dr Nicholas Capstick	£220,000	£256,000.00	£36,000	12228	£22.90	32	11.3
Leigh Academies Trust	Simon Beamish	£235,000	£255,000	£20,000	19055	£13.38	28	10.5
United Learning	Sir Jon Coles	£252,000	£252,000	£0	51672	£4.88	76	9.0
Aspirations Academies Trust	Steve Kenning	£225,000	£250,000	£25,000	8638	£28.94	15	9.8
Partnership Learning	Roger Leighton	£225,000	£240,000	£15,000	9398	£25.54	12	8.1
Loxford School Trust	Anita Johnson	£230,000	£235,000	£5,000	7164	£32.80	7	6.3
Oasis Community Learning	John Murphy	£230,000 ¹	£230,000 ¹	£0	30,600	£7.52	25	6.8
The Spencer Academies Trust	Paul West	£230,000	£230,000	£0	15807	£14.55	52	9.5
Delta Academies Trust	Paul Tarn	£205,000	£225,001	£20,001	23201	£9.70	51	9.0
Reach2 Academy Trust	Sir Steve Lancashire ²	£220,000	£220,000	£0	21033	£10.46	12	9.7
The Gorse Academies Trust	Sir John Townsley	£220,000	£220,000	£0	10154	£21.67	60	7.6
The Elliot Foundation	Hugh Greenway	£205,000	£214,000	£9,000	12149	£17.62	29	8.9
Ormiston Academies Trust	Nick Hudson	£206,000	£212,000	£6,000	32786	£6.48	40	7.1
Academies Enterprise Trust	Rebecca Boomer-Clark ³	£285,000	£210,000	–£75,000	33000	£6.36	57	8.3

NOTES:
1 Salary for trust's unnamed highest earner.
2 Now left
3 New in 2020-21
4 Actual staff pay, not FTE

INVESTIGATION

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Pay reined in after CEO exits...

The Joseph Leckie Academy's highest earner received £90,000-100,000, down from £180-190,000 two years ago. Its head is James Ludlow, with the previous salary understood to be that of late ex-head Keith Whittlestone. The trust did not respond to request for comment.

Nova Education Trust scrapped senior performance bonuses and shook up leadership structures and teams to include more women after new chief executive Ashfaq Rahman joined last year.

"Financial bonus incentives were not in the spirit of the organisation's ethos," Rahman said.

The trust declined to reveal his pay, but said it was "significantly" below the £230,000 salary ex-CEO John Tomasevic earned in 2019-20.

Even among the top 20, seven leaders' bands were unchanged.

Moynihan's pay was also frozen at Harris, while the Elliot Foundation and its CEO Hugh Greenway agreed with unions to raise pay for everyone but him this year.

A Holland Park spokesman said governors would review CEO pay "shortly".

David Bradley, of leadership support firm DRB, reported restraint among smaller and new trust clients more widely, reflecting awareness of government concerns and CEOs actively shunning rises.

Meanwhile Sharon O'Ryan, a benchmarking expert at Pay in Education (PiE), expects this year's pay data to show further restraint amid a teacher pay freeze.

The Confederation of School Trusts' CEO Leora Cruddas said trusts were also using sophisticated benchmarking data, and did not need DfE letters.

CST launched a benchmarking service last year, while the NGA announced a partnership with PiE this month.

But Knights said pay was "hard to reverse" contractually outside of changeovers, meaning there had been "not as much change as one would hope for".

A Delta spokesperson said it welcomed published pay comparisons, and backed calls for more metrics on "every penny spent outside the classroom" – with poor-value trusts stripped of schools.

...but women are still losing out

Schools Week identified four instances of male CEOs being replaced by women. Of these, two were replaced on lower salaries, one on the same, and one paid more.

Gail Brown's £90,000-£100,000 pay as Ebor Academy Trust's CEO was significantly below predecessor Richard Ludlow's £120,000-£125,000 salary.

A spokesperson said trustees, too, were "concerned" at this difference after the appointment. They commissioned an independent review that involved benchmarking and then increased her pay.

Meanwhile, the country's third-largest chain, Academies Enterprise Trust, "took the opportunity" to review CEO pay "as is typical" after Julian Drinkall left. He was paid at least £285,000 in pay and bonuses.

His replacement Rebecca Boomer-Clark earns £200,000, with up to £10,000 more in bonuses. Vivien Porritt, of female leadership group WomenEd, welcomed increased restraint, saying the sector should avoid a "race to the

top". But she said, more generally, recruitment was "broken", with questions about past pay, subliminally gendered job descriptions and limited role models holding women back.

Two thirds of all the trusts in our analysis had male leaders, despite two thirds of headteachers being women.

Top-paid male leaders averaged £160,100 – more than £15,000 above female peers.

Only two of the top 20 are female, one more than last year after Boomer-Clark joined AET.

Cruddas said there was "always more we need to do" to improve diversity.

CEO pay is an 'exaggerated debate'

Paul Whiteman, general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT, warned of an "exaggerated debate", saying school leaders' salaries had dropped 15 per cent in real terms since 2010.

Leora Cruddas said trust pay was "slightly lower" than comparable organisations elsewhere. A CST survey reported average trust CEO pay of £130,000, but housing association executive pay averaged £189,600, according to Inside Housing.

School union leaders' pay averaged £135,000, with Whiteman the highest paid, on £170,900.

Cruddas also noted DfE rules let maintained heads in London earn more than £150,000. Examples include now-retired Ges Smith, who earned £154,000 as head of Jo Richardson Community School. Barking and Dagenham Council accounts show he earned a further £38,500 on top of that for temporarily covering another large secondary in trouble, at the secondary's request.

The DfE was approached for comment.

BEST PAID PER PUPIL

TRUST	PUPILS	SCHOOLS	CEO OR HEAD	MINIMUM PAY 19-20	MINIMUM PAY 20-21	DIFFERENCE	PAY/PUPIL
St Helen's Catholic Junior School Academy	362	1	Bozena Laraway*	£105,000	£110,000	£5,000	£303.87
Holland Park	1396	1	Colin Hall*	£280,000	£280,000	£0	£200.57
Sacred Heart Catholic School	848	1	Serge Cefai	£115,001	£145,000	£29,999	£170.99
The Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies	863	4	Peter Box	£140,000	£120,000	-£20,000	£139.05
Carshalton Boys Sports College	1457	1	Simon Barber	£190,000	£195,000	£5,000	£133.84

Note: List excludes trusts with special schools and AP | *Has since left

LOWEST PAID PER PUPIL

United Learning	76	51672	Sir Jon Coles	£252,000	£252,000	£0	£4.88
Academies Enterprise Trust	57	33000	Rebecca Boomer-Clark ²	£285,000	£210,000	-£75,000	£6.36
Ormiston Academies Trust	40	32786	Nick Hudson	£206,000	£212,000	£6,000	£6.48
Oasis Community Learning	52	30600	John Murphy ¹	£230,000	£230,000	£0	£7.52
The Co-operative Academies Trust	26	17361	Chris Tomlinson	£150,000	£160,000	£10,000	£9.22

1 Salary for highest earner

2 New in 2020-21

NEWS

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School faces legal action following strip-search

SAMANTHA BOOTH
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An east London school where a 15-year-old black girl was strip-searched by police officers is facing legal action and calls for its headteacher to resign.

The student, known only as Child Q, thanked the outpouring of support after details of the "appalling" case at the Hackney secondary were published last week.

A Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review found racism was "likely" to have influenced the strip-search in the school's medical room after she was wrongly accused of carrying drugs in December 2020.

Lawyers representing the child have launched civil proceedings against the Metropolitan Police and the unnamed school "to hold both institutions to account" so that such a case "never happens again".

Philip Glanville, the mayor of Hackney, and Anntoinette Bramble, the deputy mayor, this week demanded a leadership overhaul at the school after more "troubling" reports from staff, families and young people.

"We've no choice but to express our lack of confidence in the current leadership and to ask that the headteacher should stand down," Glanville said.

This would "allow that school and its community the new start it needs to heal from this traumatic experience and, by doing so, also recognise the traumatic impact on Child Q and her family".

The review found the girl's intimate body parts were exposed without an appropriate adult present and "with the knowledge" the child was menstruating.

Staff had "insufficient

Hundreds of protesters attend a rally in front of Hackney Town Hall, to demonstrate their support of Child Q



focus" on safeguarding needs about suspected drug use and "deferred" to the police's authority.

The panel said the Department for Education's guidance on searching children should be "strengthened by including much stronger reference to the primary need to safeguard children".

At present it "worryingly" contained "outdated terminology" and focused too much on discipline.

Chanel Dolcy, a solicitor at Bhatt Murphy, which is representing the child's family, said they want to "hold both institutions to account including through cast iron commitments to ensure this never happens again to any other child".

Florence Cole, an education solicitor at Just for Kids Law, which is also part of the legal team, said the case illustrated the "systemic" mistreatment of black children, the lack of safeguarding and the failure to recognise the "ripple" effects of the trauma that followed.

Hundreds of protestors marched through north London at the weekend in support of the child. In a statement, Child Q thanked the "thousands of people" supporting her. Her mother said "necessary action" should be taken against "all

members of staff involved".

The Met has admitted the search of a girl who "smelled of cannabis" should "never have happened".

The Guardian reported that Marcus Barnett, Hackney's Basic

Unit commander, admitted at a community meeting on Wednesday that the Met has a problem with officers viewing inner London children as "adults".

Detective superintendent Dan Rutland, who was also at the meeting, said: "We believe that kids in London are more resilient than they are."

