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SCHOOLS WEEK

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Heads don't need strikes stress, but remember who teachers are fighting

There is no doubt that strikes are heaping more pressure on headteachers who have already had a rough few years.

Teacher Tapp data shows anxiety among heads rose the most during Covid, exposing the additional strain on their shoulders.

Working out whether schools can stay open during strikes is undoubtedly tricky, and a job made more difficult by ministers (see page 24). But it is important that heads remember who teachers are fighting. It's not personal.

Teachers are striking because they have totally lost faith in the government, just as many school leaders have too.

It was probably inevitable that tensions between school staff would rise as a result of strikes; not just between heads and teachers, but staff whose unions did not vote to strike, and support staff who might be asked to provide cover, despite their union saying not to. And this is all before the strikes even take place.

The noise around minimum service levels – and what they even mean for schools – does not help. As ever, leaders are just getting on with the job.

Take the schools white paper, published with much fanfare last March. We know the associated schools bill – containing the policies

that needed legislation – has been canned. But what about everything else?

Not a jot from the government. The result: progress is not just stalling but going backwards.

Fewer schools are now meeting the requirements of the proposed Parent Pledge than when it was announced (see page 5). Since then, it seems to have just disappeared off the face of the education-policy earth.

As Leora Cruddas pointed out this week, it is worrying that we have no clarity on what the plan is.

There are areas where schools will probably welcome finding their own solutions.

As we report this week, academy trusts such as AET are implementing plans that work best for them and their communities on governance (page 12).

But not all problems can be shunted to the sector. Schools have been left behind in the flexible working revolution.

Finding solutions for how they can again compete with other sectors has become increasingly important. Let's hope outsourcing an important national scheme to another for-profit, private firm (see page 11) will deliver better results this time.

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NEWS: RETENTION

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School staff shun free professional qualification

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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Less than one in five free placements to study new national professional qualifications (NPQs) has been taken up so far, leaving the government miles off its target of 150,000 starts by 2024.

Robin Walker, the former schools minister, said in 2021 the reformed qualifications would "develop the world-leading teachers and school leaders who will guide, care for and educate our children for years to come".

The government allocated £184 million to deliver 150,000 courses by the end of 2023-24.

But an evaluation report published yesterday showed 29,425 courses have been started so far. It means the government will have to deliver another 120,575 starts in about 18 months to meet its target.

The Department for Education said providers had "reported experiencing challenges" relating to Covid-19 disruption, confusion about "specialist" NPQs, which make up more than half of the starts so far, and overlaps "with other qualifications/opportunities".

The evaluation looked at NPQs in executive leadership, headship and senior leadership, and specialist NPQs in teaching, teacher development and behaviour and culture.

A further two – in leading literacy and early years leadership – were launched last term.



Robin Walker

Of the 29,425 starts so far, 15,898 were on specialist NPQs, with the teaching qualification most popular at 7,400.

There were 13,423 starts on leadership NPQs, most of which were on the senior leadership framework (8,452).

The DfE said a higher proportion of those taking specialist NPQs were already in the role they were studying or had "responsibilities linked to the qualification". A higher proportion of those taking leadership qualifications did not hold a leadership role.

Despite a high number of starts overall, "providers highlighted that recruitment across the

first two cohorts was lower than they had forecast", the DfE said.

According to the department, a "lack of clarity surrounding whom each specialist NPQ is targeted at has created a challenge for some providers who believe that this has affected uptake".

For example, senior leaders in primary schools with responsibility for behaviour and culture chose the senior leadership NPQ, rather than the specialist qualification.

There was also an overlap with the government's early career framework entitlement to two years of induction, "because the mentors in the ECF are the same people who may be undertaking this NPQ and do not have time to do both".

The "most common barrier" was finding time to complete the course.

This was flagged by 45 per cent of respondents to a DfE survey of 3,250 school staff. Forty-three per cent said they did not encounter any challenges.

Although "comprehensive awareness of the reforms is low, early findings indicate that they are still having a positive impact on the sector".

Participants "described how their qualification had led to an increase in skills and knowledge which many have been able to apply directly to their teaching and ways of working".

The DfE's funding for the qualifications also appears to have made a difference to teachers' decisions to choose NPQs over other qualifications, with 53 per cent citing that as a reason.

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Student loan forgiveness fails to boost retention

An evaluation of a trial that forgives student loan repayments for teachers in shortage subjects and supply cold spots has found no "strong evidence" that it aids retention.

The report by CFE Research into the teacher student loan reimbursement scheme found its influence on teachers' career choices was "subtle", and that its impact was "limited" for staff who had concerns over workload and their work-life balance.

Proposals to forgive teachers' student loan repayments were first promised in the Conservatives' 2017 general election manifesto. A pilot in 26 areas was announced

later that year.

Teachers who qualified between 2013 and 2021 and spend at least half of their time teaching languages, biology, chemistry, computing or physics are eligible to claim back repayments for up to 11 financial years into their teaching careers.

But a statistical analysis conducted by the DfE "did not find strong evidence of any effect of receiving [loan forgiveness] on teacher retention".

There was a "small difference in year-on-year leaver rates" between those whose loans were forgiven and those whose loans were not.

But the "size and variability of the pilot, with additional variability caused by the Covid pandemic, meant that the analysis was not sufficient to determine whether this was due to a real effect of the pilot, or random variation".

The evaluation looked at impact on teacher recruitment and retention, and relied on a survey of teachers and interviews with teachers and heads alongside the statistical analysis.

The report did not say how many teachers had taken part, nor how much money had been spent so far.

NEWS: WHITE PAPER

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Progress on white paper Parent Pledge goes backwards

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

Fewer schools are meeting the government's proposed "parent pledge" than before the policy was announced, new figures show.

The policy was a feature of the schools white paper, published last March, promising every child falling behind in English and maths "timely and evidence-based support to enable them to reach their full potential".

Part of the pledge was an expectation that schools also let parents know the type of support provided. The government told schools in May to factor in the pledge when setting budgets for this year, but since then ministers have gone quiet.

A Teacher Tapp poll last year, just as the policy was announced, found 68 per cent of respondents' schools had informed parents of their child's lower attainment. Seventy-eight per cent said they provided specific interventions and 61 per cent told parents about those interventions.

But in response to the same questions this week, just 58 per cent said they told parents about lower attainment, 72 per cent said they provided specific interventions, and 54 per cent said they let parents know about them.

Secondary schools were far less likely to meet each element of the pledge.

James Bowen, the director of policy at the NAHT, called the policy a "gimmick", adding it was "unsurprising that relatively little progress has been made towards what feels like a rather vague concept".



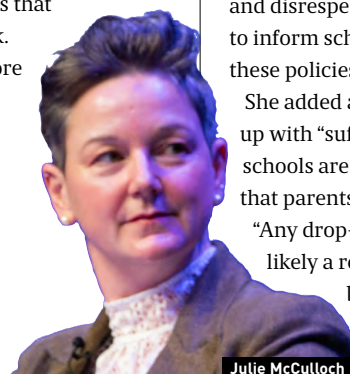
He said schools would "no doubt have continued to do what they have always done, which is to identify pupils that need extra support and put that in place as soon as possible. They do that because it's right for pupils and not to achieve a nebulous government target."

Leora Cruddas, the chief executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, said on Thursday she was worried ministers had not confirmed the aspects of the schools white paper that they planned to take forward.

Another of the proposals was that schools offer a 32.5-hour week. The government promised more guidance in the summer, but nothing has so far surfaced.

A government source this week insisted it remained committed to both policies, but leaders demanded more information.

Julie McCulloch, the director



Julie McCulloch

of policy at the ASCL school leaders' union, said both proposals had been "in limbo ever since the political turmoil and ministerial changes last year". Her organisation had "regularly" asked if they remained government policy.

However, it seems more schools are now on track to meet the expectation of a 32.5-hour week than when the DfE last surveyed staff in 2021.

Teacher Tapp data shows 79 per cent of respondents said their school required pupils to be in for at least 6.5 hours a day. The figure was higher among primary schools (82 per cent) than secondary (77 per cent).

An earlier government survey in 2021 found that 52 per cent of primary schools and 62 per cent of secondary schools already ran a day of six-and-a-half-hours or more, with a further 41 per cent of primary schools and 35 of secondary schools about 15 minutes off.

Increased compliance may have something to do with the DfE's deadline of this September, and the fact Ofsted is expected to check up on schools' progress.

McCulloch said it was "extremely unhelpful and disrespectful that the DfE has not seen fit to inform school leaders about whether or not these policies are being progressed".

She added any new policies should be backed up with "sufficient resources to ensure all schools are able to provide the interventions that parents will then expect.

"Any drop-off in interventions at this time is likely a reflection of the pressure on school budgets."

TOM BELGER | @TOM_BELGER

Ministers certain to miss 2030 MAT target

The government will "certainly" miss its 2030 target for all schools joining larger multi-academy trusts, as it would require "unprecedented" upheaval that threatens standards, a new report has said.

Its white paper pushed for all schools to be in MATs of 10 schools or 7,500 pupils by 2030.

But a National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) study found an "unprecedented" 25 maintained mainstream schools and three single-academy trusts would need to convert every week to reach the target.

Schools Week analysis shows conversions averaged 7.5 a week in December.

Such rapid growth "risks creating issues for trust quality, as it did during the initial rapid expansion of MATs", with schools joining "inappropriate" trusts, the trust said.

Furthermore, just 6 per cent of the 33 councils who completed the NFER survey were in favour of all schools being in strong MATs of 10 schools by 2030.

Two in five also expected to take advantage of proposed reforms allowing them to launch

MATs.

Jenna Julius, the NFER's research director, said the Department for Education should instead "prioritise a slower transition that allows time to build MAT capacity".

The report said: "Given the current political context, the slowdown in academisation in recent years and the scale of academisation and trust growth that would be required, it is likely to take a significant period for the government to achieve an all-MAT system, certainly beyond 2030."

INVESTIGATION: OFSTED

Investigation: The broken link between exam results and Ofsted ratings

AMY WALKER

@AMYRWALKER

Ofsted promised that its 2019 framework would look more closely at what schools taught pupils, rather than just exam results. Is that now reflected in its judgments? Amy Walker analyses the relationship between Progress 8 scores and inspectors' ratings

Ofsted has rated a school in which pupils achieved a third of a grade lower than expected 'outstanding', while schools in which youngsters scored a full grade more have lost their top grade.

The watchdog said its new framework in 2019 would be an "evolutionary shift" looking more closely at what schools taught, rather than just exam results.

Things got complicated when exams were cancelled during Covid, leaving inspectors without access to performance data during the 2021-22 academic year. They were, in effect, inspecting "results blind".

Since inspections restarted in 2021, *Schools Week* found four downgraded 'outstanding' schools with provisional Progress 8 scores among the highest 100 in the country – putting them in the top 3 per cent.

Meanwhile, eight schools rated 'good' were in the bottom 100 schools in the country for their Progress 8 scores.

Such "outlier" ratings seem to be growing since the inspections' 2019 overhaul.

Analysis reveals the link between results and Ofsted outcomes also dipped when national data was not available, but has since bounced back.

'There's more to education than outcomes'

Redden Court School in Essex was rated 'outstanding' in November. The school's Progress 8 score for last year was -0.38, compared with the -0.03 national average.

Anthony Henry, the school's head, said it was an "unusual 'outstanding' because it is usually the school in the headlines for their exam results that are judged best in the country".

"It is highly unusual for a mainstream school with such high needs to be recognised in this way,



'It is highly unusual... we have bucked the trend'

but we have bucked the trend."

Six per cent of pupils have education, health and care plans (EHCPs), compared with 2.3 per cent nationally. A fifth of pupils require special needs support.

Inspectors said leaders ensured all pupils studied a "curriculum that is broad and ambitious". Teachers also knew the needs of pupils with SEND "very well".

The school employs six teachers who exclusively teach children with additional needs, including in "nurture groups" of just five pupils.

Henry said personal development was a priority. "What is equally important as outcomes is that these young people really develop and leave here knowing who they are and able to make a positive contribution to society."

He said Ofsted has "now got a softer ear to listen to the narrative around how you've arrived at where you are".

"They've realised it's important that students have good outcomes but there are a lot more ingredients to baking a really nice cake than just those outcomes."

More schools with lower outcomes get 'good'

Schools Week looked at the mainstream schools with the 100 lowest provisional Progress 8 scores

last year, when national exams returned after Covid. (We didn't include UTC or studio schools.)

Of the 39 inspected since visits resumed in 2021, eight were rated 'good'. All eight had Progress 8 scores below -0.5 and five had results below -1 – meaning pupils, on average, achieved a full grade less than expected.

Hartsdown Academy, in Kent, was rated 'good' after a December 2021 inspection. Its Progress 8 score for last year was -1.33.

Inspectors said leaders worked hard to "develop an ambitious curriculum that caters for all pupils" with a wide range of subjects at key stage 3 that "prepares pupils well" for life beyond school.

