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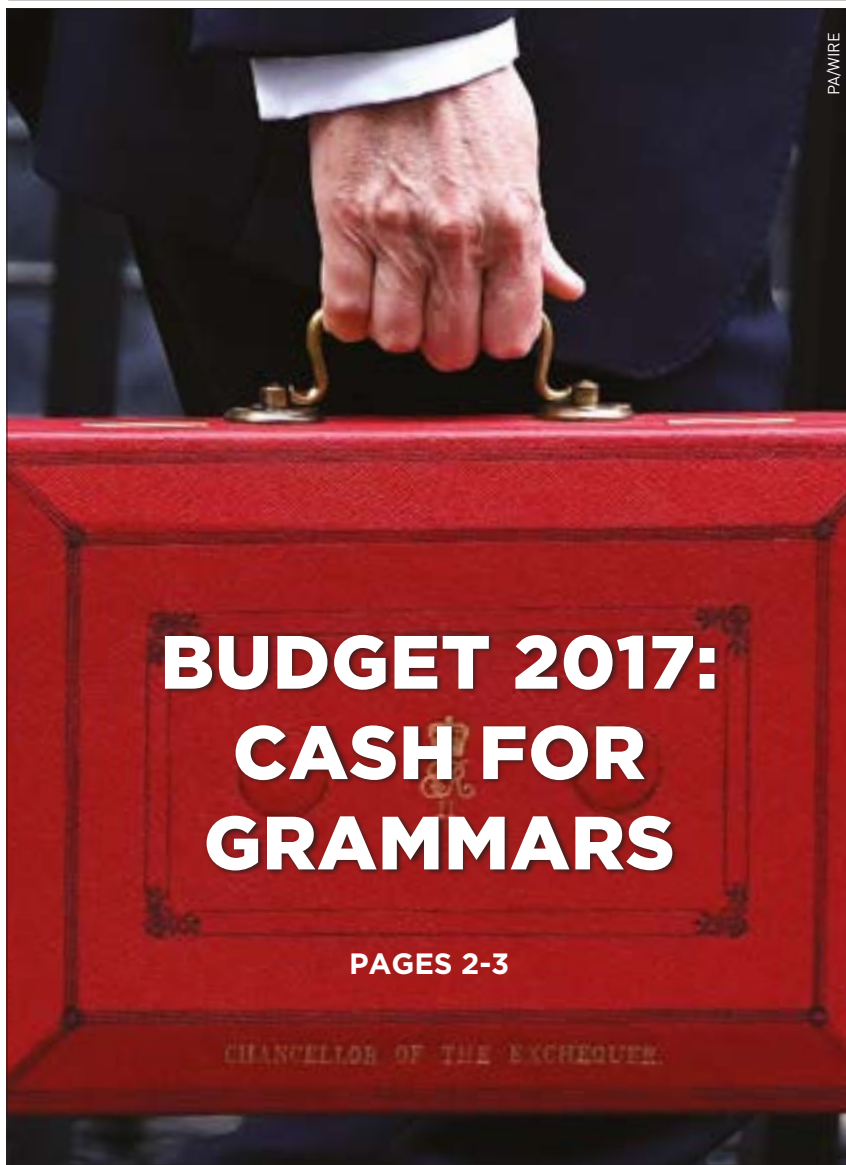
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P16



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NEWS: BUDGET 2017

More schools spending – b

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

A multimillion-pound investment in new free schools promised in this week's budget will mark the beginning of the government's "grammar school revolution", but the additional money equates to just £2.3 million per school, less than half the average cost of a new site.

The chancellor Philip Hammond used his speech to parliament to set aside £320 million for 140 new free schools over the next four years, and says a proportion of these will be selective, providing the government can overturn the ban on new grammar schools.

However, critics have pointed out that the allocation is low in comparison to the high costs associated with the free schools programme.

A recent National Audit Office investigation found the average cost of the 175 freehold sites bought by the government on which to establish free schools between 2011 and 2016 was £4.9 million. Twenty-four of these sites cost more than £10 million, and a further four topped £30 million.