The two officers who conducted the search have been removed from frontline duties. The Independent Office for Police Conduct is investigating.

Figures show Met officers have made 9,088 strip-searches of children over the past five years. This includes 2,360 on children under 16.

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Special schools left 'begging' councils for tax hike cash

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

INVESTIGATES

Special schools are having to take "begging bowls" to councils who are refusing to hand over hundreds of thousands of funding allocated to cover taxation hikes.

The autumn spending review confirmed £1.6 billion for schools to cover the health and social care levy "and wider cost pressures". The levy aims to raise £12 billion each year to help tackle backlogs from Covid.

Mainstream schools will receive the £1.2 billion Schools Supplementary Grant (SSG) directly. But the £325 million allocated for special and alternative provision schools goes to councils as part of their high needs budget – with these schools told to "discuss" potential increases with their local authority.

Schools Week understands special schools in at least 15 councils have been told the SSG funding would not be passed on.

Susan Douglas, the chief executive of The Eden Academy Trust, estimates its four schools in Hillingdon, west London, – which she says is refusing to pass on the cash – will lose around £400,000.

Meanwhile Dudley council said it would decide whether to pass on cash based on the size of individual school's surpluses and their staff salaries.

As the government is using top-up funding to cover the tax increase, Douglas said councils had "a moral and legal obligation" to pass that on in full.

Hillingdon Council did not respond to requests for comment.

Leora Cruddas, the chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST), warned that the ability of special schools to support children was "directly impacted" when local authorities (LAs) did not pass on the money.

CST has challenged the government over councils holding on to the cash as it "doesn't think that's acceptable because of the policy intention behind SSG".

The Department for Education would only say it is for "each local authority to allocate that money locally, just as LAs allocate the rest of their high needs budget".

Schools resort to legal action amid



Oliver Twist, 1948

postcode lottery

Douglas said her trust was now considering legal action.

Warren Carratt, the chief executive of Nexus Multi-Academy Trust, told *Schools Week* it had spent thousands on lawyers to secure the funding from Rotherham and Doncaster councils after they initially indicated they were "unwilling to do so".

"You've got the most vulnerable kids who have been given no guarantees and their headteachers have to go with a begging bowl to the LAs."

Lawyers from Stone King said they had "worked successfully" to ensure such schools got their full SSG and had drawn up an advice pack for schools to challenge any refusal.

As special schools have a high staff to pupil ratio they are "disproportionately" affected by increases in staffing costs, Douglas said.

Carratt said he would have been forced to make "workforce reductions" without the money.

In contrast, Sheffield council agreed to pass on the money immediately, he said. The council said it had agreed to a 5 per cent funding increase per pupil for all its special schools.

There are also differences in the amount of SSG being passed on – with some councils providing a partial sum.

The health and social care levy will come into effect next month, but a survey of more than 120 schools by the National Network of Special Schools (NNoSS) found two thirds were yet to receive any communication from their LA on the funding.

Many said they were "seen as an afterthought" and they "must fight for money".

Leeds, North Yorkshire and Dudley councils have said no formal decision has yet been made on how the extra cash will be spent.

But the latter said it would be distributed on a "case-by-case basis" which would take salary levels and reserves into account.

Cash-strapped councils are estimated to have a combined £2.3 billion in high needs funding deficits.

In a letter to the education committee, Eden and Nexus trusts asked it to pick up the issue and challenge education secretary Nadhim Zahawi to issue "clearer guidance" on how the SSG should be calculated.

They also want a direction that the funding is passed as a "lump sum payment".

A Department for Education spokesperson said the mainstream grant would be rolled into the National Funding Formula next year, but provided no clarity for special and AP schools.



Susan Douglas

Re-emerging recruitment struggles hit popular subjects

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Ministers are again set to miss their secondary teacher recruitment targets, with even popular subjects facing challenges.

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) says “significant” teacher supply challenges are “re-emerging” after two years of a Covid-related boom in applications.

The Teacher Labour Market in England annual report also reveals the number of teachers leaving the profession is heading back to pre-pandemic rates.

1. ‘Substantial risk’ of missing targets ...

Researchers say there is a “substantial” risk that a range of secondary subjects will not meet targets for this year’s recruitment cycle.

The rate of ITT applications dropped off during summer last year as the wider labour market picked up after Covid restrictions eased.

As of February, the number of applications was 23 per cent lower than at the same time last year.

Of 19 subjects, the NFER estimates that 14 are at risk of falling below target - a guess based on last year as the Department for Education has yet to publish what it is aiming for this year.

Subjects that had shortages pre-pandemic, such as physics, modern foreign languages and computing, are likely to be hardest hit.

Less than a quarter of the required physics teachers were recruited last year, although the Government substantially upped the figure needed.

However, the NFER says that subjects that usually recruit well, such as biology, English, geography, art and religious education, are now also unlikely to meet this year’s target.

While the economic recovery is the main reason for the fall in overall applications, bursary cuts “play a small role”, researchers say.

2. ... and teacher exit rates creeping up

The government’s school workforce census shows retention rates in 2020 were “significantly improved” compared to pre-pandemic.

But data from the NFER’s autumn survey of school leaders suggests rates may be “returning towards” pre-Covid levels.

About a fifth of primary leaders said teacher turnover was higher than before the pandemic, but another fifth said turnover was lower.

More secondary leaders said turnover was lower (46 per cent), rather than higher (21 per cent), compared with last year (50 per cent for lower turnover and 7 per cent for higher).

The NFER says this “may suggest that secondary leaving rates are increasing, but not fully to pre-pandemic levels”.

3. Teachers’ ‘real’ pay lower than 2010

The foundation says despite some above-inflation rises in teacher pay, the median rate in 2020-21 remained about 7 to 9 per cent below the 2010-11 rate in real terms.

The median earnings of similar professionals are 1 per cent lower, meaning teacher pay has “lost competitiveness”. The NFER concludes this “is likely to contribute to additional recruitment and retention challenges”.

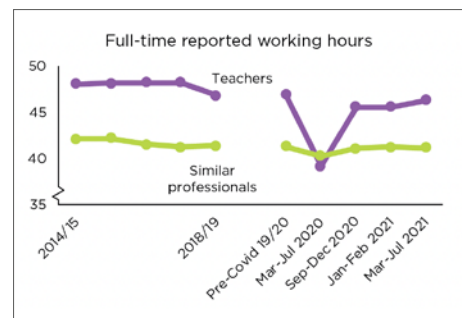
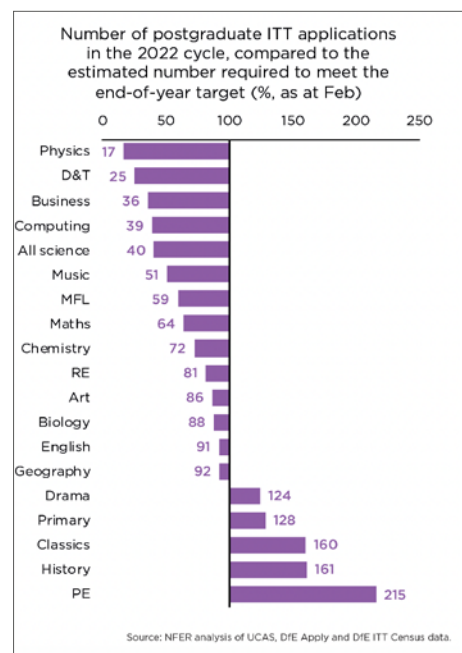
Ministers are proposing hiking the minimum pay by more than 16 per cent over the next two years to reach £30,000 starting salaries by 2023.

But researchers say this “flattens” the pay structure, with fewer big rises between pay scales, which could result in more experienced teachers deciding to leave.

The proposed reductions to London weighting could also “exacerbate” supply in the capital’s schools, leading the foundation to warn the government to keep the premium.

4. Working hours back to pre-pandemic

Before the pandemic, teachers were working longer hours in term time than



similar professionals in a usual week.

Data shows workload had fallen before the pandemic after a big government push, and then plunged from 47 hours to about 40 during the first lockdown. But it rose back to 46 hours in the past academic year.

Similar professionals worked about 41 hours a week last year.

Jack Worth, the foundation’s school workforce lead, said tackling these issues effectively “requires policy action to improve the financial and non-financial attractiveness of teaching”.

The Department for Education was contacted for comment.



Jack Worth

£150m to deliver high-speed internet for all (but not until 2025)

JAMES CARR

@JAMESCARR_93

Nadhim Zahawi has promised access to high-speed internet for all English schools by 2025, with £150 million in funding.

Speaking at the BETT Show education technology event, Zahawi also revealed he is “considering the potential” wider use of online exams and unveiled the first set of school technology standards.

Ministers were previously accused of having a “lack of ambition for children” after it was revealed almost one-fifth of schools faced at least a five-year wait to access full-fibre broadband.

The Department for Education will now contact schools in “priority areas” over the next three years to help facilitate faster and more reliable connectivity.

Priority areas will include the 55 new ‘levelling up’ education investment areas.

“We need to use our experience from the pandemic as a springboard to embed new and better ways of using technology in schools, and across education,” Zahawi said.

This would mark a “giant step forward”, he added.

Caroline Wright, director general of the British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA), said research indicated teachers’ top three concerns were “connectivity and infrastructure, ICT training, and a lack of funding”.

DfE reveals new technology standards for schools

The government said its new digital standards



Nadhim Zahawi

“should be used as guidelines to support your school or college [to] use the right digital infrastructure and technology”.