Kirkby High School in Merseyside was rated 'good' after an inspection in July. Its Progress 8 score was -1.14.

Inspectors said leaders were able to "identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and effectively".

Both schools did not respond to a request for comment.

All but one of the eight 'good' schools had a higher-than-average percentage of pupils with EHCPs. Several reports referenced the inclusiveness of the school's curriculum.

Analysis suggests such 'outlier' judgments are a feature of Ofsted moving its focus away from grades.

Between 2017 and March 2018, just 1 per cent

INVESTIGATION: OFSTED

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of schools rated 'good' had Progress 8 scores of below -0.5.

Between September 2019 and March 2020 – after the introduction of new inspections – the figure grew to 8 per cent.

Early data for the current academic year shows 10 per cent of schools rated 'good' between September and December had Progress 8 scores below -0.5.

Mohsen Ojja, the chief executive of the Anthem Schools Trust, said: "If Ofsted produces a report that says a school's education is 'good', but I look at the league tables and the Progress scores are below the national average, I would be asking myself how that school could be 'good'?"

"The whole point of exam data is that it's external, it's validated, and it's standardised... Children need outcomes and a great education. One should not be superseding the other one."

'Outstanding' downgrade was 'astounding'

But the picture is different among the highest-performing schools.

The previously 'outstanding' Holy Cross School in Surrey, was downgraded to 'good' after a May inspection last year. Its Progress 8 score for that year – published a few months later – was 1.1.

That meant pupils achieved a grade higher, on average, than expected. The school ranks 32nd in the country – out of more than 3,500 secondaries – in terms of progress.

Dervla McConn-Finch, the school's head, said the outcome had been "based on an unnecessarily narrowly focused and highly subjective framework, using no triangulated benchmarking data, in a very limited timeframe. It makes very little sense."

Areas of improvement identified by Ofsted included that some pupils thought staff were not "good at sorting out problems" such as bullying.

It also noted that leaders did not "routinely monitor" how effectively staff used "identified strategies" to support pupils with SEND.

The percentage of pupils at The Holy Cross with an EHCP is in line with the national average at 2.2 per cent.

The Henrietta Barnett School in north London ranks 54th in the country in terms of Progress 8 with a score of 0.98. It was also downgraded to 'good' last May.

Inspectors noted that the quality and "impact assessment practice"



Mohsen Ojja



varied across subjects. Teachers "occasionally" did not check gaps in pupils' understanding "sharply enough".

Swakeleys High School in west London – with a Progress 8 score of 0.93 – was also rated 'good'.

Inspectors said teachers sometimes did not ensure pupils tackled "more challenging tasks". They also did not "engage well enough with pupils to understand their opinions", leading to some lacking confidence in their ability to deal with bullying.

Commenting on such downgrades, Mouhssin Ismail, a regional director at Star Academies trust and the former head of the top-performing Newham Collegiate sixth form in east London, tweeted that "parents will just laugh".

But McConn-Finch said that despite the "disappointing" rating, "the enduring popularity of our continually oversubscribed school" demonstrated how much parents valued its curriculum, teaching and results.

'Leaders still don't understand the new framework'

Jeffrey Quaye, the national director for education and standards at Aspirations Academies Trust and an Ofsted inspector for ten years, said that good outcomes did not necessarily reflect a good curriculum.

While teaching in general might be good, there might be "significant areas of the subjects they haven't given the same attention to".

"A lot of leaders...still

need to understand what the new framework is really about. If all you think is Progress 8 scores make you 'outstanding', then you're going to have a shock when you're told you're a 'good' school."

So has the relationship between a school's outcomes and Ofsted grades changed?

In 2018-19, under the old framework, the correlation "coefficient" between Progress scores and inspection outcomes was 0.59. (1 indicates a perfect link, and 0 indicates no link).

Ofsted's annual report shows this fell to just 0.46 across the 2021-22 academic year when there were no national results to consider.

Datalab analysis of inspections from September to November 9 last year show the correlation rose to 0.66.

Progress 8 scores were published by the Department for Education in October. However, Ofsted said inspectors only accessed inspection data summer reports (IDSR), which had Progress 8 scores from mid-November.

Dave Thomson, Datalab's chief statistician, said the figures showed Ofsted outcomes and Progress 8 were "related, but not strongly related".

But there might be a stronger correlation between the two in future because inspectors would have had access to data.

An Ofsted spokesperson said: "Ofsted judgments focus on how well constructed and implemented a school's curriculum is.

We'd expect outcomes to correlate well with this, but good outcomes alone are not necessarily evidence of a curriculum with no issues."



Jeffrey Quaye

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NEWS: STRIKES

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Teacher strikes: Pressure warning, guidance clash and Ofsted U-turn

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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Teachers are due to walk out on Wednesday in the first national strike in more than six years. As schools and the government prepare, here's what you need to know about developments this week.

'Don't pressure staff to cross picket lines'

Staff should not be put under pressure to work on strike days or to cross picket lines, the NAHT and National Education Union (NEU) have told their members in a call for unity.

Teachers are under "no obligation" to provide advance notice that they plan to strike, and the unions have agreed that "school leaders will not put staff under pressure to do so", joint guidance says.

However, it is "also recognised that school leaders have a duty to carry out a risk assessment in advance to assess whether a school can be kept open or partially open".

"We jointly agree that no pressure should be placed on staff to attend work on a strike day or to cross a picket line."

The guidance followed reports of rising tensions between teachers and leaders.

Support staff union clashes with DfE over cover

Unison, which represents more than 200,000 support staff in England's schools, has issued guidance that seemingly clashes with advice from the DfE.

The union's members should "continue with their normal duties", but should "not take on any additional responsibilities being given to them directly as a result of other unions' industrial action".

Support staff "should not be expected to provide cover for, or take classes, where this would normally be done by teachers who are taking action", the union said.

But in its guidance the DfE said that schools could use support staff "to provide cover supervision or oversee alternative activities".

"Support staff are able to carry out 'specified



work' provided they are subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher."

Ofsted U-turns on strike day inspections

Schools will not be inspected on days when teachers are due to go on strike.

Previous guidance stated that strikes would be treated similarly to other disruption. Inspectors would "take a view as to whether there is sufficient activity taking place to enable it to conduct an inspection", and "likely" defer if there wasn't.

But Ofsted said this week it would schedule inspections and notifications of inspections to avoid strike days in February. The policy will be reviewed ahead of further planned walkouts in March.

On the days where strikes are limited to certain regions, inspections will continue as normal elsewhere.

NAHT will re-ballot its members

The NAHT school leaders' union will re-ballot its members for industrial action, its leader confirmed this week, after its previous vote failed to reach the turnout threshold.

The organisation said last week that it was considering going back to its membership after just 42 per cent of eligible members voted in its last ballot, short of the 50 per cent required by law.

On Wednesday Paul Whiteman, its general secretary, confirmed the union was "committed to balloting again", although it would wait until talks with the government either ended or broke down.

The union also this week criticised a DfE request to heads for information on whether their schools would open on strike days. Whiteman said heads were unlikely to know the impact of the walkouts at this stage.

Keegan challenges NEU over strike vote

Gillian Keegan, the education secretary, has questioned the NEU over the timing of its announcement of its strike ballot and how it informed schools.

Keegan asked the union to clarify when employers were told about the results, which were announced to members and the wider public at 5pm last Monday during a live Facebook event.

The union said it had informed the DfE of the results "shortly before 5pm" on January 16, and the department "then informed schools (and hence employers) that the ballot results would lead to strike action" in a post on its Education Hub blog.

It then wrote to "all relevant employers" the following day.



Gillian Keegan

NEWS: ACADEMIES

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OGAT threatened with rebroker over 'high' suspensions

TOM BELGER

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The government has threatened to remove a school from a turnaround academy trust dubbed as "one of our most successfully performing" by former academies minister Lord Nash.

The Department for Education published a termination warning notice on Friday threatening to re-broker Outwood Academy Ormesby because it excludes too many pupils.

The school, run by Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT), was downgraded from 'good' to special measures in October. In the warning notice sent the same month, the government voiced "concern" over Ofsted's findings that a "high proportion of pupils are suspended from school".

Inspectors called for more "consistent" behaviour management to curb suspensions (officially known as fixed-term exclusions) and exclusions at the Middlesbrough secondary.

OGAT said the trust took on some of the most deprived, historically under-performing and "challenging" schools in the country – with the vast majority rated 'good' or better.

The termination warning notice follows a trust-wide drive since 2018 to cut suspensions. OGAT had been under scrutiny over having some of the highest suspensions nationally and strict discipline policies.

But other schools have also been criticised. Despite being rated 'outstanding' this month, Ofsted said suspensions were "too high", albeit falling, at Outwood Academy Valley in Nottinghamshire.

It also criticised OGAT last year for "high" exclusions and internal isolations at its City Fields academy – and "too high" internal exclusions at its Ripon academy.

Analysis of data via SchoolDash Insights suggests suspensions averaged 43.3 for every 100 OGAT pupils in 2020-21 – 10 times national averages.

The term "exclusion" also appeared in more OGAT inspection reports than average nationally every year, bar 2020 and 2021.

OGAT praised for AP

But Ofsted raised no concerns at other recently inspected OGAT secondaries, including two



'inadequate' schools now rated 'outstanding'. Suspensions were also falling at two other secondaries in Wakefield.

Meanwhile OGAT's alternative provision centre, created to prevent exclusions, was rated 'good' this month.

The trust has previously linked high but often short suspensions to introducing behaviour standards, and unusually diligent reporting.

An OGAT spokesperson said the challenging schools it took on were being "transformed" by high standards, personalised support and academic rigour. Trust schools have "never been so popular". Ormesby leaders were already tackling challenges before July's inspection, with "excellent progress" since, he added.

Suspensions at 'outstanding' Outwood Academy Valley were "a last resort" but needed to stop a minority disrupting "the vast majority of well-behaved students".

'Heated' debate on exclusions and crime

A study this month suggested academisation increased pupils' short-term chances of suspension by 2.6 percentage points.

This could reflect "new discipline policies", although researchers acknowledged conversion's longer-term impacts could be different.

The study, by the Behavioural Insights Team, also claimed a pupil excluded in year 10 increased their chances of

being in police custody before turning 17 by 33 percentage points. Suspension increased it by 1.3 percentage points.

Researchers called it the "first such project" using techniques able to estimate a causal effect. Findings should be "taken seriously" given the thousands of exclusions and hundreds of thousands of suspensions annually.

They acknowledged an "ongoing and often heated argument" about a so-called "school-to-prison pipeline".

Anne Longfield, the chair of the Commission on Young Lives, said it "backs up" stories she heard about exclusion as a "trigger point that can lead to exploitation or criminalisation", and urged a "culture of inclusion".

Tom Bennett, the government behaviour tsar, called the study "interesting and innovative", but dubbed its conclusions "debatable".

Any impact was "far smaller than has been claimed by those who talk of a school-to-prison pipeline", he said. It gave "little reason" to curb exclusions as a cost-effective tool to reduce youth crime.

Thomas Martell, director of the North East Learning Trust's research and training institute, said the study showed "the power of linking together different data" – but involved "lots of assumptions" so should be interpreted cautiously.



NEWS

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Capita set to oversee flexible working programme

SAMANTHA BOOTH

@SAMANTHAJBOTH

EXCLUSIVE

The outsourcing company Capita is in line to run the government's national programme to deliver a flexible working "culture change" in schools.

Schools Week understands the private firm is the preferred bidder ahead of schools that have run a similar scheme for the past 18 months.

Eight flexible working ambassador schools helped others to improve their part-time employment offers as part of a £480,000 scheme that ended last month.

The Department for Education has been looking for a contractor to run a roll-out of the programme – to include 12 ambassador schools – until March 2025.

The contractor would deliver a "strategy for culture change and promote the programme across the sector" in schools and multi-academy trusts. It would also run workshops and webinars.

Schools Week understands that while a consortium of existing ambassador schools, teaching school hubs and education consultants were among the bidders, Capita is set to be awarded the £768,000 contract.

The DfE said it had not finalised any contract and further detail remained commercially sensitive until then. The programme is expected to be launched in spring.

But there have been recent problems with private companies running DfE contracts.



Ministers launched a "lessons learned" probe into Capita over a £107 million contract to run SATs and Randstad was axed from the National Tutoring Programme.

Improving flexible working in schools is a key part of the government's teacher recruitment and retention strategy. A further pledge was made to "champion" it in last year's schools white paper.

A government report published yesterday found heads believe the benefits of flexible working – such as retaining good staff and improving wellbeing – generally outweigh any costs.

But short-term financial constraints, such as national insurance, could be a "hindrance to schools improving" their approaches. However, researchers found schools "do not explicitly measure or track" the costs or benefits of provision.

The latest DfE workforce data shows 29 per cent of women teachers work part-time,

compared with 35 per cent of all UK female employees.

Male teachers also lag behind with 8 per cent working part-time compared with 11 per cent of men nationally.