Although budget documents show that a further £655 million is due to be spent on the free schools programme in 2021-22, this is not linked to the 140 new schools

Hammond announced, and will depend on the result of the next general election and any subsequent spending review.

The government's bid to overturn the ban on grammar schools is meanwhile expected to be launched within weeks through a white paper outlining precise plans.

But ministers face a fight to get the change approved in parliament, as many on their own side remain sceptical.

The chancellor believes the creation of new selective free schools will enable the most academically gifted children from every background to have the "specialist support that they need to fulfil their potential".

Opponents of selective education, however, insist that the budget prioritises spending on free schools and grammars, but does not provide the necessary additional revenue funding for schools facing further cuts to their budgets over the coming years.

Russell Hobby, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said the budget was a "missed opportunity" for schools, which face a national shortfall of £3 billion as a result of real-terms cuts.

Writing for *Schools Week*, Hobby said headteachers' anger over the budget would be "twofold", as existing schools get nothing while watching new free schools



Prime Minister Theresa May observes a physics experiment

and grammar schools receive generous additional funding.

The government has admitted that just 30 of the 140 free schools will open by 2020, which has cast more doubt on its commitment to opening 500 over the course of this parliament.

The Department for Education says 124 free schools have opened since the 2015 general election, while a 243 more are

Pension row delays major MAT takeover

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

A long-running squabble over a pension deficit has seriously delayed a major multi-academy trust from taking over a failing school.

Bright Tribe, a Cheshire-based trust with 12 schools, was meant to take over Grindon Hall Christian free school in Sunderland almost one and a half years ago after the school was rated 'inadequate' in 2014.

But staff and pupils are still without formal new management because the pension fund provider for the school has asked Bright Tribe to pay some of the debt and costs of transferring the school's pension deficit.

This wrangling over the pensions pot challenges claims by ministers that academisation allows "swift" action for failing schools.

Last year, the gap in employer contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which is for non-teaching staff only, rose steeply across most major academy trusts, while several inherited large pension liabilities from the schools that joined them.

Tyne and Wear Pension Fund, a council-run body which will continue to run the school's pension scheme after the move, has asked the MAT to pay off some of the debt alongside a "cessation payment" for

transferring it to a new employer, Bright Tribe told *Schools Week*.

"The matter in relation to the pension liability has slowed down the process of academy conversion," said the trust's spokesperson, who described the situation as "rather unprecedented".

Usually, a new employer will take on a pension deficit "without any transferring debt being requested to be paid by the fund provider", she said.

The shock of Brexit has caused the estimated value of pension benefits to grow again this year, causing pension deficits to balloon, according to Paul Hamilton, an actuary with expertise in education at actuarial firm Barnett Waddingham.

Pension providers are "under considerable pressure nationally" and the Tyne and Wear fund is "looking to crystallise the cessation payment that arises when an employer changes", said Bright Tribe.

Company accounts show that the 10 largest academy trusts now have a combined pension deficit of more than £660 million.

Ormiston Academies saw its deficit rise by £23 million in 2016 – much steeper than the £8.3 million it rose by in 2014-15. United Learning saw an even larger increase, of £38.4 million, in its deficit from 2015-16.

The trust also inherited a £2.3 million

pension liability in 2015, and a further £1.7 million liability last year.

The other large trusts to inherit pension deficits from schools last year were ARK (£716,000) and REAch2 (£15.5 million).

Bright Tribe has been waiting for actuaries to estimate Grindon Hall's pension liability "as a monetary figure" in order to calculate what could be paid up front, said their spokesperson.

"It has taken time to get an estimated actuarial valuation of the transferring debt as a monetary figure," they told *Schools Week*, adding that the Department for Education (DfE) had stepped in to negotiate with the fund.

A triennial review of the LGPS in April could also mean schools will be told they must contribute even more money to meet the growing gap, said Micon Metcalfe, the director of finance and business at Dunraven School in south London.

Although the Grindon Hall situation seems to be a "one-off", she added, the administrative burden of having schools with different pension providers could already be increasing costs to trusts.