Zahawi added he is “not going to wade in and start telling schools which bits of kit to use, or when”.

The guidance sets out standards for schools’ broadband, network switching, network cabling and wireless networks.

Schools are told that they should use a “full-fibre connection for their broadband service” to ensure they will get the fastest speed available.

Schools are told to “implement this standard as soon as you can” but are warned that the copper connections “widely used in schools at the present do not meet this standard”.

A move to a full-fibre connection will aid schools in their transition to cloud-based management systems – which Zahawi called “the way forward” during his BETT speech.

According to data from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) there are 3,835 schools in postcodes that do not have access

to full fibre.

The DfE also advises schools that they should have a “back-up broadband connection to ensure resilience and maintain continuity of service”.

The DfE already expects schools to have appropriate IT security and safeguarding systems in place to comply with statutory guidance on keeping children safe in education.

But they are also now advised to instal security features to their wireless networks to “stop unauthorised access” and “misuse of sensitive school or student data”.

This standard should be met when a school next upgrades an “underperforming or unsupported solution”.

Elsewhere, schools are advised to ensure they have a “fully functional” wifi signal throughout their school site and the ability to “centrally manage” their network.

Wright said the standards would “better help schools understand the baseline infrastructure that is needed to start addressing the digital divide”.

Zahawi ‘keen to explore’ online exams

The secretary of state also said he was “keen to explore” the potential for digital assessment with Ofqual and the Standards and Testing Agency (STA).

“It’s possible that more digital assessment could bring significant benefits to students, teachers and schools, and I want to start carefully considering the potential opportunities in this area,” he added.

“Other countries have been experimenting in this area and it’s possible we can learn from what they are doing”

FREDDIE WHITTAKER | @FCDWHITTAKER

Confusion as DfE pencils in SATs for 2024

The Department for Education has refused to say when key stage 1 SATs will be scrapped, after pencilling-in rough dates for the tests up to 2024.

The tests for seven year olds were due to become non-statutory from 2023, following the introduction of the reception baseline assessment, which ran for the first time last autumn.

But leaders are confused by this week’s announcement that the department has confirmed rough dates for key stage 1 SATs up to 2024. The DfE said it was a “precautionary

measure to aid with school planning”.

Ministers still plan to make key stage 1 SATs non-statutory once the baseline assessment is “fully established”, it said.

But the department refused to say when the change would come into effect - the year would be confirmed in “due course”.

The new baseline assessment was due to become statutory in 2020, but its introduction was pushed back to 2021 because of Covid.

James Bowen, the head of policy at the NAHT school leaders’ union, acknowledged the disruption of Covid, but pointed to a “real

frustration” over the delay.

He said the “rationale” for the timetable change “has clearly not been communicated to school leaders by the department as well as it could have been”.

“It would be helpful for the government to reiterate that it remains committed to removing key stage 1 SATs as soon as possible.”

An NAHT survey of 2,000 leaders suggested most feel this year’s SATs will not provide meaningful data or a reliable indicator of children’s attainment.

MPs want more transparency over trust bailouts

SAMANTHA BOOTH
@SAMANTHAJBOTH

Ministers should lift the veil of secrecy around how they award million-pound bailouts to struggling academy trusts, say MPs.

The Public Accounts Committee has also told the Department for Education to explain how it will crack down on the leaders of “failing” trusts moving around the education system.

Dame Meg Hillier, the committee chair, said there was an “unacceptable lack of transparency and accountability” for parents and taxpayers.

In a report today, she said this must be sorted before the government ploughed on with a revitalised push towards academisation, due to be announced in the White Paper next week.

The DfE dished out £31 million in financial lifelines to 81 trusts in 2019-20. More than two thirds (£21 million) will not have to be repaid.

Accounts from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) also show funding for losses in large trusts.

About £10 million of debts were written off in 2020-21, including £5 million for the Shrewsbury Academy Trust.

The committee said it was “concerned that there is a risk that a trust becomes too big to fail and could therefore see large sums of public funds being pumped into it to keep it afloat”.

The 2019-20 bailouts included more than £2 million to “enable financial recovery” at



Academies Enterprise Trust, the country’s third largest chain.

MPs want the ESFA to “set out the criteria” it uses for providing such cash or writing off debt.

“Parents deserve a lot more visibility and clarity over exactly what is being provided to their children, in what facilities, for the vast amounts of public money pumped into the school system,” Hillier said.

The committee said it was also “concerned” the DfE’s approach to monitoring the skills and experience of academy leaders, and the lack of remedial action for leaders of failing academies, “risks further failures across the sector”.

Ministers can ban leaders becoming academy trust

directors under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. But it has been used against just ten individuals.

The report added: “There is a risk that the powers available to the department do not go far enough to prevent leaders of failing academy trusts from moving elsewhere within the education system.”

The committee has asked the DfE to explain within six months “how it will better identify and address cases of failed leadership within academies”.

Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the school leaders’ union ASCL, said that the “vast majority” of trusts were “financially very well run”.

The DfE was approached for comment.



Dame Meg Hillier

JAMES CARR | @JAMESCARR_93

Secondaries at capacity as primary classes empty

More than one in five secondary schools in England are now full or over capacity, new government data shows.

But the proportion of full primary schools is decreasing as a population bulge moves between the two phases.

The Department for Education on Thursday published its latest school capacity data, based on responses from local authorities in May last year.

The data shows 750 secondary schools (22 per cent) were at or over capacity in 2020-21,

up from 560 (17 per cent) in 2018-19 – a rise of 34 per cent.

School capacity data was not collected in 2020, to reduce the burden on schools during the pandemic.

The DfE said the increase “corresponds to the larger cohort moving into the secondary phase”.

Of the 750 schools, 610 were over capacity by 10 or more pupils, while 130 exceeded capacity by fewer than 10.

About 56,000 secondary pupils are now in



places that exceed their school’s capacity, up from 50,000 in 2019.

EDITORIAL

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Eton's sixth form top-up exposes funding inadequacy

On the surface, the news that top private school Eton will co-sponsor new "elite" sixth forms in deprived parts of the country sounds like an easy win for the government as it seeks to "level-up" the country.

But, perhaps inevitably, we learned this week the school plans to throw a large chunk of cash at the new establishment, effectively doubling the per-pupil funding available.

This shows the gaping hole in the government's levelling-up mission. The fact Eton is having to dig into its own coffers to supplement a state education for sixth formers in Middlesbrough or Dudley just goes to show the scale of underfunding of our post-16 education system.

Funding per student in further education and sixth form colleges fell by 12 per cent in real-terms between 2010 and 2020, while funding per student in school sixth forms fell by a whopping 23 per cent.

If the government wants to get serious about levelling-up, this is the inequality it should be addressing.

Signs of CEO pay restraint – but not for outliers

The government's super light-touch academy trust chief executive pay crackdown put more of a spotlight on excessive salaries.

But writing letters, with no means to take action against those that ignored demands, was toothless.

However, what we seem to be seeing now is trusts using the departure of sometimes long-standing chief executives to think again on pay.

It has resulted in newcomers on salaries much less eye-watering. It shows the sector is alert to criticisms, and also making use of better benchmarking tools.

But there are still two sticking blocks. The first: examples are emerging of women replacing men, and being paid less. Our investigation this week reveals the £15,000 CEO gender pay gap. Also far more men are those roles – despite women making up two-thirds of headteachers.

Second: the best-paid academy trust bosses are still getting pay rises that outstrip their peers.

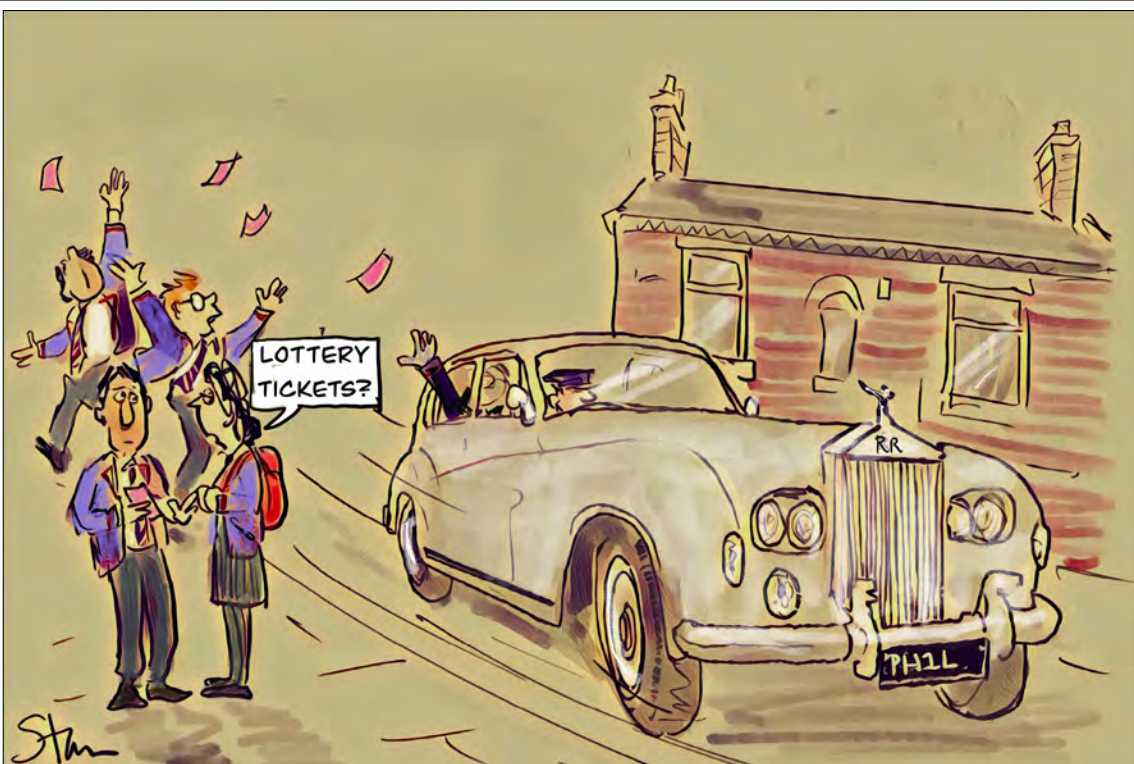
The government is about to launch an academy push again in next week's schools white paper. It must ensure it has a grip on the academy pay outliers, so they don't unnecessarily drive anti-academy sentiment.