Charles Dickens Primary Academy in Southwark, south London, was one of the flexible working ambassador schools. It worked with nine schools in the south east and south London, held four webinars and spoke at national events.

Emily Crow, deputy director at the London South Teaching School Hub, said it supported schools "to recognise the unquantifiable cost of retaining staff and expertise, better pupils outcomes as well as the actual cost of recruitment and training when employing".

To continue its impact, Crow said a financial incentive from the government for participants could be beneficial. For instance, schools and MATs completing the DfE's behaviour hub programme receive up to £9,000 of funding.

Timetabling was a focus for Michael Scott, the head of Newport Girls' High School, the West Midlands ambassador school. A teacher had requested flexible working but the school's timetable administrator was not sure how it could work.

"We used pens and paper as well as timetabling software to show how it's possible to achieve," Scott said. "It's about exhausting every opportunity."

The DfE has surveyed schools involved and is evaluating the impact.

EEF wants schools for three new trials

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is looking for schools to help it find out if university student mentors can boost GCSE science results.

The EEF, which works to build an evidence base for teaching and learning interventions, has announced three upcoming trials in England.

The first looks at Ascents 121, which aims to improve year 11 pupils' science attainment by training undergraduate students to deliver weekly, one-to-one mentoring sessions.

A previous trial in 2019 was impacted by Covid. Secondary schools in London, the south west, East Midlands, and north of England are wanted. The trial will be evaluated by NatCen.

The second scheme, Focus4Taps, aims to raise scientific attainment by providing "high-quality professional development" for science subject leaders and teachers over an academic year.

An earlier EEF trial found children who took part made an average of two months' additional progress.

Primary schools can also take part in the foundation's trial of FFT Reciprocal Reading, a "structured, targeted" 12-week intervention to support pupils in years 5 and 6 who are struggling to understand texts.

Becky Francis, the EEF's chief executive, said it was more important than ever that schools knew that their teaching and learning approaches were having the "desired effect on pupil progress".

Visit the EEF's website for more information.

NEWS: GOVERNANCE

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AET puts parents back on governing bodies

TOM BELGER

@TOM_BELGER

The third largest multi-academy trust has guaranteed parents a place on school-level governing bodies – after previously sidelining them and saying that many were “playground bully parents”.

Rebecca Boomer-Clark, the chief executive of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), said it was “too easy for school trusts to become distant and disconnected from communities” in her report in the trust’s annual accounts, published this week.

The report shows “academy councils” have been rolled out across its 57 schools this year, overhauling the previous local governing bodies (LGBs).

AET claims the change puts “localism front and centre of what we do”, with councils tasked with “helping us connect with communities by forging deep and lasting good relationships”.

The new bodies include two elected parents, up to two employees, a local authority representative and up to three more appointed community members, such as local employers, charities, faith and culture leaders, staff from feeder schools or FE providers.

The chair should “ideally be a community member”.

The change is in stark contrast to the previous bodies with Boomer-Clark’s predecessor, Julian Drinkall, telling *The Times* in 2019 that he had removed parents from local boards, condemning the “playground bully parents” who dominated some.

The trust replaced every chair of governors, appointing senior educational leaders, trust officials and principals.

“I wanted them to all be based on educational excellence, not full of lay people who weren’t up to date with safeguarding and compliance or educational data. It was too cosy...no ability to put together a coherent educational strategy for the school,” Drinkall told the paper.

Parents, community members and other staff have always had some sort of role, but Drinkall relegated them to advisory bodies.

Under the new approach, the two bodies have been merged and



revamped, with almost 500 new members appointed since September.

An AET spokesperson said Boomer-Clark had introduced and led the changes since joining in 2021. Academy councils were “already demonstrating their value” providing an “immediate feedback loop”.

AET accounts stress new board members “will not be ‘governors’ in the traditional sense”, however, and “will not be relied on” for scrutiny of educational performance, policy and compliance.

New roles include feedback on school priorities, ethos and direction, “championing” school achievements, developing local links for learning and employment, and “whether pupils, parents and staff feel safe and happy”.

Emma Knights, the chief executive of the National Governance Association (NGA), said she was “delighted” by the changes. She had dubbed AET’s removal of parent governors as “an own goal”, likely to be seen as a “power grab...to stifle dissent”.

Knights said AET’s latest reforms were “much more in line” with the government’s changing stance and the “direction of travel” across the sector.

An NGA governor poll last year found 91 per cent reported MATs had boards at each school, up from 84 per cent in 2017, and another 6 per cent had LGBs for multiple schools.

The 2021 schools white paper stopped short of mandating school-level governing

bodies, but stressed all trusts “should have local governance arrangements” to make them “responsive” to communities.

The DfE also reminded trusts in 2021 that parents must have a role either on local or trust-level boards.

A report on Monday by Forum Strategy, the MAT CEO network and consultancy, argued that “pure accountability to communities, staff and pupils is a key principle of a thriving trust”. Trust boards could make joining more attractive by showing how they “take into account the views of local governing bodies”.

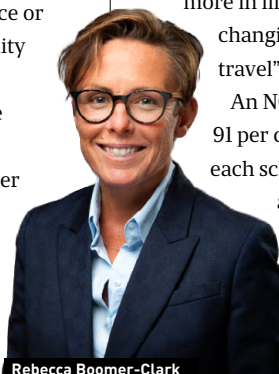
Another report by the Confederation of School Trusts last month said trusts should be “anchor institutions” in communities, and LGBs tasked with “ensuring depth of understanding of the community”.

Yet a report by charity Parentkind this month found only half of parents felt they had a say and that schools acted on their views – but “clearly want” more input.

The NGA’s survey also showed fewer local governors reporting their MAT engaged effectively with communities, with a Covid bounce fading.

At Holland Park School in London, two parent governors elected last year have not been appointed to the temporary school improvement board installed by new sponsor United Learning. The previous board was dissolved.

But England’s largest trust is expected to include parent representatives when a new local governing body is eventually formed.



Rebecca Boomer-Clark

NEWS: INCLUSION

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Grammar schools 'not pulling their weight' on SEND pupils

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

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EXCLUSIVE

Grammar schools are “not pulling their weight” teaching disadvantaged pupils, say campaigners, as new figures show they educate far fewer looked-after children and those with special educational needs than their neighbours.

Selective schools are often criticised for their low proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. But analysis of 2022 census data by Comprehensive Future also shows just 4.3 per cent of their pupils have SEND, compared with 15.5 per cent in non-selective schools in grammar areas.

Grammars also educate on average two looked-after or previously looked-after children each, compared with an average of 14 in non-selective schools. Sixty-eight of the 163 schools have no children in care on their rolls at all.

Comprehensive Future said the data showed selective schools were “not pulling their weight”, leaving non-selective schools to educate “a disproportionately higher number of SEN and looked-after pupils than a typical comprehensive”.

At St Anselm's College in Birkenhead, 2 per cent of the school's 981 pupils were recorded as having SEND, compared with 19.3 per cent in non-selective schools in the area. The school was approached for comment.

And at Wirral Grammar School for Girls, 3.8 per cent of pupils had SEND, compared with 19.3 per cent in non-selective schools.

The school pointed to its recent ‘outstanding’ Ofsted inspection, which found leaders were “quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND”.

The school added that its admissions policy guaranteed the first 15 places in every cohort to disadvantaged pupils, meaning its numbers were “significantly higher than other grammar schools in the area and nationally”.

Last year, Kent, which has more grammar schools than any other county, was rapped by the government for failing to tackle a “lack of willingness” of some schools to “accommodate” children with SEND.



Just 3.9 per cent of pupils at the county's grammar schools had SEND, compared with 12.1 per cent in non-selective schools. Campaigners pointed out Kent also has the highest number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, who counted as looked-after and who would “invariably attend non-selective schools”.

Dr Nuala Burgess, the chair of Comprehensive Future, said it “would seem that the vast majority of grammar schools are making absolutely no effort to be inclusive”.

But Dr Mark Fenton, the chief executive of the Grammar School Heads' Association, said selective schools already prioritised pupils with EHCPs and looked-after children who met admissions standards.

“Unfortunately, fewer children in these categories achieve the higher levels at key stage 2 compared with the national average and therefore tend to be under-represented in selective schools.”

However, Burgess said it would be “a mistake to assume that all SEN pupils are lower attaining”.

“This group is massively diverse and includes highly able dyslexic and autistic pupils, as well as other forms of neurodiversity. Einstein was a dyslexic and apparently hopeless at school tests, and Bill Gates has autism. It is highly likely that both men would have been rejected by an English grammar school.”

Fenton added that because

it was up to individual schools which children to place on their SEND register, it was “not a reliable basis for comparison”.

Some grammars do buck the trend. For example, about 13 per cent of pupils at Lancaster Royal Grammar School have SEND, compared with 11 per cent in non-grammars. The school did not respond to a request for comment.

Grammar schools also generally educate far fewer looked-after pupils.

In Wirral, 0.57 per cent of pupils at grammars are either looked-after or have previously been looked-after, compared with 3.05 per cent in non-selective schools.

Councils pointed to efforts to get more disadvantaged pupils into grammar schools.

In Buckinghamshire, 0.12 per cent of grammar school pupils are looked-after, compared with 0.84 per cent in non-selective schools.

Anita Cranmer, the council's cabinet member for education and children's services, said adjustments were made to the 11-plus for children with disabilities, and that most children who entered care did so when they were already at secondary school.

In Medway, Kent, 1.3 per cent of children in non-selective schools are looked-after, compared to 0.29 per cent in grammars.

A spokesperson said looked-after children were encouraged to take the 11-plus.

The council was also “liaising with grammar schools across Medway to see how we can work together to increase the number of SEND pupils at grammar schools”.



Dr Mark Fenton

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BTECs cull: Ministers accused of reneging on promise

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Ministers are under fire for reneging on their promise to axe just a "small" number of BTECs and other applied general qualifications, as new analysis reveals that more than half will be scrapped by government edict.

A cross-party group of peers led by Lord Blunkett has vowed to confront education secretary Gillian Keegan on the issue.

"This, at best, is an act of considerable bad faith and, at worst, an indication that the government's word isn't worth the paper it was written on," Blunkett said.

Leaders have warned the "ideologically driven" reform could cause "significant chaos", as the plans would wipe out provision currently offered to almost two-thirds of sixth-form college students.

The Department for Education is working to introduce a streamlined system for students finishing their GCSEs that pushes them to study either A-levels, their new technical equivalent T-levels, or an apprenticeship.

Officials have already announced that 106 alternative technical level 3 courses will have their funding removed from 2024 because they "overlap" with the first few T-level courses. Others face the chop in future years as more T-levels roll out to allow the qualifications to "flourish".

The DfE launched the next phase of its level 3 review earlier this month, which involves a new strict approvals process that all "alternative" technical and academic applied general qualifications, such as Pearson's popular BTECs, must pass to retain their funding.

But a guide published this month states that ministers have made the "conscious choice" to exclude "certain" academic qualifications from this process, either because the subject is "more suited to a technical qualification or because there is an associated A level".

When the list of qualifications eligible for funding is mapped against the 134 recently reformed applied general qualifications



Lord Blunkett and Nadhim Zahawi

currently available to young people and included in the DfE's performance league tables, an "astonishing" 75 are found to be ineligible.

It means well-established qualifications, such as BTECs in health and social care, applied science, and law will disappear from 2025.

Experts also predict that many of the eligible courses will fail to gain approval through the new process.

The analysis, shared exclusively with *Schools Week* by the Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA) that leads the Protect Student Choice campaign, shows that 62 per cent of applied general students in the sixth-form college sector are currently enrolled on qualifications that will be scrapped before the approval process begins.

This comes despite then education secretary Nadhim Zahawi promising the sector and Parliament through the passage of the skills and post-16 education bill that "only a small proportion of the total level 3 BTEC and other applied general style qualification offer – significantly less than half" would be removed.

Bill Watkin, SFCA chief executive, criticised the government for their decision not to run a "transparent and impartial approval process".

He also criticised officials for not being clear about what evidence was used to draw up the list of subjects that will be funded

in the future, describing their decisions as "indefensible and entirely unnecessary".

Blunkett hit out at ministers for a "clear reversal of the undertakings given last year" after promising the Lords "in writing and from the despatch box that only a minority of advanced qualifications would cease to be funded".

"This is either a mistake that can be easily rectified, or a deliberate and calculated U-turn.

"A range of peers from all parties have agreed to take this matter up with education secretary Gillian Keegan, and I feel sure that she will want to demonstrate her honesty and integrity and act accordingly."

Toby Perkins MP, Labour's shadow skills minister, said the government's reassurances on level 3 choice "have been shown to be hollow" and called on officials to "work with the sector and think again before pursuing this approach".

A DfE spokesperson said: "Our reforms are intended to help more people to progress into work, an apprenticeship or on to further study, so it's vital that the qualifications on offer are of the highest possible standard.

"We have already introduced T Levels as the new gold standard technical qualification and the changes we are making through our review will make sure only qualifications that are necessary, lead to good outcomes for students and meet the skills needs of businesses are approved for public funding."