SCHOOLS WEEK



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Pearson
BTEC



‘Perhaps a female trait is we look out for each other’

The chair and chief executive of Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust learnt about the importance of the CEO-chair relationship when they worked on academisation for the Department for Education. Seven years into their partnership, the former DfE advisers tell Jess Staufenberg about lessons learned along the way

Carol Dewhurst, chief executive, and Tessa Mason, chair, of the Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT), are a fascinating powerhouse pair to lead an academy trust. Dewhurst is a chartered marketer, a non-teacher specialising in marketing strategies, who spent years on the Department for Education’s academies programme. It was there that she met Mason, a former primary school headteacher working as a DfE consultant on the same

programme, in 2012 – the feverish early days of academisation.

So, when Dewhurst left the civil service to become BDAT’s chief executive in 2014, she rang Mason straight away after her original chair, the archdeacon of Bradford, stepped down.

“I’d always been very excited by the way Carol worked. Our paths had crossed at DfE, and she had enthusiasm and a can-do attitude,” beams Mason.

Dewhurst, who prior to the DfE had worked on the Children’s Workforce Development Council, the quango that delivered the ‘Every child matters’ programme, was conscious of not having an education background herself.

She also found herself surrounded locally by big trusts with a national profile, including the likes of Dixons Academies Trust. BDAT was small, with just three schools that had struggled. Dewhurst wanted to reposition the trust as a home for excellent schools and felt

Profile: Carol Dewhurst and Tessa Mason



Pupils at Christ Church primary academy, which joined the trust in 2013

there was no better way to persuade them than have a former experienced headteacher and a high-powered civil servant at the top.

“Tessa was well respected and steeped in a schools background,” she explains. “And I gave it credibility in that I’d given up this career as a civil servant to join this embryonic MAT. There was that degree of credibility that we’d chosen to take our next career steps here.”

Dewhurst had left the civil service to be closer to the action in education, she explains. The words echo former DfE permanent secretary Jonathan Slater, who in an interview with *Schools Week* accused civil servants of spending too much time in a room with each other, rather than with those on the frontline.

“I really enjoyed my time at the DfE, but I thought I could do more on the frontline,” Dewhurst adds. “In the civil service you’ve got a job to do, but you’re one step removed from children and families.”

Since Mason joined in 2015 the trust has grown to 17 schools (14 primaries, four secondaries), and there is another primary school joining in July. Only three will not have a Church of England denomination.

The government’s academisation push lost momentum after the abandoned plans in 2016 to force all schools to convert. But that push is set to be revived in the upcoming white paper, and converting religious schools is a key target of government. Many dioceses are now choosing to convert their schools en-masse, sensing the policy shift. Converting the circa 4,000 Christian faith schools will mean around two-thirds of schools would be academies.

So what do Mason and Dewhurst remember from their front seat at the policy decisions a decade ago?

Mason was a consultant for the DfE based



Dewhurst and Mason at Immanuel College, the trust’s second secondary school to join, in 2016

“I’d given up this career as a civil servant to join this embryonic MAT”

in Sheffield from 2012, advising schools on academisation as one of about 100 advisors across the country.

“As a head I’d become fascinated by the idea of outreach,” she says, pointing out it had been tried through Tony Blair’s ‘Education Action Zones’ from 1998. “But what was new about the academisation programme was sponsorship. This wasn’t about temporary partnerships, these were big commitments and long-term relationships.

“It was a very exciting time in a way, but it was also a bit of a knife edge, because it was potentially disruptive to what was a very, very well-established system of strong local authorities,” Mason continues frankly. “But I could see, once the 2010 Academies Act came in, that every single direction was taking us down this road.”

Meanwhile Dewhurst, who joined the academies programme as a civil servant in 2011, was highly enthused by it all. She also had a secondment with then-academies minister Lord Nash.

“The pace and pressure of decision-making astounded me,” she says. “Lord Nash worked

incredibly hard and expected civil servants to work really hard... I do think every school should be actively considering joining an academy trust, unless they have a good reason not to.”

Dewhurst explains her thinking. “I think schools supporting schools as part of a family, by sharing practice on how to improve, is where academies really make a difference. It’s a formalisation of that system. If you’re a good school, you have a lot to bring to an academy trust.”

Of course, the CEO-chair relationship was a key ingredient for successful trusts that both Mason and Dewhurst witnessed during their DfE work. The Wakefield City Academies Trust collapse of 2017, in which a CEO overruled a weak board, happened just nearby.

“We wanted to take the best of what we were seeing and construct a really positive CEO-chair relationship,” says Mason. Dewhurst adds: “I might come at it more from a commercial value, and Tessa will come at it from ‘how does that fit with our values?’”

One of the big challenges for the pair

Profile: Carol Dewhurst and Tessa Mason



Year 9 pupils at Bradford Forster academy, a CoE secondary school founded in 2015

was changing the perception of the trust as just for struggling schools. Now ten schools are good, one is outstanding, three require improvement and three haven't been inspected yet (about half the schools were less than 'good' on joining). "That took a long time, to be honest, to make people realise," says Dewhurst. The turning point was when the first 'good' graded secondary school joined the trust, to help set up another secondary, she says.

But there were other challenges. Three years ago *Schools Week* reported that BDAT was shaking up teachers' pay and conditions, which unions said would allow the trust to dismiss staff at more points throughout the year, potentially leaving some unpaid during summer.

"I think that was a misunderstanding with the unions. We had staff on contracts dating back to the last century, and we wanted to make sure we had fair and equal contracts, with the same rights as our new starters," says Dewhurst.

The trust was also criticised by unions when it notified staff of a restructuring consultation at one of its schools during the first week of coronavirus school shutdowns, at a time when many trusts had suspended redundancies. Dewhurst says the consultation was agreed by the board "before the first lockdown", and when lockdown was announced, some staff voluntarily engaged while the wider consultation was cancelled.

Now the pair have launched 'BDAT People', a new initiative to show "how much we value our staff", says Dewhurst. A new website compiles the staff development offer, and the trust has also worked on strengthening its initial teacher training offer by no longer using lots of different ITT providers and doing more training in-house. There has also



Dewhurst and Mason with year 8 pupils at Immanuel College



Year 4 pupils at St Philip's CoE primary academy, which joined the trust in 2014, with teacher Bethanie Lawton-Sergeant

“Academisation was potentially disruptive to a very, very well-established system”

been a diversity and inclusion recruitment drive, and support staff recently got a pay award, adds Dewhurst.

It's a reminder that it's a tough business, running academy trusts. CEOs and chairs are responsible for thousands of staff, huge budgets, and often deal with close scrutiny. It makes that CEO-chair relationship all the more important.

"I do think perhaps a female trait is we look

out for each other," notes Mason. Dewhurst adds she is keen to share lessons with other trust leaders about asking themselves "what battles they want to pick" and what has worked well.

Does it matter that Dewhurst wasn't a teacher before becoming a trust CEO? "No. The way BDAT works is we operate as a strong leadership team. I've got great educationalists on my team, and collectively we've got the skills we need."

In many ways, the Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust is perhaps exactly what policymakers hope to see more of. It aims to bring failing and good faith schools together, and is run by experienced leaders behind the DfE's vision. Throw in the need for more female academy leaders, and Dewhurst and Mason look like models for the next decade.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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A review will finally support teachers and schools to put our 'hidden heritage' in its rightful place across the history curriculum, writes Blondel Cluff

The UK's multi-racial society is unique, and something that should be celebrated. However, for too long our shared values and our complex past have not been a consistent feature of children's learning. It's time to change that. Echoing the sentiment in Morgan Freeman's famed words, black history should not be confined to one month alone.

I am therefore delighted to see that as part of the Inclusive Britain action plan published last week, the Department for Education will actively seek out and signpost high-quality resources – properly researched and, wherever possible, accredited – to support the teaching of black history all year round.

Everyone, no matter their class, colour or creed, should see their culture reflected in their education. As the daughter of Windrushers from Anguilla I want to see my parents' history recognised, respected and learned from. It is a heritage I am proud of, and one that I do not want to see stigmatised, rewritten, cancelled or neglected.

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report confirmed what we already knew, namely that many schools and teachers do not have the lived experience, knowledge or confidence to comprehensively teach history in a manner that embraces a multi-ethnic UK and, as such, may need additional support.