EXPLAINER: ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Ofsted's thematic reviews of AP: 6 things to know

Ofsted has set out how it will conduct thematic reviews of alternative provision (AP) as part of its new area SEND inspections.

The reviews were announced at the end of last year in an effort to improve the watchdog's knowledge of how AP is used.

Inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will begin visiting local areas in February. They will continue until the summer term, with a national report published this autumn.

It comes as part of the inspectorate's new joint area SEND inspections framework, which came into force in January.

1 Visits will not result in judgments

Ofsted said thematic visits will find out "the extent to which" AP is meeting the health, care and education needs of children and young people and "better understand" the purposes for which it is used.

They will also explore how local area partners work together to commission and oversee placements within the provision and highlight good practice.

The visits are also expected to "provide insights" into the relationship between SEND and AP.

But while Ofsted said its findings will be used to update inspection approaches "as appropriate", it will not make judgments about individual areas during the reviews.

Inspectors will debrief local area leaders and hold "reflective discussion" at the end of visits. Individual areas will then receive a summary note.

2 Findings will not identify local areas

The local areas visited will be listed when a national report is published later this year. But findings will not be attributed to individual areas unless they have agreed to identified.

Personal information about children, young people, parents and carers will also not be featured.

Ofsted and the CQC will select a "varied sample" of a "smaller number" of local authority areas to visit.

The watchdog added it would "be considerate" of other inspection activity when selecting areas.

3 All types of AP within scope of the visits

The scope of thematic visits will be children and young people between the ages of five and 18 who are in AP, or have been within

the previous six months.

All types of provision are within the scope of the visits, with inspectors also seeking to understand how local partners define AP.

Outreach services, such as alternative providers to improve behaviour within mainstream schools, could also be reviewed.

4 How AP supports children to stay in mainstream

The Ofsted guidance lists seven overarching themes it plans to investigate, including the role of AP, strategic planning, commissioning decisions, oversight arrangements and transition arrangements.

Inspectors will also look at factors that enable or prevent local partners from working together and the impact of arrangements on children and young people.

Sub-themes include AP's outreach role in supporting children and young people to stay in mainstream provision and how it supports them to return where appropriate.

5 Leaders will get 10 days' notice

Inspectors will notify local leaders 10 working days before on-site visits start. Leaders will then be sent a link to a survey that they should "make reasonable efforts" to distribute to relevant stakeholders.

A virtual discussion will take place between inspectors and local leaders, and the local authority and other partners will be asked to provide information to support the visit.

Inspectors will also carry out a pre-visit analysis, select providers to visit and up to three children and young people to take part in tracking meetings.

The latter meetings will enable inspectors to hear directly about experiences and outcomes. Visits will consist of up to four days of off-site activity and four days of on-site visits.

Inspectors will meet with children and young people in AP and parents and carers, as well as leaders and practitioners.

6 Significant concerns could lead to inspections

Inspectors are advised to follow existing procedures if they are concerned about a child or young person during a visit.

The guidance states that if they remain concerned, either Ofsted or CQC will consider if further action is appropriate.

This could include referring individuals to the local authority or requesting an inspection of the individual service or provider.

If other serious concerns are identified, inspectors will also notify a senior officer from the local authority. This could lead to an inspection.

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Trust seeks approval to write off £133,000 duplicate payment

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
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United Learning has applied to write off a "duplicate payment" of more than £133,000 made to a company that subsequently went into liquidation.

The trust said it had exhausted efforts to recoup the payment made to H & E Mechanical and Electrical Limited in October 2017, and had applied to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for permission to write the amount off this year.

The trust's accounts for the year to August 2022 said the £133,637 payment had been "appropriately authorised" and was "not expected to constitute a loss" because full repayment was anticipated.

However, the supplier went into liquidation in March 2019. Despite agreeing a payment plan and chasing the money, no payment was received.

The trust said its management had been "robustly pursuing" repayment via legal proceedings and using a debt collection agency. It had therefore concluded in previous years that "no loss had yet crystallised".

But given the time that has passed, and "based on the latest advice" of lawyers, debt collectors and insolvency practitioners, the chances of recovery were "now considered to be low". It has sought government approval to write off the costs.

United Learning's auditor Grant Thornton said in its report that the duplicate payment had resulted in "funds not having been used as intended by parliament".

This was a breach of the requirements of the academy trust handbook, and "therefore constitutes a reportable irregularity". The payment related to a school capital project.

Elsewhere, United Learning feared it would rack up an in-year deficit of £10 million due to "late" energy and pay cost pressures before the government announced extra funding for schools last autumn.

It now projects a deficit this year of about £3 million and "to return to balance at year end".

United Learning loses legal fight over £2m MIS deal

TOM BELGER
@TOM_BELGER

England's largest academy trust has lost a High Court battle over a £2 million management information system (MIS) deal, with a judge ruling rejected bidder Bromcom should have won the United Learning contract.

But United Learning will seek permission to appeal the judgment, a move it said has the backing of the government as the ruling is "of concern to all schools".

United Learning handed Arbor a multi-year contract to provide a cloud-based MIS to 57 schools, thought to be one of the largest deals of its kind. Systems were previously run by Capita.

But the second-placed bidder, Bromcom, took legal action seeking damages in 2020, alleging United Learning had breached procurement law.

United Learning denied the claims, but a High Court judge has found in favour of Bromcom on multiple issues, and said he would be awarding damages – with the sums yet to be determined.

Mr Justice Waksman ruled: "There were numerous breaches and collectively they would have meant that the result would have gone the other way by some margin."

But a United Learning spokesperson told *Schools Week* that the Education and Skills Funding Agency had said it should defend the case, partly given "the potential impact on other schools of repeated litigation".

"It will be of concern to all schools that a good faith procurement carried out with full professional advice can lead to so many wasted hours and thousands of pounds of legal costs, even where a trust does all it can to close the matter reasonably."

The judge said there was a "failure to treat the bidders equally" and "manifest error" because it did not take a particular step to "neutralise" Arbor's inherent advantage as incumbent provider" to 15 other United Learning schools.

United Learning was also found to have infringed regulations as its cost scoring factored in a rebate from Arbor on its separate contract for other trust schools. The question turned on "the proper approach of the rules relating to incumbent advantage and ensuring a bid relates only to the contract in question".

Meanwhile the trust "acted unlawfully" in its scoring because it did not provide enough information to Bromcom about why it received particular scores.

Several Bromcom accusations were thrown out, however. The judge also said no rule breaches were "deliberate" or in "bad faith".

A United Learning spokesperson said it was "pleased" by this, but "disappointed" the court found it was "in technical breach on some specific points".

United Learning also accused Bromcom of "grave professional misconduct which renders its integrity questionable" after six phone calls with the trust were covertly recorded.

The judge said the behaviour "showed a lack of professional courtesy" but not grave misconduct.

Ali Guryel, the executive chairman of Bromcom, said he was "delighted that Bromcom is clearly vindicated".

"We are confident our success in this legal action will lead to better outcomes for schools and their pupils, as well as better suppliers in the future."

The company pledged to give half of recovered damages, after costs, to "education charities and awareness campaigns for best practice".

Duncan Baldwin, an education consultant and former deputy policy director at the school leaders' union ASCL, said the judgment would "potentially fill school and MAT leaders with dismay and dread".

Last year Bromcom also filed a legal action against Academies Enterprise Trust, and has previously been involved in legal battles with two local authorities.



SPEED READ: ONLINE LEARNING

DfE updates guidance on remote learning

Schools can use remote education for pupils off with infectious illnesses and to “reintegrate” some absent children back into the classroom, says updated non-statutory guidance.

The guidance, updated on Monday, was first published during Covid, when schools were closed to most pupils.

It comes ahead of planned strikes by teacher members of the National Education Union in February and March with schools likely to use remote learning in the face of partial closures.

1 Remote education only for 'short-term' absence ...

The guidance says remote education should only be considered as a last resort “where a decision has already been made that attendance at school is not possible, but pupils are able to continue learning”.

This includes school closures, or where school access is restricted.

On individual cases, the guidance says there should only be “limited circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend school but is able and well enough to continue their education remotely”.

This “should only involve a short-term absence” and could include pupils recovering from infectious illnesses, operations or injuries.

However, remote education should not be “viewed as an equal alternative to attendance in school”. It also does not “reduce the importance of bringing that absence to an end as soon as possible”.

Pupils receiving remote education should still be marked as absent.

2... and can be used to reintegrate pupils

In exceptional cases, pupils whose attendance has been affected by SEND or a mental health issue could be educated remotely. But this should be on a case-by-case basis.

“This should be part of a plan to reintegrate back to school, and only when it is judged that providing remote education would not adversely affect the pupil’s return to school.”

But the DfE adds that such a provision should be a “short-term solution” allowing pupils to “keep on track with their education and stay connected to their teachers and peers.”

3 Share plans with parents

The government notes that remote education plans are likely to be in place already, but these should be kept up to date to “remain relevant to the school’s current context”.

They should also be kept under review and demonstrate a “consideration” of additional burdens that remote education could place on staff and families.

Schools are told to consider sharing plans with parents and pupils to “provide ongoing clarity and transparency about what to expect”.

Where pupils have access to digital devices, the DfE suggests online learning could include recorded or live teaching, as well as time for pupils to complete tasks independently.

It recommends Oak National Academy as an alternate provider of “high-quality lessons”.

4 Check on home internet connection and devices

Leaders are warned to be “mindful” of the individual needs and circumstances of pupils and their families.

These could include whether a child has a suitable place and opportunity to study, or any “significant” demands this may place on parents or carers where “high levels of adult involvement” might be needed. Limits on screen time should also be considered.

Schools should work to “overcome barriers” for pupils, including auditing access to devices and supporting families to find appropriate internet connection.

5 Remote learning can be used during suspensions

Suspension and permanent exclusion rules state schools must take steps to ensure work is set and marked for pupils during their first five days away.

The guidance says remote education “should not be used as a justification for sending pupils home due to their misbehaviour”. Suspension laws must be followed “even if they have been asked to log on or access online education while suspended”.

6 Provide lunch parcels or vouchers

Pupils eligible for free school meals should be provided with good quality lunch parcels or a food voucher.

“This will ensure that eligible pupils continue to be supported for the period they are unable to attend school.”



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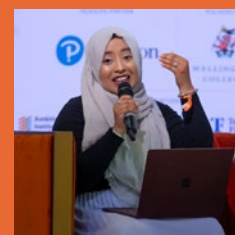
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JESSICA HILL | @JESSJANEHILL

'The Covid spotlight showed the depth of the quality of education in private schools'

Jessica Hill meets Chris King, the chief executive of the Independent Association of Prep Schools

As a young pupil of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital school in Bristol, Chris King used to take his cap off as soon as he passed through its castle-like gates into the outside world. "God help us if somebody from another school was passing by, they'd knock it off

your head," he says.

But he is worried that discrimination against children from "elite" schools has soared to a "different level". While a selective school-educated child from a "socially tough" part of town might once have faced snowballs or hat-

grabbing from their comprehensive school peers, "now they just have stones chucked at them".

King says he knows of recent cases of families from deprived areas turning down 100 per cent bursaries from fee-paying schools. "Before, there would be a certain pride in the local community

Profile: Chris King

in that child. That's all gone."

King has spent much of the past eight years representing independent schools on the national stage, first as chairman of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) and, since 2018, as chief executive of the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS). Before that, he spent three decades teaching and leading selective and independent schools across England.

A perceived backlash against fee-paying schools is something he is particularly concerned about, given Labour's proposals to take away their charitable status and charge 20 per cent VAT on fees.

King is also wary of journalists who perpetuate an image of independent schools based on J K Rowling's Hogwarts – or worse, "that awful photograph of children with top hats and the street urchins alongside them". (He's referring to the iconic "Toffs and Toughs", taken in Harrow, 1937).

He's also pretty cross about "ridiculous" reports that imply the expulsion of Russian oligarchs has financially impacted his sector, so creating a false image of "super-wealthy" parents.

He had hoped through his national roles he might be able to overcome this "lack of understanding". But he admits to "great frustration" that "we're a minority interest for the government".

From sewage to school teacher

King's career has certainly come a long way from when he started out in sewage. After graduating with a geography degree from Durham, he joined Wessex Water in a role involving sewage management.

In the 1970s, as now, sewage was pumped into our waterways but it was "really difficult to get money spent in the right places. There were no votes in sewage" because "most people don't see it".

King opted to switch to teaching and after getting his qualification at Durham, started at Sutton Valence School in Kent.



'Children are very shrewd, they know who the best teacher is'

Remarkably, it was not until 26 years later in 2001, as head of Leicester Grammar School, that anyone ever observed King teach – and then only because he "insisted".

"I don't think it could happen now," he says. "Judgment on my teaching was based on my reputation coming from the children. Maybe there's something in that."

He thinks privately-educated children have more self-confidence to speak out if they feel a teacher is "rubbish. Children are very shrewd, they know who the best teacher is and appreciate consistency and fairness. The discipline line can be different between teachers, as long as they consistently apply it."