Many have made valiant efforts to address this, but it's clear that in various instances we need better resources that teachers can use and trust. This is why I am pleased to see

BLONDEL CLUFF

Chief executive,
The West India Committee



Inclusive Britain: a chance to get our history curriculum right

education at the core of the Inclusive Britain action plan. It provides 70 actions that build on the work the government began in 2010 to ensure that education truly reflects our society and recognises our past, providing a much-needed platform

the story of the diverse communities that make up our society to form a unifying sense of Britishness. This will equip the next generation with a more comprehensive understanding of the making of modern Britain that will support their aspirations and

“Black history should not be confined to one month alone

on which we can all work together to boost opportunity, promote fairness and tackle racial disparity.

It is not about teaching the personal history of each individual in the classroom, but rather about linking

attainment.

Guided by a diverse panel of history curriculum experts, historians and school leaders, by 2024 there will be a new model history curriculum that will provide teachers in England



Windrush passengers, 1948

and Wales with the tools to tell the multiple stories of the contributions different groups have made that have shaped the UK as it is today. It will help pupils understand how Britain's history is entwined with that of the rest of the world and will contextualise their place within it.

I have long advocated for recognition of the UK's 'hidden heritage', including topics that can be uncomfortable but must be recognised and addressed in order to create agency in our young people. So I am buoyed up by the innumerable examples of history that are both positive and hidden in plain sight, and I look forward to a time when they will be an overt and consistent part of the curriculum.

By celebrating the long-neglected contribution of ethnic minorities to British history, we will instil national pride in our young people. For example, the contribution of the West India Regiments that were an intrinsic part of the British Army from the 1700s, and that of the British West Indies Regiments that heroically served on the Western Front and in the Middle East during the First World War, but whose contribution was largely forgotten for over a century.

As my Race and Ethnic Disparities co-commissioner Michael Young said in our report: "Knowledge is 'powerful' if it predicts, if it explains, if it enables you to envisage alternatives."

It's time to introduce a history curriculum to deliver on that promise, one that allows all children to see, hear and read about their heritage, and the contribution their forefathers and mothers have made to modern Britain. I am confident the Inclusive Britain action plan will do just that.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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BARNEY ANGLISS

SEND consultant and author



SEND green paper: a chance to call out failures and mobilise

I've seen the system from every angle and none is flattering, writes Barney Angliss. It's time to demand better for schools and families

I'll say what others are thinking. The disconnect between schools policy and SEND strategy has given the lie to 30 years of inclusion rhetoric, flies in the face of logic, feeds unremitting concerns about the High Needs Budget – and it's hell for families. Whatever the achievements of Nick Gibb's era, the schism continued. Quality First Teaching? Every teacher a teacher of SEND? Whole-school SEND? Not unless we have whole-school policy.

The forthcoming SEND Review consultation aims to strengthen the inclusive duties of mainstream schools and reduce the number of appeals to the SEND tribunal. We've been here before. A 2006 select committee report on SEN strategy claimed funding had continued to increase (£4.5 billion then; it's double that now in cash terms), 92 per cent of plans for children were drafted on time and there had been a nine per cent reduction in tribunal appeals. The successes were short-lived, standards were still low, and the next government legislated again. That's the template...

Unless I'm very much mistaken, this new review will fail to achieve any of its aims for the simple reason that government continues to sandbox SEND. For career politicians, it's a stepping stone to more prominent positions. Only Ed

received a local authority email at midnight. People are working all hours and either they do know what they're doing or they don't; but they, like the children and the schools too, are caught in a maelstrom of politics, management and plain shenanigans.

- Protect SENCO time but allow trusts greater flexibility over their role.
- Review the quality of SENCO training and develop a specialist pathway.
- Task the children's commissioner with reporting annually on a levelling-up agenda for SEND.
- Introduce regional commissioning to level up the quality and choice of specialist provision.
- Release maintained specialist schools and AP settings from the current place funding formula to improve quality and respond to demand.
- Raise young people's voices in the setting of their own EHCP outcomes and allow them or their parents the right of appeal.
- Amend the SEND regulations to ensure the information schools publish is current and evidence-based and to reflect the recent High Court decision on annual review timescales.

“ We've reached peak dysfunction ”

Timpson has distinguished himself in the role; but as Ofsted/CQC report, his Children and Families Act legacy is deeply mired by the failure of local authorities to implement it, failure that leaves both families and schools without essential services.

Symptomatically, the DfE's SEND review of this slow progress has itself taken three years and counting – an ambivalence that makes SEND look like one of Kirsty and Phil's *Love It or List It* projects: remember the one where a woman had far too many mugs? That's the one that comes to mind.

I served five years as a local authority SEND manager in the late 1990s, so I'm pretty accustomed to the kinds of nonsense, intimidation, deception and routine stalling that go on in SEND. But we've reached peak dysfunction: recently, I

I remember me back then, doing the LA job, probably just the person you imagine. I got pissed off with the silo-thinking, the policies without evidence, the knee-jerk strategies and went into PRU leadership for three years followed by 15 years as a mainstream SENCO. Whether things are any better or worse now (debatable on many levels), it is what it is. The people working in it may be good or they may be bad but it's a bad gig.

We need better: for families, for schools, for society. We need better than we'll get in the review consultation, a piece of puppet theatre with strings attached to every question. We should mobilise and re-write the consultation on our own terms. To that end, here are some low-to-no-cost things we should be thinking about:

Of course, we might be accused of delaying the process ourselves by rallying around a genuine consultation and evidence-based outcomes. But if the alternative is just more of the same, then what do we have left to lose?

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Our experience shows a regulator so intent on being right it simply can't admit to getting it wrong - and that's not good for anyone, writes Nick Osborne



Ofsted complaint procedures are a cause for concern

Does your complaints policy allow you to avoid speaking to a complainant parent, ignore them and rely on your staff's evidence without establishing validity? Does your behaviour policy let you listen to only one child while the other awaits discipline? Does either policy allow you to ignore witnesses and expert evidence because your team is exclusively composed of people who never get anything wrong?

Of course not. Such policies are anathema to school leaders. And yet this is effectively how Ofsted's complaints system works, so it must be best practice.

We all hear anecdotal stories about Ofsted, negative and positive, and we bring our biases to them. You will be familiar with the experience of hearing the negative ones and wondering, 'but is that just because your inspection went badly?'. I know I have.

The best test of whether inspections are fair is for two different teams to inspect the same school.

Which is exactly what happened to us. Our infant and junior schools are effectively one school. They are on the same land, share the same budget, have the same policies, procedures and leaders and the same staff working as one team. But because they are technically two schools, they get two inspections.

In autumn, the infant school was inspected and remained a 'good' school. Ofsted noted 'robust' safeguarding and leaders 'resolute in their approach to providing a safe environment for all.'

Three weeks later, the junior school was inspected and deemed 'inadequate'

for safeguarding.

Following the inspection, in addition to internal assessments and as part of our duty to determine if action needed to be taken, we commissioned an audit. It was carried out by a former Metropolitan Police Service

also completely contradicts the inspection and highlights the strength of safeguarding in both schools.

The stark contrast between reports from actual safeguarding experts and Ofsted's findings are highly

“Both teams were somehow right, and everyone else is wrong”

detective constable with the specialist Child Abuse Investigation Command, later a safeguarding coordinator for schools and local authority designated officer (LADO). He disagreed entirely with the inspection findings.

We were delighted, and unsurprised, when both the infant and junior schools officially received the Safeguarding Quality Mark this week. The audit for this process

unusual and deeply concerning. And the inconsistency between the regulator's own findings about our two schools no less so. Surely these are grounds to complain and obtain a reinspection.

But according to Ofsted, the infants inspection was a discrete event, which gives them the out to say that both teams were somehow simultaneously right, that everyone else is wrong and that they have

sufficient evidence to that effect. Worse, we are absolutely committed to fixing whatever needs fixing, but the only evidence they have provided us doesn't align with local arrangements or statutory guidance.

And the complaints process only adds insult to injury. It involves no human interaction. Ofsted chooses which points to respond to and its responses can range from misinterpreting information to giving explanations that are simply not based on fact. Ofsted doesn't clarify, verify or tell you what its evidence base is. You don't get assigned a complaints manager; nobody speaks to you or your witnesses; and there is no appeal or panel hearing before it publishes its report despite the ongoing complaints process.

We are now in an invidious position. We have no actionable evidence from Ofsted, while expert evidence is considered effectively worthless. We have full confidence in our leaders, while our community is rocked by an 'inadequate' judgment.

All because it is deemed in the 'public interest' to publish a highly contested report after stage two of an ongoing complaints process rather than reinspect or see the complaints process out. Why is it so challenging to contemplate that, just maybe, the inspection team did not get it right on this occasion?

But is it just on this occasion? Ofsted's policy (and by association, its culture) appears to prioritise being right over getting it right. And isn't that in the public interest to know?

Yes, our inspection went badly. But then who else is going to experience the complaints process and tell you about it?



Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Children appear to have been altogether ignored in the drafting of this bill and there's little evidence it'll make them any safer, writes Jen Persson

In 2010 the Conservative Party manifesto pledged to “reverse the commercialisation of childhood”. Three years after the 2019 government white paper argued the existing regulatory and voluntary initiatives had “not gone far or fast enough”, they have published 225 pages of new draft law to regulate the internet: the online safety bill.

Companies will be required to comply with an overarching duty of care principle enacted through a raft of obligations borrowed from the offline legal framework for health and safety. There are threats of enormous fines and of holding executives criminally liable for content. But while this might sound simple, it simply isn't.

Clear, enforceable definitions are missing so far. What's legal offline might become unacceptable online where content is labelled “lawful but harmful”, and much of the detail is delegated to ministers or to Ofcom for further legislation or yet-to-be-written codes of practice. And some things that are clear are ill-thought-through. For example, the proposed obligations to act on complaints appear to ignore the real risk that groups with opposing views could weaponise account take-downs. Edu-Twitter beware!

More fundamental than even these consequences for ministerial powers and freedom of speech, it takes our responsibility for assessing our own capability, risks and choices about the content we access away from us as internet users and gives it instead to companies. By encouraging the use of “behaviour identification technology” and profiling, it treats us merely as

JEN PERSSON

Director, defenddigitalme



The online safety bill will do little to protect children

consumers, not creators. In the effort to protect children, the bill infantilises us all.

Yet when it comes to children, the proposals are neutered or tackle the wrong end of the problem. The section dedicated to the promotion of media literacy has been cut altogether

real-time. Will companies at one end of the chain be prosecuted for non-compliance of content created by someone else at the other? Achieving a workable definition of who is ‘responsible’ for content “likely to be accessed by children” will be hard.

Some global social media

“The proposals tackle the wrong end of the problem

from a previous draft and, instead of banning the systemic use of children's data to target advertising, it creates a duty to stop children encountering inappropriate content in search engine results.

But online ad space is often sold via complex automated workflows to buy access to readers based on a variety of data, such as shopping patterns, in

companies already use algorithms to try to retrospectively identify self-harm or suicide, but the intent of content is extremely hard to contextualise. Posts about recovery or online counselling services or sites with evidence of war crimes and human rights abuses are inevitably over-removed by automated tools that fail to make accurate



distinctions.

Further, the bill demands age verification. While presented as protection for children, in practice AV can mean everyone must give up their right to privacy and hand over personal details to commercial companies to create a credential for identifying themselves to websites as not-a-child or a child of a defined age group. Not only can AV be worked around, it drives the opposite of the original intent.

The upshot is that the bill will not reverse but embed “the commercialisation of childhood” from an early age. The integrity of our identity-for-life will be dependent on those companies' security. Either that, or some websites might decide not to offer services to children here at all rather than incurring the costs of installing digital gatekeepers or tools to determine users' location.

Young people's own views have been ignored. A 2019 survey by the Australian e-safety commissioner found that over half (57 per cent) were uncomfortable with background monitoring processes, and 43 per cent were unsure about these tools' effectiveness in ensuring online safety.

Meanwhile, the departments jointly behind the bill pursue their policy goals. While other countries ban general surveillance, the Home Office stands accused by the Internet Society of pursuing “an internet that is more insecure and unsafe” in its efforts to undermine encryption. And the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is busy promoting the UK as a world-leading seller of safety tech, with a highly anticipated export market.

Commercialisation of childhood, indeed. Now with added British values.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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STEPHAN NICHOLLS

Primary training team lead,
Juniper Education



Covid has raised new barriers for the pupils in greatest need

New national attainment data shows the impact of the pandemic on primary school children has not been evenly spread, writes Stephan Nicholls

When the country first locked down, two years ago this week, primary schools were launched into uncharted territory. Despite the extraordinary efforts of heads and teachers during this time of turmoil, many pupils have fallen behind where they should be for their age. Sadly, it's the most vulnerable children who are bearing the heaviest burden of the pandemic.

New data from more than 6,000 schools including more than 500,000 pupils compares the attainment of primary school children in autumn 2019 – before any of us had heard of Covid-19 – with key points in time up to autumn 2021. It looks at the percentage of pupils who are achieving or exceeding age-related expectations in reading, writing and maths.

This gives us a detailed picture of the attainment journey for pupils who were in primary school at the start of the pandemic, the current Years 3 to 6.

Deeper divides

One of the most shocking findings from the data is the extent of the pandemic's impact on disadvantaged children. The gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers have widened across all

the year groups we measured.

In autumn 2019, 68 per cent of disadvantaged children (those who qualify for Pupil Premium) were working at or above age-related expectations in maths, compared with 82 per cent of their peers – an attainment gap of 14 points. By autumn 2021, that gap had grown to a worrying 20 points.

There were similar drops in reading and writing attainment for disadvantaged children, with the year 3s, who were in year 1 at the start of the pandemic, falling furthest behind their classmates in the three core subjects.

The pandemic has affected the lives of the less fortunate in so many ways. This data exposes the damage done by Covid to children from underprivileged backgrounds who already had mountains to climb.

New obstacles

There is also stark evidence of the impact on children with special educational needs. Faced with repeated waves of staff and pupil absence, it has been challenging to maintain pre-pandemic levels of

SEND support.

The data confirms that the attainment of primary school pupils with an identified SEND has fallen significantly compared with 2019 levels. In autumn 2019, 42 per cent of children with identified SEND were working at or above age-related expectations in reading. That figure dropped to 33 per cent in autumn 2021. The corresponding drops were from 35 to 22 per cent for writing, and from 45 down to 34 per cent for maths.

The youngest children with SEND are the worst affected. In autumn 2019, the current year 3 pupils with SEND were 29 percentage points behind their peers in reading attainment. By 2021 the gap had widened to 45 points.

Uneven recovery

The youngest children in all pupil categories suffered steeper drops in learning than their older peers. Nearly one in three year 3 children has not met age-related expectations in reading, writing or maths compared with just one in five before the pandemic. And not only has year 3 attainment fallen furthest, but it is yet to show signs of recovery.

However, there was a slight uplift in attainment for years 4 and 5 by autumn 2021, and even stronger indications of recovery for year 6 pupils who had the chance to build firmer learning foundations prior to the pandemic.

The data in our report tells the story of how the greatest public health crisis of our age has created deeper divisions between children from different backgrounds and circumstances. It also shows how the pandemic is making it harder for younger children to make up lost ground.

But there are rays of hope. Since that first lockdown, schools have become skilled at adapting to the unexpected and supporting pupils' wellbeing and learning through uncertain times. And thanks to their efforts, some pupil groups have taken their first steps on the road to recovery.

“The most vulnerable children are bearing the heaviest burden”

Reviews

BOOK REVIEW



The Teaching Life. Professional Learning and Career Progression

Author: Kate Jones and Robin Macpherson

Publisher: John Catt Educational

Reviewer: Zoe Enser, specialist adviser, The Education People

In 2017, Helen Timperley, Fiona Ell and Deidre Le Fevre argued that to be successful in the ever-changing environment of our schools, teachers and leaders need to develop something called “adaptive expertise”. This comes from “a deep understanding of the complexity of the interactions between learners and their learning environments” and their “capability to draw on a rich and deep knowledge base” (rather than generic standards or practices) to address specific challenges.

They go on to say that teachers with adaptive expertise are “committed to using this knowledge to make a difference for every learner, particularly those at risk of failure and dropping out”. This is what all teachers aim for, and *The Teaching Life* is focused precisely on how they can develop their own learning and take charge of their development and careers to achieve it. Throughout, Jones and Macpherson seek to help teachers to navigate their way through the complexities of building knowledge, looking at everything from conferences to books and social media, and how they can develop the expertise and flexibility required to be successful today.

The book is divided into two sections. The first is dedicated to professional learning and covers everything from the importance of evidence-informed professional development, through advice for early-career teachers, to suggestions about advanced professional qualifications. There is a wealth of knowledge collated here, drawing on the authors’ experience and supported by an “evidence-informed teaching and learning glossary” at the

end, which provides a quick summary of areas readers may wish to explore in greater detail.

The second section explores career progression and covers reflective practice, leadership, non-leadership and progression, as well as interview processes and how to succeed in applying for different roles. It even includes a chapter on international teaching too – an often-neglected subject in discussions around teacher development.

The focus is on supporting teachers to see teaching as a lifelong career choice. *The Teaching Life* offers a wealth of opportunities to examine nuances and variety while building your understanding of teaching and learning and of your own development. The challenge questions at the end of each chapter encourage reflection on how the ideas relate to their wider context.

More than a book about professional development, this is a book about empowerment. The authors remind us regularly that wellbeing resides in being and feeling successful whatever our career path. They urge us to seek out opportunities to grow and to be challenged, and to create the time and space to reflect.

It is a wide-reaching book, so if you’re keen for quick solutions this is not the place to look. Teachers at either end of their careers might also find they are left either overwhelmed with choice or under-served for greater depth.

However, the authors are consistent in their message that teaching is a long-term endeavour, and in the context of our perennial recruitment and retention problems that feels particularly poignant.

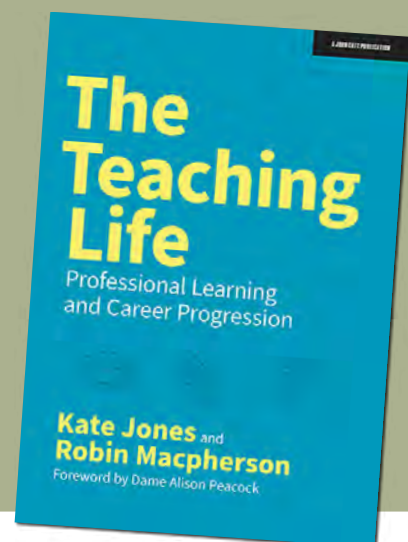
Approach this book in the same vein – as a long-term endeavour – and you are bound to return to its ideas again and

again, reframing and recontextualising. In fact, it specifically provides the support to do so. Whether you are just starting to explore the profession, have been in it for five years, or are working as a senior leader, you will find something new to take away and reconsider each time you read it.

To relate this back to adaptive expertise, Timperley, Ell and Le Fevre argue that it “goes beyond a mindset or a set of skills and comes to form the essence of teachers’ professional identities”. What Jones and Macpherson have created is a resource to help every practitioner do that.