After a stint as head of geography at Rendcomb College, Gloucestershire, King moved to the 400-year-old Kimbolton School, Cambridgeshire, which is based in a castle.

He was the first deputy head appointed from outside existing staff, and recalls it as a "culture shock".

Certain staffroom chairs were reserved for senior, long-serving teachers. But King "wasn't

having anything of it" and sat wherever he wanted. "I had quite a lot of fun in a slightly sad way upsetting some of the older staff members."

But time and age have "mellowed" King, who is now "more accepting" of such traditions and has "come to value" people with different life perspectives.

Labour plans and education 'apartheid'

But the mellow nature is soon cast aside when talking about Labour's plans to take away private schools' charitable status.

The party – likely to form the next government – has pledged to invest the £1.7 billion-a-year the policy would raise to recruit 6,500 new teachers.

King takes a swipe at politicians from all parties and their "unwillingness to openly connect themselves" with their own private or selective school background, which is often seen as a "criticism rather than something to be praised".

A 2019 Elitist Britain report showed 29 per cent per cent of MPs were privately-schooled, compared with about 6 per cent nationally.

King claims British independent school heads

Profile: Chris King

are “regarded incredibly highly and instantly so” everywhere in the world. But within this country they “don’t get the recognition in the sense of being drawn into discussions about curriculum development, pastoral care and education”.

“It’s very difficult to get a voice for the sector. There’s an apartheid situation, which is not of our creation.”

King warns that a “swingeing” 20 per cent VAT on fees would reduce the ability of independent schools to afford outreach, bursaries and scholarships, making them “more socio-economically exclusive”.

The Independent Schools Council says nearly £1.2 billion has been provided over the past year in fees assistance, up 4.8 per cent on the previous year. The value of means-tested bursaries and scholarships has risen 78 per cent, by more than £200 million, since 2011.

King believes that the tax hike would lead to closures “without a doubt”, leaving a “significant number of children looking for places in the state sector”.

Independent schools are doing “a great deal of work behind the scenes” to explain all this to Labour representatives, as well as MPs more generally.

Are they listening? “To some extent.” But King believes Bridget Phillipson, the shadow education secretary, and Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, have “dug into positions” on their plans.

King and some other heads’ associations are already “planning for the worst and hoping for the best” by telling their members to budget ahead for potential tax hikes in 2024-25. Potential staff redundancies could be involved, King warns.

For now, pupil numbers at IAPS member schools are “up” – from 191,000 last year to 195,736 in January – despite the economic downturn. The organisation represents more than 650 prep schools, most of which are in the UK.

King believes this reflects what happened during the Covid lockdown. “The education experience parents saw shone a light on a contrasting position between ... the state ... and



Scene from Harry Potter

Photograph by Warner Bros/Courtesy EMI Collection

‘Schools naturally want to be part of their local community’

the independent sector. The spotlight, when it was shone, really showed the depths of the quality of education [in the independent sector].”

But energy bills – almost half of the ISC’s 1,388 members have pools to heat – mean the “forward” view is of a “really challenging environment”.

However King is optimistic his sector is flexible and resilient enough to overcome future hurdles.

Teacher recruitment challenges

Another challenge is finding subject-specialist teachers, which is “harder now than it’s ever been”, prompting independent schools to extend their reach overseas.

He says teaching abroad 15 years ago would “probably be a death knell to your career back in the UK”. Now there is more ebb and flow.

“Now it is probably regarded as advantageous if somebody had some years abroad, particularly in the Middle East.”

But it still leaves schools having to “appoint in

haste and repent at leisure”.

King says “many dozens” of prep schools are now adopting a curriculum pioneered by St Faiths Prep School in Cambridgeshire that is designed around engineering and in which pupils learn maths “almost without knowing it”.

But he derides the prime minister’s proposals for all pupils in England to study maths to 18 as “absolutely ridiculous”.

Partnerships with state sector

But one area private schools are keen to get involved is in setting up new elite sixth forms.

Eton College is teaming up with Star Academies to open three in Dudley, Oldham and Teesside, a move that King says is reflective of much “partnership work” off the radar with state schools.

“A lot of it happens very quietly, partly because politically if a lot of noise was made about it in local authority areas more ideologically driven to object to independent schools, those linkages would be severed overnight,” he says.

“I know of instances where independent school heads don’t want any publicity [about that work] because they fear the spotlight would give pause for people to object and bring it to an end. It’s a terrible situation.”

The ISC says 936 of its 1,388 member schools are involved in 6,963 partnerships with state schools, including 2,362 sports partnerships. King believes such partnership work is one way a government might deem whether a school is “charitable” or not.

But the intention behind them is not purely altruistic. The “best schools recognise” some parents’ concern that a fee-charging school could turn their child into a “posh, arrogant snob they won’t recognise”, and “want their child to be able to talk with prince or pauper with equal ease”.

“The idea that a successful independent school operates behind the drawbridge that separates them from the local community is an historic manner of behaviour of our schools,” he adds. “Schools naturally want to be part of their local community.”

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
CONTACT US NEWS@SCHOOLSWEEK.CO.UKMICHAEL
GOSLINGChief executive,
Trinity Multi-Academy TrustKeegan is right on pay levels,
but she should go further

The education secretary's proposal to differentiate pay according to subject specialisms is right, says Michael Gosling, but misses an important factor

Regardless of the quality of their defending, or indeed the accuracy of their crosses, a fullback will never be paid as much as an effective goal-scoring striker. The team doesn't win if either is missing, but there is an economic reality that football – indeed most professions – readily accepts: you have to pay more for the scarcest of resources. Furthermore, once this principle is accepted, dressing-room harmony need not be threatened.

When Gillian Keegan recently mooted higher salaries for shortage subjects, the union response was predictable and, in the current circumstances, understandable. However, while few in the profession would decry an above-inflation, fully funded pay increase for all, economic reality makes that unlikely. Nonetheless, this same reality also suggests that her proposal is worthy of serious consideration.

First, in the past year STEM subjects missed recruitment targets by 46 per cent in England, with

physics particularly hard hit with a shortfall of 83 per cent. Before people blame the demands of the job, PE recruited to 143 per cent of its required numbers. This leaves only one reasonable explanation: a physics graduate (a scarce resource), probably saddled with considerable student debt, would choose a different path because of a comparatively poor salary.

Second, Einstein described insanity as “doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results”. The parity of teachers' salaries is something that has been well guarded over the years. However, that position has manifested itself in a lack of specialist teachers in shortage areas, which can only negatively impact on student understanding and outcomes. In other words, our next generation of potential STEM graduates are being let down by the very system we are protecting.

Finally, this is not new territory. The DfE points to bursaries and scholarships worth £27,000 and £29,000 respectively in key subjects for 2023. However, retention becomes the issue as these trainees enjoy the tax-free bursary, and then effectively take a significant pay decrease in the early years of their careers. If the profession is serious about



“You have to pay more for the scarcest of resources

attracting and retaining qualified teachers in shortage areas, these incentives need to be baked in.

In the past month, our trust (with 75 per cent of its schools rated ‘outstanding’) has been running a heavily advertised recruitment campaign – more than 50 jobs across ten schools in five local authorities in the north of England. We received more than 700 applications, an average of just over 14 for each role. However, when considering just STEM roles, that average dropped to six, with a small number of crucial roles (that we have advertised previously) attracting just one or two candidates.

This is a picture that most school leaders will recognise only too well. Indeed, some will look on in envy as they desperately try to improve a vulnerable school in a geographical area that is statistically harder to recruit to. That final point – the geographical challenge we face – is also worth considering.

While schools are multi-faceted

and complex organisations, sometimes it is important to keep it simple: the single most important factor in raising performance is the quality of the person standing in front of the pupils. That will never change, and so here are two thoughts to finish with.

If the logic of a financial incentive is accepted, it should be used to attract the best candidates to areas of underperformance as well as shortage subjects. Furthermore, if this incentive is to be used, it cannot come out of existing school budgets. They are already strained to breaking point, so there needs to be a mechanism for schools to claim additional funding based on their recruitment in shortage subjects, and their locations.

Rather than hearing that we cannot afford to do that, one professional voice needs to shout loudly that we cannot afford NOT to do it. Until that happens, however inviting the cross into the box is, there will not be an effective striker waiting to score the winning goal.

Opinion

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ANDREA
SQUIRES

Partner and head of the education team,
Winckworth Sherwood LLP

Legal changes make it difficult to prepare for teachers' strikes

New regulations and a bill wending its way through parliament at speed make preparing for strikes more challenging, says Andrea Squires

As teachers vote to stop work, the focus turns to how school leaders should prepare for strike action. The pressure on the government will increase as schools face closure and parents are forced to take time off work. But there are no easy answers and school leaders will need to consider the impact of sustained action as well as short-term disruption.

Heads have a duty to take all necessary steps to maintain teaching and learning safely. This duty to maintain provision has been brought into sharp focus with the rapid progression of the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill, which is now at the committee stage after its introduction on January 10.

The regulations will provide for standards to be maintained, and employers will have the power to issue "work notices" which, if not adhered to, will remove the employee's protection from dismissal for striking in breach of contract. Given the strength

of feeling across all sectors, it seems likely that there will be some challenge when the draft regulations are consulted on, assuming the legislation clears the House of Lords. It is worth noting too that the regulations are expected to apply retrospectively, after a strike ballot or strike action has been notified.

It's difficult to see quite what minimum service the education secretary will want to protect and how practical this will be. She may draw on guidance and regulations issued during the Covid pandemic, when schools were required to remain open to allow children of key workers and vulnerable pupils to attend, or to prioritise teaching and exam preparation for certain year groups. As with Covid, careful risk assessments will need to be made, with the added complexity of trying to assess how far staff will in practice cooperate with a work notice and what each work notice must say.

Under the school teachers' pay and conditions document, non-striking staff cannot be asked to cover the lessons of striking colleagues unless they are specifically employed as cover teachers. Those not in a union are allowed to join an official strike



“New regulations are expected to apply retrospectively

and benefit from the protection against dismissal. Those in a union not taking industrial action are not allowed to join any strike organised by a different union, a fact now more pertinent given that two of the three unions that balloted couldn't get over the threshold required for action. This also brings into play questions around "lock out", where the employer refuses to allow those who are not striking to work and the consequences of that.

Helpfully, regulations issued last year (which are themselves the subject of an application for judicial review by the unions) enabled agency staff to be called on to provide cover. How much of an impact this will have in the context of a national strike is hard to assess. Volunteers can be used to provide cover, but they must be DBS-checked.

The DfE has now published updated guidance on handling strikes. It remains the head's decision whether to close the school

if adequate minimum cover cannot be secured and whether pupils or staff will be put at risk. A key focus of the new guidance is the ability of schools to work together to maintain provision, including delivering remote provision. Having learned lessons from the pandemic, some larger multi-academy trusts will be very able to respond effectively to this need.

This is not without its own controversy, though. The pandemic reinforced existing divisions and created new disparities as some were more able to adapt to a different teaching and learning environment than others. The pandemic has clearly widened the gap in attainment, and the strikes may well have the same effect.

Meanwhile, previous legislation that made a national walk-out less likely has arguably made matters worse in terms of widening these disparities. This should be a lesson for any minister hoping to legislate their way out of this dispute.

Opinion

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IAN
EDWARDS

Executive member for schools and young people, London Councils

London Challenged: The capital's places crisis could soon spread

The capital's schools are threatened by a falling birth rate, writes Ian Edwards – an experience that could be repeated across the country

London has some of the best schools in the country, continuing to enjoy the best results of any region in England at key stage 2 and GCSE.

Achieving this has taken decades of effort and investment and the dedication of teachers, boroughs and local communities. For our children's sake, it is vital that we maintain the quality of our education in a fast-changing world. However, a new report from London Councils shows that demand for school places (particularly at reception) has dropped across the capital, bringing new challenges.

Many primary schools in London are already struggling to balance budgets because of a combination of factors that include price rises and a shortage of teaching and support staff, leading to an increased spend on more expensive agency staff. The decrease in the number of children starting school has the potential to impact funding further, leading directly to lower

per-pupil allocations.

London Councils' new report shows there is a predicted 7.6 per cent decrease in reception numbers across London from 2022-23 to 2026-27. This means today's 96,424 will decline to 89,121 by September 2026, roughly equivalent to a decrease of 243 classes across the city.

The reduction is already creating challenges for schools and local authorities, as well as families and communities. In particular, the cut in income means that schools will have to make further difficult decisions to balance their budgets. This could include reducing teaching and support staff or narrowing the curriculum and extracurricular opportunities, which could have an impact on standards and children's experience of school. In some cases school and local authority leaders may have to merge or close schools.

The main reason for this decline is the long-term decrease in the birth rate across London. For context, between 2012 and 2021, there was a 17 per cent decrease in London's birth rate, which translates to a reduction of 23,225 live births across the capital. The national birth rate has also fallen, although



“The scrapping of the schools bill has left a policy vacuum

not as steeply as London's, by 13 per cent. It is not unusual for birth rates to fluctuate, but it is something that schools, boroughs and government need to manage carefully.