Becoming the best possible teacher or leader takes time. It involves a change in the way we think according to the paths we choose to take. A career in education is a journey.

By guiding its readers to consider their professional identities as they navigate these choices and changes, *The Teaching Life* is an important contribution towards keeping more professionals on those journeys, successfully and happily making a difference for young people.



Reviews



Our podcast reviewer of the week is Penny Rabiger, researcher and associate, Centre for race, education and decoloniality, Leeds Beckett University

@Penny_Ten

The Brief

@HaringeyEduc

Haringey Education Partnership should be commended for its innovative and very helpful podcast idea. This series rounds up the latest news and top stories for educators in schools in ten-minute episodes. The final few minutes of each episode takes a deep dive into one issue and gives an overview for schools.

The specific episode I've chosen looks at council school placements, school gas contracts with the Russian firm Gazprom, plans for Oak National Academy and the disabled students' allowance. It then takes a deep dive into the new guidance for schools on political impartiality. Helpful, clear and...impartial!

Pushing The Edge

@GregBCurran

This podcast series has six seasons of talks with educators and community leaders who are challenging systemic inequity and bigotry, privilege and silence. These are all people who are not content with traditional approaches to diversity and inclusion and are instead committed to re-making their schools and amplifying the voices of



communities who have been sidelined for too long.

The episode I've chosen is part of the season on thriving as a teacher. It's a conversation between host Greg Curran and teacher Rusul Alrubail that looks at how to navigate social justice issues in the classroom. Building on the theme of impartiality, this episode looks at how to encourage open discussion in class and beyond without fear of accusations around standards.

How to 'backward design' educational nirvana

@Rethinking_Ed

A recent Twitter thread asked what you would include if you were to design the perfect school. I was quite disappointed that what followed was a list of jargon-y tricks of the trade instead of begin-again, blank-page thinking starting from the purpose of education and disentangling it from its service to the machinery of capitalism.

By comparison, *Rethinking Education* sounded promising by its very name, and this episode even more so. A health warning though: each episode is four hours long which is certainly more conducive to sensible discussion than 280 characters. It's well worth a listen as host Dr James Mannion speaks with Jay McTighe about McTighe's book, *Leading Modern Learning: A Blueprint for Vision-Driven Schools*.

The Trojan Horse Affair

@HamzaMSyed and @BriHReed

The eerie silence that followed the extraordinary and frankly shocking so-called Trojan Horse affair/hoax has broken, and in no small part due to this podcast. In effect, what is left is a study of the betrayal of Muslims in the media and society, the way in which British identity is constructed by the left as secular and by the right as Christian, and how British Muslims are seen as a threat to both by the government and the media.

This podcast series is a phenomenal piece of investigative journalism, created by the production company that kicked off my own podcast obsession with *Serial* many years ago. Trainee journalist Hamza Syed and award-winning journalist-podcaster Brian Reed take us on an intriguing and infuriating journey.

It would be wrong to single out any single episode, so I've linked you to the first. Where better to start than at the beginning?

Trojan Horse: Brit-ish?

@BBCSounds

For the sake of impartiality and balance, my final choice this week is the BBC's *The Corrections* – a series that revisits news stories that left the public with an incomplete picture of what really happened and investigates how and why the narrative went awry.

It's worth listening to the whole series, which covers a range of important misrepresented news stories from 2015 onwards. But several episodes recorded in 2020 are dedicated to the Trojan Horse affair, and the episode I have chosen sees Jo Fidgen consider its impact.

Then-education secretary, Michael Gove responded by making it compulsory for schools in England and Wales to promote British values, including democracy, the rule of law and mutual respect. Undermining those values became grounds for prohibiting someone from managing a school. The list of values generated a lot of debate and left some British Asians wondering whether they were really at home in the UK. It's a legacy every teacher should contend with.

Research



Manchester Institute of Education will regularly review a research development throughout the year. Contact them @EducationUoM you have a topic you'd like them to explore

What support might students need with 'normal' exams?

Tee McCaldin, lecturer in education, Manchester Institute of Education, and Hannah Wilkinson, senior tutor, Manchester Institute of Education

Schools are increasingly aware of how students' experiences around exams – particularly stress – can affect both their wellbeing and their outcomes. As we return to what we think of as 'normal' exams this year, though, it's worth noting that these may in fact feel very different for students and they may need additional or different support from usual.

In the summer of 2020, we spoke to GCSE students about their experiences of exam cancellations. They told us how they believed this might affect their future exam experiences, and those of others around them.

Students described feeling as though the cancellations had resulted in them missing important stepping-stones in their school life that should have prepared them for future study. They described feeling that they had missed teaching, learning and knowledge but also, and more importantly, revision and exam practice. These experiences were viewed as natural things that should have happened, and students believed that their year group may be uniquely disadvantaged by not having had them.

Students also discussed a lack of motivation due to missing revision and exam preparation, with some feeling that this would affect their

motivation around study in the future. Those who believed they had worked hard and prepared well in their GCSE years felt this particularly keenly.



This year, students may feel less prepared but also less motivated than in previous years. In order to build confidence and reduce feelings of disadvantage, students are likely to need clear explanations of exam processes, and detailed and specific advice around skills. It can help to guide students through factors such as: how marks will be awarded, topics that are likely to come up in the exam, effective revision techniques, how to spend time in the exam, and tips for picking up marks.

In addition to students receiving this information, it is also important for them to feel that these techniques will be effective and to feel confident in performing them. Providing explanations as to why these techniques are effective and adopting encouraging and motivating language when discussing them can be helpful in achieving these aims.

Students felt the cancellation of exams represented a loss of control over their grades and their futures, not just because their grades were being decided by other means but because decisions seemed confusing and the details of processes

uncertain. This was exacerbated by feelings that there was a lack of clear communication between decision makers and students, and some felt that this would leave them feeling distrustful of similar systems in future.

Many will be aware that this is a transition year when it comes to exam grading and that provisions are being made to try to accommodate for lost preparation time. But the unfamiliarity of these systems is actually likely to add to their sense of loss of control. Paradoxically perhaps, the mitigations designed to help them could simultaneously increase their feelings of worry.

The advanced communication around what 2022 exam provisions will look like – including advanced information on the exam and additional materials such as formulae and equations – should help to increase feelings of control over the situation. However, communications are still directed at schools and teachers rather than at students themselves. To ensure they don't feel left out of the chain of information, schools and teachers should provide detailed information about planned provisions. Teachers can also support this by offering a clear and reassuring voice of confidence around the processes.

In addition, students will likely benefit from an open acknowledgement that things are different for them compared to other year groups, alongside reminders that this experience is being shared by all students taking exams this year, that they are not alone, and that teachers, schools and exam boards are doing what they can to make it all feel as normal as it can.

This research was conducted by the myGCSEs research team at the University of Manchester, including Tee McCaldin, Kevin Woods, Kerry Brown, Rob Buck, Nicola Fairhall, Emma Forshaw and David Soares



Hannah Wilkinson

Week in

Westminster

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



MONDAY

How the mighty have fallen. In six months Gavin Williamson has gone from being in charge of the Department for Education to begging his former colleagues to reply to his letters.

In a recent written question, the former education secretary asked business minister Greg Hands when he would get a response to his letter of January 10 on battery storage unit planning applications.

Hands responded by suggesting the letter had actually gone to a different department, and promised a response "as a priority".

We also note Gavlar is yet to publicly acknowledge his knighthood ... maybe he's as embarrassed by it as the rest of us?

TUESDAY

The Office for Students has appointed school leader Dr Dayo Olukoshi as a non-executive director. The universities regulator wants more support to get poorer pupils into top universities, and Olukoshi has a stellar background.

He leads Brampton Manor academy in Newham, one of the capital's poorest boroughs, which this year smashed its own impressive records to get 89 pupils into Oxford and Cambridge.

One lesser-mentioned point in the regular plaudits: the school is highly selective – and only takes in the brightest kids in the first place!

WEDNESDAY

After delivering a spring statement that offered nothing to schools to address their rising energy bills, and with councils warning of the impact of rising fuel bills on school transport, chancellor Rishi Sunak took to the petrol station forecourt to demonstrate he really is a man of the people.

Except his mini-budget wasn't the only thing wide of the mark. When paying for petrol, the man who fancies himself as the country's next PM didn't know how to use his payment card, attempting to use the attendant's barcode scanner rather than the card reader.

Then again, it's possible this is the first time the millionaire politician has ever had to physically pay for his goods and services.

It gets worse. It turns out the car Rishi filled up wasn't his. The Kia Rio belonged to a member of Sainsbury's staff.

At least the stingy chancellor did reportedly pay for the tank out of his own pocket, rather than charging it to the taxpayer, or worse, letting the supermarket worker foot the bill.

Meanwhile, one politician who didn't need to buy petrol on Wednesday was education secretary Nadhim Zahawi. He snubbed the 16-mile round trip from the DfE to the BETT Show in east London, and instead delivered his speech over video link.

Ironically, the address to a conference aimed at promoting the very latest in cutting-edge education technology was fraught with technical issues. Users dialling in from home could barely hear Zahawi, who used his speech to declare war on passwords, claiming he was too busy with important matters of state to worry about such frivolities.

He said his household "becomes a much less tranquil place when our nine-year-old daughter needs to log in and dad has to get the right password".

"Apparently, overseeing the UK's vaccine rollout did NOT count as a good enough excuse for her."