Other factors are also affecting the number of reception applications in London schools. Boroughs are also experiencing shifts in their local child population as a result of families leaving London during the Covid-19 pandemic and following Brexit.

Councils have a hugely important role in supporting the education system, and we will continue to work hard to minimise the impact fewer pupils may have on school budgets. London boroughs are supporting and guiding schools during this period and are looking to work with the government to minimise disruption to children in schools with falling rolls.

The abandonment of the schools bill has left a policy vacuum at exactly the same time as schools

in London are moving out of a period of growth and stability into reduction and uncertainty. In its place, we must begin to discuss an overriding education support framework that puts communities at the heart of planning.

We do not know how long this downturn in pupil numbers will continue, and it is essential that while we adjust we find ways to minimise disruption to our children's' education. Boroughs are listening to local schools and working with teachers and parents to find a sustainable model that brings about a better future for our schools and London's children.

There is a real chance to nurture local and regional collaboration, to strengthen partnerships and how we share information. But this period also presents substantial risk, and our aim must be to protect and sustain our schools' hard-won gains.

Opinion

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?
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Some progress has been made towards key goals in the DfE's sustainability strategy, say Keya Lamba and Shweta Bahri, but commitment and consistency are sadly lacking

Climate education plays a key role in empowering children and tackling climate anxiety, reducing future carbon emissions and ensuring climate justice. The Department for Education's sustainability and climate change strategy recognises this and sets the stage for the UK to be one of the few countries in the world to have formally adopted a comprehensive climate and sustainability education plan. Nearly a year on from publication, however, it's high time for a clear implementation roadmap and financial and technical support for schools to make it a reality.

The dedicated unit has already achieved some progress in its strategic goals, including the creation of a consortium led by the Natural History Museum. This partnership is set to establish a new national education nature park and climate action awards' scheme.

Compared with other countries, the DfE's strategy takes a holistic approach across age groups. It has a vision for skilling for future green jobs and for a carbon-neutral school infrastructure. It even considers elements of teacher training, which is often overlooked.

But vision without a clear strategy and robust financial and technical support for implementation amounts to little but warm words. Schools need the government's help to appoint sustainability leads, to train teachers, to create climate action plans and to prepare curriculum material. However, beyond a model science curriculum for primary schools due this year, the strategy is vague on timelines and

KEYA
LAMBA

Co-founders,
Earth Warriors

SHWETA
BAHRI



Piecemeal progress will allow a green gap to appear

on the type of support that will be available.

Even the promised model primary curriculum is insufficient. Climate education specialists broadly fall into two camps: those who argue that climate change should be threaded

the kind of climate action we need. Instead, a solutions-based approach is key to empowering students in their local communities.

Meanwhile, various threads of work must be brought together. For example, it's unclear exactly how the

“ Vision without a strategy is little but warm words

through all subjects and those who say it should be taught as a standalone. The two aren't exclusive, and in any case the subject should be made relevant to all age groups.

And it can't just be about curriculum either. Work is also needed to develop pedagogical approaches, as research shows that simply teaching the science of climate change doesn't inspire

new consortium fits into the broader strategy.

Similarly, the DfE's plan must be considered alongside existing education policies, notably accountability. One potential driver for rapid and sustained progress, for example, could be to incorporate parameters from the strategy into Ofsted's inspection framework.



But schools can't be held accountable for something they have not been trained to deliver or supported to achieve. They will need direction on how to make time in already packed timetables for climate education, and for training teachers to deliver it. The public sector decarbonisation scheme is delivering change in many schools, but those taking advantage of it are those already most likely to have the resources to make funding applications and oversee capital projects. What about the rest?

One way to ensure the issue doesn't get lost could be to make climate education a legal requirement for all schools. That would hold the government equally accountable for action on climate education and demonstrate genuine commitment to the DfE's strategy.

There is already a growing movement of schools and teachers who are incorporating climate change and sustainability education into their timetables. School Sustainability Networks (SSNs) are bringing together students and teachers on this topic and provide access to classroom resources and CPD. Many international organisations provide free resources too.

All of which means schools do not have to wait on the government to drive climate and sustainability education forward. But piecemeal progress like this isn't enough. It will only allow a "green gap" to appear where other disadvantage gaps are already apparent.

Climate change is a global problem that requires national solutions. The DfE's strategy outlines a promising roadmap that could make the UK a model for the rest of the world, but we need momentum to make climate and sustainability education a reality for all.

Solutions

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HEIDI HEINEMANN

Education lead,
The Roots Programme

How to ensure cross-sector work doesn't feed inequality

Many well-meaning initiatives to support "disadvantaged" schools and pupils perpetuate the divides they purport to challenge, writes Heidi Heinemann

Classism and inequality have been hot topics recently. The BBC's *How to Crack the Class Ceiling* showed young people receiving lessons on how to present themselves as middle class for interviews. Meanwhile, research has brought to light the gaps in pay, opportunity, access to politics and life expectancy between the privately and state educated.

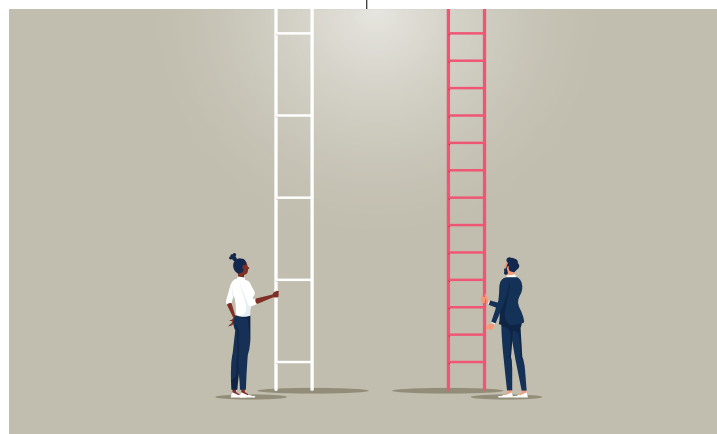
At The Roots Programme, I work with young people and teachers from state and private schools to bridge class, cultural, racial and religious divides. I believe firmly that cross-sector work can re-shape future leaders' approaches to class and inequality, challenge biases, reconstruct ideas about those from different backgrounds, and educate people about different class cultures and the varied challenges they face.

Without careful consideration, however, it can perpetuate inequality and classism. While much cross-sector work can appear promising, private schools are often placed in positions of

assumed superiority. They might be asked to use their "expertise" to help state schools. Or private school pupils might "mentor" state school pupils to develop "leadership skills". Such approaches are patronising and tokenistic.

This issue is sometimes mirrored by organisations that work with "disadvantaged" young people. For example, a recent post on LinkedIn celebrated the "transformation" of some young participants in an employment programme. Images showed young black boys originally in tracksuits and puffer jackets now wearing suits. "What a change a suit makes," read one comment. "Young men who [now] look investable," said another. Apart from reinforcing stereotypes among employers and others in positions of power, this approach also conditions those involved to perceive their culture and forms of expression as inferior and problematic.

Working as a teacher in a rapidly gentrifying area of London, I recently assisted a 15-year-old boy to prepare for a public speaking competition. His speech was titled "Don't judge a book by its cover". In it, he described reactions to his everyday clothing (hoodies, tracksuits, puffer jacket): people crossing the road to avoid him,



“Some approaches are patronising and tokenistic

the countless times he had been subject to stop and search, feeling shamed in front of his community. And yet, the negative conception of working-class young people (those of colour in particular) places the onus to change on him.

But problematic social divisions exist at all levels of society. So while, as Richard Beard suggests, "the sense of community at private boarding schools is not with the rest of the country but with boarding school boys back through time", I have also encountered young people from private schools being spat at, objectified and hated because of the type of school their families have sent them to.

No one is left unharmed by these divisions, and if we are going to challenge them and avoid the kind of problematic approaches that perpetuate them, we must hold ourselves to a better standard in our cross-sector work.

First, we must model the ideals we are aspiring to. If we want to create a more equal society, all parties must begin on equal footing by taking an assets-based approach, recognising that everyone has

something to offer as well as something to learn.

Second, involvement must be consent-based. We will struggle to create change and will encounter divisive behaviours if an opportunity is forced upon young people (or indeed staff).

Third, success depends on integrating a relational approach. According to social identity theory, humans subconsciously form "in-groups" (people we identify with ourselves) and "out-groups" (those who we perceive to be different). To promote change, we must actively re-shape those in-groups to include those from different backgrounds. This can be achieved when people have the chance to connect authentically in both formal and informal spaces.

Reducing inequality is not something we will achieve by doing it to, for or against others, but by all pulling together on equal bases. The growth in cross-sector work and the number of teachers and schools interested in this work offers hope, but we must start with challenging ourselves and our own practices if we are to create real change.



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THE REVIEW

THE ACADEMY OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Organiser: Diana Osagie

Venue: De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms, London

Date: January 21

Reviewer: Jess Mahdavi-Gladwell, SENCO and head of assessment centre, Newhaven School, south London

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THE
ACADEMY OF
WOMEN'S
Leadership

This inaugural conference of the Academy of Women's Leadership was billed as a day of powerful, motivational and developmental sessions for women leaders, by women leaders. It delivered. One of the stand-out experiences for me was simply to be in a room full of women. In fact, it was so energising that I (a reluctant dancer at the best of times) even managed to join in a little with the welcome session's ice-breaking boogie.

The academy's creator, Diana Osagie, opened and closed the conference with bookend sessions called "Fire from the founder". The opening session set the tone for an uplifting day; Osagie encouraged us to reflect on the difference between facts about ourselves and the truth of our existence. Linking to points in her recent book, *Women in Leadership: One hour to fix the five mistakes you are making*, it resonated with me and many others. The focus on what we are able to do rather than what we have not yet done was poignant.

The keynote from Lisa Cherry that followed was a contrast in tone, but conveyed an equally powerful message. Considering the possibility that women may see leadership in the "we" rather than in the "I" and reflecting on the impact of finding the correct role and space for work in our lives, Cherry's calm, reflective presence was no less a challenge to delegates than Osagie's fire. She asked us to consider what we were seeking to do in this space of alliance, and prompted us to reject a sense of inevitability in our

leadership.

I then attended facilitated discussions by Vivienne Porritt and Lisa Cherry. Here, the deliberate whooping of the opening sessions' "unleashing-our-superpowers" motif contrasted with more accidental whooping that felt like a natural part of creating a community – one that is diverse in ages, stages, roles, races and strengths, and on in which each of us is valuable as individuals.

During registration and breaks for coffee and lunch, delegates were invited to browse a small number of stalls. There was no hard sell, only an opportunity to become aware of products and services of potential interest. Ranging from curriculum services, through books to dolls representing different races, to products such as plant-based, ethical skin products and information about managing perimenopause.

There was something for everyone, and that made for a perfect environment in which to make new connections with like-minded women leaders in and beyond education. I left both exhausted from the mental engagement and invigorated by the professional challenge to think deeply and to continue to develop on my

leadership journey. The sessions were relevant for my context of working in a PRU, but I spoke with social workers, hospital registrars, headteachers, middle and senior school leaders who all felt they had learned and grown from the day.

No review is complete without a wistful think about

what could have improved the experience. For me, the answer is purely logistical.

I found it difficult to choose between facilitated sessions and would have benefited from a chance to attend more of them. The two I attended were as relevant and beneficial as I'd hoped, but more carousel slots would have allowed me to sample a session from Pamela Windle about the empowerment that comes from an understanding of the body's response to menopause, to listen to Yinka Ewuola share her mindset secrets and to make a vision board with Mandy Tucker.

Having started the day dancing, I may even have risen to the challenge of fighting my tendency to perfectionism with Astrid Davies. But my perfectionism remains unchallenged, so I would also have liked to see more books to browse and add to my to-be-read pile (or as I now like to call it, my book cellar).

Having said all that, the inaugural Academy of Women's Leadership conference delivered everything I'd hoped in terms of learning, empowerment and networking. I'll be ready with my dancing shoes when the next rolls around.

★★★★★
Rating



Diana Osagie

THE CONVERSATION

LISTENING IN ON THE DIGITAL STAFFROOM



Robert Gasson
CEO, Wave Multi-Academy Trust

EXCLUDED FOR GOOD?

I always find this a curious time: a new year has started, but it doesn't feel like it for those of us who set our clock by the academic calendar. As such, I find this a good time to look at issues where long-term data shows a clearer picture.

This blog from FFT chief statistician Dave Thomson does exactly that by setting out to answer a crucial question: what happens to the permanently excluded?

A look through the 2018-19 data gives a fascinating and indeed shocking insight into the journeys (or lack thereof) for those who could easily be described as the most vulnerable children in society. Pupils who were excluded between years 7 and 10 were unlikely to return to state-funded mainstream schools. "Just over a quarter (26 per cent) of those excluded in year 8 in 2018-19 were attending mainstream schools in January 2021," Thomson's analysis reveals.