He said he wanted to create an ecosystem "where data can be shared

effortlessly in a system that is safe and secure and that enables the right people to see the right things at the right time".

At a time when fears of cyberattacks from Russia are running high, we can't think of a better time to rethink our relationship with passwords ...

THURSDAY

It appears Dame Rachel de Souza has new commuting partners – and they may look familiar to regular readers of this column.

The children's commissioner tweeted a picture of her with Gavin Williamson and Nick Gibb, formerly of DfE ministerial team fame.

"Great quality of education debate on the walk to work this morning," Dame Rachel said.

And who was behind the camera? None other than Ollie Lane, managing director of communication agency PLMR and press officer to several large multi-academy trusts.

It's all about who you know ...



Buttershaw Business and Enterprise College

Reevy Road West, Bradford, BD6 3PX



HEADTEACHER

Salary: L36 – L42 (£99,681 - £115,483)
Full Time, Permanent for 1st September 2022

We are looking for an inspirational Headteacher to join our vibrant and bustling school filled with incredible children. We would like a strong leader and team player who will build on the existing strengths of the school and support us on the next steps of our journey. If you think you can be our exceptional candidate, we can't wait to meet you.

We need from you

- A love of teaching and learning
- A passion for developing your team
- Strong, innovative and strategic leadership and management
- A firm commitment to achieving success through partnership and teamwork
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Drive, ambition and high expectations
- A commitment to ensuring our children achieve their biggest and bravest ambitions
- Commitment to the Christian values of the Trust

We can offer you

- Engaged, happy, well-behaved and well-motivated children
- A dedicated, enthusiastic staff team committed to our school and our children and who will support you every step of the way
- High levels of Trust and Governor support – you won't be in this alone when you join the BDAT family of schools
- A welcoming, friendly and vibrant school
- A career in a forward thinking Trust

Visits to the academy are warmly welcomed and actively encouraged. Please ring the Academy Trust Office on 01274 909120 and ask for Emma Williamson to make an appointment to see our school at work or email emma.williamson@bdac-academies.org

Timeline

Closing date: Thursday 14th April 2022 at 9.00am

Shortlisting: Wednesday 20th April 2022

Interview day 1: Tuesday 26th April 2022

Interview day 2: Wednesday 27th April 2022

Tour dates: w/c 28th March 2022

w/c 12th February 2022

For the Full Job Description and Application Form please visit <https://www.bdat-academies.org/employer-of-choice/vacancies/>

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our children and we require all our staff to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced criminal records check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on the BDAT website www.bdat-academies.org/bdat-business/bdat-policies/



Executive Headteacher

Application Deadline: 13 April 2022 at midday
Interview Dates: 26 and 27 April 2022
Start Date: 01 September 2022
Salary: L24-L30 (£74,295-£86,061)
Contract Type/Term: Full Time/Permanent

We are seeking to appoint a motivated and innovative leader as the Federation’s first Executive Headteacher.

We are looking for someone who:

- will embed and further develop the strategic vision for the Federation whilst maintaining the distinct identity of each individual school;
- will ensure that the Federation’s ethos and values are deeply embedded and visible amongst pupils, staff, parents and stakeholders;
- will drive collaboration, learning and joint working across the Federation and ensure this translates into measurable pupil outcomes, professional development and efficiency savings;
- will provide outstanding leadership, inspiring the same throughout the Federation to ensure strategic school improvement, excellent learning outcomes and effective business operations;
- has proven excellent teaching and leadership skills across EYFS to KS2 level with sustained success as a Headteacher;
- is motivated by a passion for education and a desire to improve the lives of young people.

We can offer you:

- a fantastic opportunity to develop the Federation;
- the opportunity to make a difference to our children who are enthusiastic and engage positively with their learning;
- a strong, dedicated staffing team, committed to their schools and the children they teach;
- the support and commitment of our governing body, parents’ associations, the diocese and the local community.

We welcome school visits which can be arranged for the week commencing 04 April 2022.

Please email helen.gibson@coventrydbf.org for further information and an application pack.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Kernow Learning

DEPUTY CEO

Salary range: L27 – L31
 Full-time, Permanent
 Start Date: 1st September, 2022

Due to the recent appointment of our new CEO, we are excited to announce this vacancy for a Deputy CEO within Kernow Learning, a primary academy Trust of 20 schools throughout Cornwall.

Trustees seek an inspirational DCEO, to work alongside the CEO and Executive Leadership Team, to continue to grow the Trust’s regional reputation as a highly effective primary trust.

Our ideal candidate has a passion and proven track record for school improvement and is a team player experienced in building strong relationships with all stakeholders. A qualified teacher with recent executive school leadership experience, they will join our Trust at an exciting juncture as we move to open our new free school, Sky Primary, in partnership with the Eden Project.

We offer:

- A competitive salary
- Teachers’ Pensions Scheme
- A culture which seeks to be fair, developmental, and supportive of staff and pupils
- A focus on staff wellbeing, and access to wellbeing services

Please refer to the Information for Candidates brochure.

Please contact the Designated CEO, Clare Crowle, in the first instance if you are interested in applying, by contacting the PA to the CEO (Bernie Blacklaw) on 01637 303106.

Please download the application pack from our website <https://sites.google.com/view/klvacancies/leadership-vacancies> and return completed form and EO monitoring form to: hr@kernowlearning.co.uk

Closing Date: 9am on 4th April, 2022
Interviews: Tuesday, 26th April, 2022

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

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



The Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust (DOWAT)
Our Lady Catholic Primary School, Hitchin



Headteacher

The successful candidate will be offered 7 point range between L12 and L21

Start date: 1st September 2022

Owing to the promotion of our current headteacher, Our Lady Catholic Primary School is looking for a new headteacher from September 2022. The school offers a distinctively Catholic education in an inclusive environment. Our Lady has been on a journey of rapid improvement in recent years and secured good and outstanding judgements in its recent Diocesan inspection. The school expects positive validation of its work when Ofsted next visits. The school is a member of the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust and leaders work supportively and collaboratively for the common good. Catholic excellence permeates our work.

You will:

- Be a practising Catholic with a strong commitment to Catholic education
- Have a clear vision for the future of the school, building on its current strengths
- Have a proven track record in raising standards in teaching and learning resulting in whole school improvement
- Be able to motivate and inspire the whole school community
- Be excited by the wider opportunities offered by DoWAT

We offer:

- A supportive and caring ethos based on the values of the Catholic faith
- Extensive support and collaboration across DoWAT
- Opportunities for continuing professional development with a strong leadership group, including development for first time headteachers
- The opportunity to work with enthusiastic and friendly children, committed staff and supportive parents
- An enthusiastic and supportive Local Governing Body

School visits are welcomed and encouraged by prior arrangement.

To arrange this, or to obtain any further information, please contact the school on 01462622555.

Closing Date: 19th April 2022 5pm

Interviews: w/c 25th April 2022

For further information, please visit

<https://www.dowat.co.uk/40/vacancies>



ST JOSEPH'S
Catholic Primary School

HEADTEACHER

The governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School are seeking to appoint a highly-motivated, inspirational and dedicated Headteacher with the energy and enthusiasm to lead the school, whilst striving to maintain its exceptional levels of education and community spirit. This is an exciting and rare opportunity to lead a successful and heavily oversubscribed Catholic Primary School with a fantastic reputation.

Our school has a well-developed curriculum and continually achieves high outcomes for its pupils. Our pupils are caring, enthusiastic, hardworking and eager to learn. Our staff are committed professionals with a passion for continued improvement, a love of teaching and supporting our pupils to achieve their best.

St Joseph's is situated in the centre of Upminster, a vibrant commuter town and a short walk from Upminster station with excellent transport links to London, Essex and the South East and a short drive from the M25.

www.st-josephs-upminster.net



Head of School

Leadership Scale 7-11

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

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

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

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

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

Travel and relocation package available.

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

For an application pack please email recruitment@niton.iow.sch.uk or download via our website www.nitonprimary.org

Visits are welcomed and encouraged

Closing date: Monday 25th April 2022 @ noon

Interview dates: Thursday 5th & Friday 6th May 2022

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



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT OFFICER

The Redstart Learning Partnership is looking to appoint an experienced school improvement lead to join our senior team. This role will support our heads of school to implement plans for sustained improvement, provide mentoring support for those new to school leadership or those requiring additional support. You will lead a development programme for our next tranche of leaders as well as contribute to the development of the Trust wide CPD programme. The School Improvement Officer will ensure that each school within the Trust provides high quality teaching and learning and achieves the highest possible outcomes for all pupils. This role is part of the Trust's Senior Executive Team.



Chief Finance Officer

Bosco Catholic Education Trust is looking to appoint an ambitious, hardworking and well-qualified Chief Finance Officer to work with schools across Sussex. This unique and important post has the potential to make a very real difference and lasting impact on the future life-chances of the children entrusted to our care.

The CFO will be a member of the Trust Central Team (TCT) and work with the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operations Officer (COO), Headteachers, leadership teams and Local Governing Committees (LGCs). The post holder will be responsible for managing the current financial position and to establish the vision for the future financial management of the Trust.

If you want to work with wonderful staff, students, and a forward-thinking leadership group, this is the job for you. We are always striving to improve and we'd love you to be part of this journey.



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.



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.



AMBITION



COLLABORATION



COMPASSION



EXCELLENCE



INCLUSIVITY



Woodland
Academy Trust

Ignite the spark, reveal the champion



'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.



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



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



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.



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.



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.



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SCHOOLS WEEK FEWEEK

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