It's a better situation for primary pupils, who Thomson finds were more likely to return to the mainstream, particularly at secondary transfer. "Sixty per cent of pupils who were in year 6 when excluded in 2018-19 were attending mainstream schools the following January."

However, and rather worryingly, this data trawl also shows that pupils who were

reintegrated into mainstream secondary schools after a permanent exclusion were more likely to be attending schools rated as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' than 'good' or 'outstanding'.

Exclusions are a thorny issue, so any intervention that seeks to better inform debates and decisions is very welcome. Given that these are pre-pandemic figures and that exclusions have significantly increased since, the sense of urgency conveyed here makes it all the more important.



THE BIG QUESTIONS

I enjoy the range of people who feature in the Centre for Social Justice blog. This post by Big Education chief executive Liz Robinson is particularly timely in relation to the exclusion figures discussed above, as well as the estimated 30 per cent of pupils who are not succeeding in school (at least in terms of our traditional measures).

As a school and system leader, Robinson works to "change the story" about how education is delivered in England. Formerly as a headteacher of a south London primary and now as chief executive of a MAT, she is on a mission to challenge narrow definitions about the purpose of school and to promote and enact more holistic approaches.

Here, she writes eloquently about our education system's journey from the Every Child Matters agenda of the late Nineties to its "explicit and consistent" focus since 2010 on "stripping out some of the broader aspects and doubling (tripling?) down on the academic element of school provision".

Her views very much gel with my own experience of the landscape over the past 20 years, and this time of year is a perfect

opportunity to embrace her challenge: to keep asking the big questions, and to support our teams and networks to do the same.



THE POWER OF BELONGING

At nearly two hours long, I thought I might not find the time to listen to James Mannion's latest instalment of his Rethinking Education podcast. However, once I started listening to his interview with Jaz Ampaw Farr, I couldn't stop.

In this episode, Ampaw Farr takes us unflinchingly through her horrendous experience as a young person in care. She explores how that has shaped her thinking, setting out the power of "withness" in a jaw-dropping 2,906 keynote addresses.

Her views on how the education landscape appears to be "watering the circle in the square", leaving the corners dark and dry are all the more interesting because Mannion has given her the time to set out that personal backdrop. And that makes her suggestions for how we can reframe our language and practices to meet the needs of all our pupils truly poignant. Refreshing, honest and at times brutal, the result is entirely uplifting. A must-listen.



Click the links to access the blogs and podcasts



The Knowledge

What we've learned about schools and their communities this week



Is pay the best lever to improve recruitment and retention?

Jack Worth, school workforce lead, NFER

The Department for Education is considering what proposals to make to the independent teacher pay review body for September 2023. It will have one eye on negotiating with unions in the face of strike action, while also considering the Treasury's willingness to support a pay offer.

Another key focus will be the potential impact on teacher recruitment and retention. Teacher supply is in a difficult state, with last year's recruitment for primary training courses and 13 out of 17 secondary subjects failing to reach their respective targets. This year's recruitment numbers are so far only a little better.

The research evidence is important for understanding what impact different pay awards might have on teacher recruitment and retention, and for understanding the effectiveness of other policy tools at the government's disposal to address teacher supply.

The DfE's review on the impact of pay increases on teacher retention concludes that there is good evidence that higher teacher pay is associated with higher retention. However, the economic research that this finding is based on is clear that it is not the absolute pay increase that matters, but how that increase compares with what economists call the "outside option". In other words, if pay for a job a teacher might take up if they left is rising at the same rate as their pay as a teacher, then it is likely to have little bearing on their decision about whether to leave or stay.

These decisions are complex and multi-faceted, and certainly not only about pay. Indeed, NFER research has consistently shown that staff who leave teaching tend to earn less than they would have done had they remained. What they do tend to get in return is greater job satisfaction and more flexibility.

But after weighing up how all the factors associated with teaching – such as workload,



flexibility, working environment, sense of purpose and length of holidays – compare with another job, pay becoming relatively less attractive would likely tip some teachers into leaving.

To take an example from 2022: if the pay for experienced teachers rises by 5 per cent, but average earnings in the rest of the labour market rise by 6 per cent, then the evidence suggests that pay may not contribute to improving retention at all.

The National Foundation for Educational Research also found that teacher pay rising more quickly than outside earnings is associated with increased recruitment to ITT. This further reinforces the considerable impact of pay on recruitment and retention, and the crucial importance of judging the likely effects by considering relative pay increases in the context of the wider labour market.

The Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts that average earnings will rise by 4.2 per cent in 2023. Therefore, any teacher pay increase is only likely to have a positive impact on recruitment and retention if it is higher than the increase in what teachers might be able to

earn away from the classroom. This is therefore a useful benchmark for judging whether the pay award is likely to contribute to improving teacher supply.

Pay is a powerful financial lever at the government's disposal, but is not the only such lever to affect recruitment and retention. It is also a fairly blunt instrument, as it is not differentiated by phase or subject. The government has recently made noises about considering differential pay awards, but for now training bursaries and early-career payments are the only targetable financial incentives.

The evidence regarding these levers is growing too. A range of research suggests that bursaries have a significant impact on recruitment into ITT, but high-quality evidence on whether those trainees stay on in teaching is lacking. Recent UCL research also suggests that early career payments are effective for retaining teachers.

All of which means the government faces difficult choices, but also that it has a variety of options to solve both the immediate challenge of strikes and the sector's long-term challenges.

Week in

Westminster

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

TUESDAY

We've written oh-so-many headlines about delays in the government's grand proposals (see favourites such as "Where the hell is the SEND review" or "Schools bill in Lords limbo", etc). But it turns out it can't even answer MPs' questions on time.

Labour asked a written parliamentary question about how many written parliamentary questions were answered on time last year.

Ministers failed to answer 21 per cent – 796 – on time, according to schools minister Nick Gibb's response. That's about two a day.

Getting more kids back in the classroom is (rightly) a government priority.

The education committee has also now started its own inquiry into persistent absence in schools.

But what's this? The committee's absence figures, published this month, show attendance is just 63.3 per cent!

The data is heavily caveated, but it ranks the Conservative MP Caroline Ansell as the worst offender (she managed just eight of 19 meetings). However gold stars to Flick Drummond, Andrew Lewer and chairs past and present Robert Halfon and Robin Walker for their 100 per cent records.

PS We imagine members were all *desperate* for a seat at the table today to quiz ITV political editor Robert Peston on careers education. Fun fact: his charity Speakers for Schools currently has more speakers than interested schools!

WEDNESDAY

The Department for Education has grand plans to export an international teacher training qualification that English teacher trainers can provide overseas.

Former education secretary Gavin Williamson said when he introduced the scheme that the country was "blessed with some of the world's finest teachers and this is down to the quality and rigour of our teacher training".

Today a bunch of new providers added to the list to roll out the qualifications includes the University of the West of England (UWE).

But while UWE is deemed good enough to roll out the flagship international qualification, it is not good enough to run teacher courses in England!

The university was one of the many that failed the government's re-accreditation process and will therefore stop providing teacher training in England after September next year.

And it turns out it won't be able to provide the iQTS post-2024, either. It will deliver it for a year before "exploring the potential to offer the iQTS with an accredited partner".

Just another week in the world of the nuts ITT reforms.

THURSDAY

The DfE published new figures today on school funding after the Office for Statistics Regulation ticked it off in 2020 because there was "no single consistent and comprehensive set of official statistics". This led to a royal rumble as others did their own analysis, with

their own skew, to seize the narrative.

The latest DfE figures claim: "Per-pupil funding for 5 to 16-year-olds in English schools was 6.4 per cent higher in 2022-23 than in 2010-11, when adjusted for inflation."

That's bloody good news – although the increase is conspicuously higher than similar figures produced by the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Gurus at the widely-respected think tank say funding will only be 3 per cent above 2010 levels by 2024-25.

Why the difference?

It turns out the DfE figures include compensation for higher pension contributions – which the IFS leaves out as cash immediately goes straight out again.

The DfE also excludes sixth-form funding, which has fallen nearly 30 per cent in real terms over the period.

WE WONDER WHY IT MIGHT HAVE LEFT THAT OUT OF ITS CALCULATIONS?

We know it's been a very *Black Mirror*-esque two years, but it's about to get more intense. The government is rolling out a new "emergency alerts" system to send pings to mobile phones when there is a danger to life in your area, alongside a "loud, siren-like sound".

Schools are being told to check the new alert guidance as well as risk assessments so they know what to do if a siren goes off. If you think it all sounds a bit scary, please don't worry.

The government will send a "welcome message" later this year. Just the text you're after!





Deputy Principal

Essa Primary is seeking to recruit a dynamic, talented individual to become our new Deputy Principal and to play a pivotal role in crafting the future success of our school. This is an exciting career opportunity for the successful candidate as we transition to the next stage of our aspirational journey. Our purpose at Essa is 'all will succeed' and our core values of effort, standards, spirit and achievement permeate through all that we do. This post is required for after the Easter holidays; however, we are willing to wait until after SATs for a current Year 6 teacher or offer a September start to attract the right candidate.

Essa Primary is a large primary school, close to Bolton Town Centre and within 5 minutes of the M61 motorway, with good access links to Manchester, Salford, Chorley and Preston. As part of the EFA Trust, our shared campus with Essa Academy offers fantastic facilities.

The successful candidate will play a key role in the development of Essa Primary by leading either our 'Inclusion, Pastoral and Safeguarding Team' or our 'Curriculum, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Team'. It is vital that candidates share their strengths and experience as part of their application.

The successful candidate will:

- Be an outstanding practitioner with experience in KS1 and KS2.
- Be a passionate and driven professional, wanting to increase standards for children.
- Put our children first, ensuring relationships, curriculum and quality first teaching supports all children to achieve
- Demonstrate strong leadership and people management skills, with the ability to further develop the leadership team.
- Be a positive role model with the ability to motivate our children and staff alike, inspiring all to reach their full potential.

In return, we can offer:

- Amazing children who are enthusiastic about their learning and want to be taught.
- A supportive Principal, CEO and wider leadership team who are determined and committed to the development of the school.

- A friendly, supportive and hard working staff team.
- A welcoming and warm community who embrace our vision and values.
- Commitment to professional development.
- Amazing facilities as part of the Essa campus.

Applicants are warmly invited to visit the school. Tours of the school will be conducted by our Principal, Peter Stewart on the following dates:

- **Thursday 2nd February at 10am**
- **Thursday 2nd February at 2pm**
- **Monday 6th February at 10am**

Please contact Allison O'Connell, School Administrator by emailing office@efatrust.org or by phoning 01204 201310 to book on one of the above tours.

For more information and to apply, please visit our website <http://www.essaprimary.org/vacancies>

Closing date:

Wednesday 8th February at 9:00am

Interviews:

Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th February 2023

Start date:

1st April 2023 (Willing to wait until after SATS or to offer a 1st September start for the right candidate)



Effort



Standards



Spirit



Achievement



HEAD TEACHER

Group L20 - 26 (£70,733 - £81,927)

Robin Hood Academy is a vibrant and innovative primary school that maintained its 'Good' OFSTED judgement with a strong report in September 2022. Robin Hood Academy has a rich history of constantly seeking to innovate and improve. We are now seeking to appoint our next leader with the drive and determination to build upon the excellent work of our current HT and to plot the school on its future development path. It is the desire to constantly improve, refine our practices and further develop the learning experiences for our children that lie at the heart of the culture and ethos of the school. The Trust wishes to recruit a Headteacher with a passion and drive to create the next exciting chapter in the history of the school and help it on its journey towards providing a truly outstanding learning experience for all of our pupils.

The successful candidate will:

- Have a proven track record in school leadership and making a difference.
- Have a passion for pedagogy and be as focused on the foundations of learning as on innovation.
- Be an excellent communicator and have outstanding emotional intelligence.
- Have strong team ethic and moral purpose.
- Have a strong vision for education and high aspirations for pupils and staff.
- Be willing to contribute their skillset to the wider Multi Academy Trust and work with our team of Headteachers to improve outcomes for all Trust pupils.
- Have a desire to impact on the wider education system in order to make a true difference.

Robin Hood Academy is part of Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust which also consists of Birches Green Infant, Birches Green Junior, Cedars Academy, Ulverley School and Yenton Primary. The Trust is built on the principles of working collaboratively across each school to create unique learning experiences for children that they wouldn't get in any other organisation. The Trust believes that each school's vision and ethos is unique to their own setting and community. With this in mind, space is provided for leaders to lead their schools whilst also offering the support of a team of highly skilled professionals from the MAT to enable the sharing of best practice. We believe that, with the collaborative leadership across our schools, we can create something truly special. To gain an understanding of the vision for the Trust please visit www.robinhoodMAT.co.uk and watch our vision.

For more information about the post we strongly encourage prospective candidates to contact our CEO, Steve Taylor (via our MAT PA, Jo Green pa@robinhoodmat.co.uk), to arrange an informal and confidential chat with a view to visiting the school for a tour.

Closing date: 10th March 2023 (No later than 12pm)

Interview date: Day 1: 27th March 2023

Day 2: 28th March 2023

For more information and an application pack please contact Jo Green via pa@robinhoodmat.co.uk

Robin Hood MAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to all necessary pre-employment checks, including: an enhanced DBS; Prohibition check; section 128 check, Childcare Disqualification (where applicable); qualifications (where applicable); medical fitness; identity and right to work. All applicants will be required to provide two suitable references.



City of Norwich School

An Ormiston Academy

Deputy Headteacher

Leadership Scale points L20 - L24

Actual starting salary: £67,364

Permanent post, Full time

The appointed Deputy Headteacher will be an exceptional strategic thinker with senior leadership experience, highly effective management skills and a team player with strong intellectual abilities. A charismatic, visible leader, they will inspire exemplary staff, and engage students, parents and other external stakeholders to ensure CNS achieves its aim of 'Excellence in All'.

We are rated 'Good' by OFSTED, with high expectations for all its staff and students. We offer a broad, well-designed curriculum, teachers have strong subject knowledge and students with additional needs receive strong support. The KS5 curriculum ensures students learn what they need to be successful in their next stage and develop deep knowledge about their subjects beyond the remit of the formal examinations.

Closing date for applications is 9am on 20th February 2023

Interviews will be 27th & 28th Feb

(date changed due to planned Strike action on 1st March)

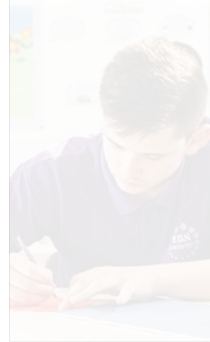


Teacher in Charge of Maths

EBN Academy 2 is seeking to appoint a highly motivated and committed Maths teacher to join our teaching team and lead Maths within the academy; you will oversee Maths and numeracy within the academy and you will also manage the second maths teacher within the department. The successful applicant will be committed to raising the achievement of all learners by ensuring teaching of maths is of the highest quality and is innovative, engaging and enjoyable. Key qualities of the successful candidate will include, high expectations of themselves and others with a strong determination to raise standards and accelerate progress in an Alternative Provision setting.

Each member of the Academy's teaching staff is seen as an integral part of the team, working together and sharing ideas to developing teaching practice across the school.

[Click here for more information](#)



WELLING SCHOOL

Building Successful Futures

Headteacher

Welling School, Welling, Kent

Salary TKAT leadership scale L28 - L32 (£90,879- £99,864)

Closing date 30-01-2023

Are you an experienced leader looking for something different? Do you want to lead a school where you can feel you are making a difference every single day? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

At The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT) we believe that for all of our staff to be truly fulfilled and successful, they need to be heard, developed and empowered. Therefore we are looking for someone who can demonstrate our values of shared voice, shared belief and shared success to work within our TKAT family.

We are seeking to appoint a substantive Headteacher for September 2023 to work alongside the Executive Head in a rapidly improving school. This is an extraordinary model because we're looking for an extraordinary person! The role will be to initially work alongside the Executive Headteacher to develop a self-sustaining school, with the aim to take on full responsibility in the future. The role would suit an exceptional Deputy who has experience of rapid school improvement, or a serving headteacher who would like to extend their current success to a larger school setting.

Informal discussions with the Executive Headteacher and/or visits are actively encouraged. If you would like an informal and confidential discussion about the role and to arrange a visit to the school please contact Julie Wood on **020 8304 8531** or email recruitment@wellingschool-tkat.org

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

[Click here for more information](#)





PRINCIPAL DESIGNATE

£64,225 - £74,283 p.a.

North Star was born out of a drive to do something different for those who need more

Formed by the desire to shape futures, North Star emerged

We remain where others may part

Equipping young minds to join with their communities

Forging together the path ahead, traveling alongside

Our team can bring dreams to fruition. Join us and thrive.

This role will play a key part in realising this vision.

North Star Alternative Learning provision is a new school which is currently being built in the north of Bristol. The school has easy access to the M4 and M5 and is due to open in October 2023. The successful applicant will project manage the opening of the new school, recruit experienced staff, develop robust systems and procedures and shape the culture of the new school. The start date is 1 May 2023 but we would consider a later start for the right candidate.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced senior leader who has a proven track record in:

- working with children with Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs
- experience of working in mainstream education
- setting up a new learning provision
- leading and developing staff
- embedding policies, procedures and new ways of working
- providing opportunities for children who are not engaging with learning in mainstream school.
- supporting children with successful re-integration into mainstream school

North Star Academy Trust currently includes a Secondary and Primary Special School which cater for pupils with SEMH difficulties and North Star Alternative Learning Provision is the next school to join the Trust. This post will provide leadership, development and management of the teaching and learning of all pupils in the Alternative Provision.

Both the secondary and primary school have been rated by OFSTED as good. Now the Trust is expanding, we are looking for a dynamic leader who has a clear vision for the future and who has the ability to put that vision into practice. You will be well organised, a good communicator and have the ability to motivate a team to create an inspirational and caring learning environment. You will have a good understanding of the SEN Code of Practice and relevant government legislation relating to Alternative Learning Provision.

We can offer you the chance to make a difference to children's lives and provide them with opportunities to grow into responsible adults. You will become part of a close and supportive management team who have a wealth of experience working with children in SEMH who are working towards creating a centre of excellence in the Southwest of England.

Closing Date: 30th January 2023 11:59 PM



PRINCIPAL

Location: Farnborough, Hampshire

Start date: 1 September 2023

Application deadline: 9.00am on Monday 6 February 2023

Salary: Competitive salary and wider benefits

- Do you have extensive experience of delivering high-quality educational provision and outcomes, ideally within the post-16 sector?
- Do you have the highest expectations for every student and staff member?
- Are you passionate about high-quality teaching and learning?
- Are you able to win hearts and minds with your inspirational vision for excellence?
- Do you have outstanding interpersonal, communication and leadership skills?

If you can answer yes to these five questions, we would love to hear from you.

A Centre of Excellence

Judged outstanding in all areas by Ofsted in September 2021, the College now has almost 4,000 students enrolled on over 40 Level 3 courses. The College community continues to grow and a record number of applications were received for September 2023.

In recent years, academic outcomes have been well above the national average both in attainment and progress. Aps value added measures put the College in the top 10% of providers nationally both at A level and for vocational courses.

As well as the pursuit of academic excellence, the College is renowned for its commitment to providing the highest possible standard of pastoral care. A team of highly experienced tutors provide group/one-to-one support and students also have access to an on-site counselling service. The College benefits from excellent facilities and educational resources, and works closely with seventeen partner secondary schools to ensure students enjoy a smooth transition to College.

The Prospect Trust

The Sixth Form College Farnborough is a founding member of The Prospect Trust. The Trust is a dynamic and ambitious multi-academy Trust on the Hampshire/Surrey border, providing outstanding education and support for almost 6,000 learners through its family of local academies. The Trust has a relentless desire to improve the educational outcomes and lives of the young people in our local communities. The successful candidate will be expected to embrace the Trust's values and play a key role in supporting its further growth and development.

How to apply

A recruitment information pack, incorporating a detailed role and person specification, provides additional context to help you better understand this exciting and rewarding opportunity.

If you believe that you have the required qualifications, experience, skills and personal attributes to deliver high performance within this role, we would welcome your application.

Candidates should contact Kate Thomlinson (Trust Executive Assistant) on kate.thomlinson@theprospecttrust.org.uk to express interest and to request an application form. Your application should evidence the requirements outlined within the person specification.

Prior to application, candidates are strongly encouraged to contact Andy Yarrow (Chief Executive Officer) for an informal discussion about this role opportunity.

Other information

The Prospect Trust takes the control and processing of employee data very seriously and is committed to acting in line with the GDPR regulations; please read the attached applicant privacy notice which explains how your data is processed.

The Prospect Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people within our care and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment.

Any future offer of employment remains subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, including enhanced DBS clearance, a health check and references.





Providence Place, West Bromwich



Director of Music

Salary: L12 – L16 £58,104 - £64,223

Hours: Full Time - Permanent

Opening September 2023

This is a unique opportunity to be Shireland CBSO Academy's first Director of Music. Play a key role in the senior team of this exciting new academy and work with our partners, including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, to deliver an outstanding experience for our students academically, musically and pastorally.

The Academy

Shireland CBSO Academy is an exciting new school opening to Years 7 and 12 in September 2023 and is the first state school in the country to have a partnership with a professional orchestra. Based in Providence Place, West Bromwich, the Academy will work in partnership with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) and serve all of Sandwell and the wider West Midlands. The Academy is for all students who have a passion or talent for music – they do not necessarily need to already play an instrument.

Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust is a recognised leader in education and was founded by three-times Ofsted 'Outstanding' Shireland Collegiate Academy: Our students will study a full, broad and balanced curriculum, seen through the lens of music. In Year 7, we will follow the 'Literacy for Life' model developed by our Trust over the last 15 years: Students learn via a thematic approach to their studies, spending 17 hours a week with the same teacher, enabling them to smoothly transition from primary to secondary school.

In Year 12, students will be part of a cohort of 60 young people studying at least one music A level or equivalent qualification. With many schools no longer offering A level music qualifications, and those that do only having a handful of students, the opportunity to join a cohort of this size who have a common interest in music brings exciting possibilities for collaboration.

Director of Music

The successful candidate will be responsible for leading on all aspects of music at the academy, including:

- Curriculum, assessment and qualifications across all Key Stages
- Liaison with the CBSO
- Oversight, management and quality assurance of instrumental and vocal lessons
- Relationships with a range of external partners, such as primary schools and organisations committed to musical education

- Extra-curricular activities
- A programme of performances
- Engagement in music of students of all backgrounds

They must:

- Be passionate about improving the lives of our students
- Role model a commitment to excellence
- Want to collaborate as part of a team
- Believe they have both a pastoral and academic responsibility
- Be flexible and adaptable, rising to the challenge of creating a new Academy
- Have high standards for students and themselves.

In return we will offer:

- Excellent career development opportunities and access to a comprehensive programme of CPD
- An ICT-rich environment which allows staff to be innovative in harnessing technology for learning
- The opportunity to be involved in the opening of a new Academy
- Staff health and wellbeing package

Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

For an informal discussion contact our HR Director Melanie Adams on 0121 565 8811. Information and application form available from careers site:

Careers - Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust (shirelandcat.net)

Closing date: Monday 30th January 2023

Interviews: Week commencing 6th February 2023

Come and meet us and find out more about the Trust, the school and the role at our Secondary Teacher Recruitment Event. Wednesday 11 January 2023, 4.30pm – 7.00pm at West Bromwich Collegiate Academy, Kelvin Way, West Bromwich.

To register please email: recruitment@shirelandcat.net



HEADTEACHER

Salary: Points L25 -31 (£79,948 - £92,596) | Location: Sir William Romney's School, Tetbury.



The Athelstan Trust is a successful and growing Multi-Academy Trust consisting of five secondary schools in the South West. In April 2023, we are excited to welcome two primary schools, and this will provide new opportunities for collaboration and strengthen the Trust further.

Sir William Romney's School is a relatively small, friendly 11 – 16 school in Tetbury. We are proudly comprehensive and committed to ensuring that our students are successful both academically and holistically. We are in the process of developing a Trust sixth form with Bradon Forest School and Malmesbury School.

As a member of the Athelstan Trust, you will benefit from:

- Being part of a Trust that is committed to raising educational standards for all the children in our schools.
- Our commitment to developing the skills of all our staff throughout their career.
- Being part of a caring, collaborative and excellent community.

The Trustees of the Athelstan Trust wish to appoint an excellent teacher and school leader to the post of Headteacher at Sir William Romney's School from September 2023.

This is a very exciting time to be joining a successful, growing Trust where we all work together to raise standards in all our schools.

This post offers a talented and ambitious school leader a wonderful opportunity to work in a supportive Trust that is committed to high quality professional development for its staff.

Please feel free to contact sjones@theathelstantrust.org for an informal conversation with Tim Gilson CEO.

An application pack is available on the Athelstan Trust website.

Closing date: 17 February 2023 at 12 noon

www.theathelstantrust.org

A charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales, as The Athelstan Trust, Company No: 7699625



HEADTEACHER

Start Date: **September 2023**
Contract: **Permanent and Fulltime**
Salary: **Outer London L28-L35**

Clarendon needs a new Headteacher to lead them into an exciting future. We are an Ofsted Outstanding special academy for 160 pupils aged 4-16 with Moderate and Complex Learning Difficulties. You need to be confident, committed, considerate, collaborative and inclusive minded. You will inspire, motivate, support and encourage pupils, families and staff from across our community.

For full details please see our website and applicant pack: <https://www.clarendon.richmond.sch.uk/>



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I have always found Schools Week very helpful. They reach a large audience and support with many of our vacancies. I am very satisfied with their service and would recommend them highly.

The Shared Learning Trust

Click here to contact our team