A spokesperson for the DfE said that it "knew that some academies were facing increasing pension deficit costs" and that it would be publishing information for trusts and pension funds "shortly".

Schools Week has approached Tyne and Wear pension provider for comment.

ut it's nowhere near what's needed



PAWIRE

will get an additional £216 million in funding to help maintain buildings, meaning ministers have now pledged to pay out more than £10 billion to improve the condition of schools over this parliament.

The additional millions will be spent between 2018 and 2020 on work to "rebuild and refurbish" existing schools.

The National Audit Office has estimated that a spend of £6.7 billion will be needed to bring all existing schools up to a condition that is "satisfactory or better".

Fears about the future of school sports funding were also allayed, after Hammond confirmed the DfE would

still get the £1 billion it had been promised from the so-called "sugar tax", to spend on sports facilities and activities.

This is despite an admission by the Treasury that the soft drinks levy would raise less than the £520 million a year it had predicted, as manufacturers have already begun reducing the sugar content of their products.

"in the process" of opening – meaning a further 133 must open to hit that target of 500.

If just 30 more open as predicted by the September start of the 2020 school year, the government will have missed its targets twice: the Conservatives had originally committed to open all 500 schools by September 2019.

Hammond also announced that schools

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. £320 million for new free schools

This funding will be used to open 30 free schools between now and September 2020, and a further 110 in the next parliament. Some could be selective if the government succeeds in lifting the ban on new grammars.

2. £216 million for school infrastructure

This money is for repairing and updating school buildings. It will be allocated over two years, with half spent in 2018-19, and the other half in 2019-20. It works out at about £9,000 a school.

3. £1 billion for school sports, despite shortfall in sugar tax revenue

The Treasury will honour its commitment to give the Department for Education £1

billion over the rest of this parliament to spend on sports activities and facilities, despite admitting it will receive less than it predicted from the soft drinks industry levy.

4. £20 million for free transport to grammar schools

An annual £5 million has been allocated to pay for the extension of a transport scheme for disadvantaged pupils, although some of this money may go to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland under the Barnett formula.

5. £500 million a year for post-16 skills reform

From 2019, additional money will go towards increasing to the time that 16 to 19-year-olds spend on technical courses to more than 900 hours a year.

Sun sets on solar panel tax break

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

BUDGET

Hundreds of local authority-maintained schools with solar panels face a £1.8 million bill as a result of the business rate hikes announced by Philip Hammond.

In this week's Budget, the chancellor ignored pleas to cancel a planned tax rise of "up to 800 per cent" on rooftop solar schemes.

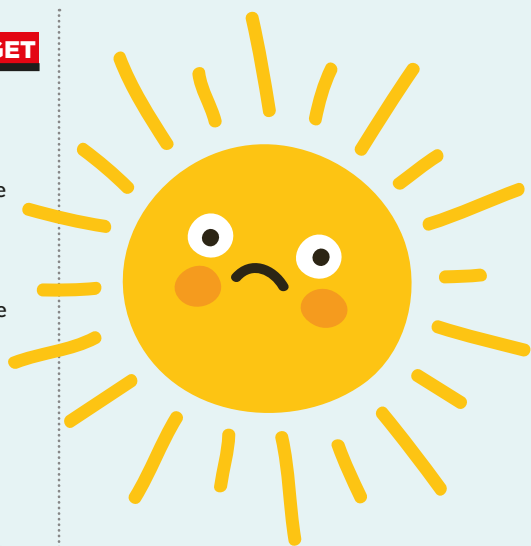
The effect on schools was reported by The Guardian newspaper earlier this week.

However, schools with charitable status – academies, free schools and some private schools – remain exempt from any hike.

Baroness Jones, the Green party peer, said it was "utterly absurd to penalise schools for investing in solar panels".

"Schools obviously face bigger financial challenges than this, but the business rate charges will stop any plans for more solar panels."

The Guardian reported that children from Eleanor Palmer, a primary school in north London, had delivered a petition against the hike to the Treasury last week. The petition



was organised by Greenpeace.

But on Wednesday Philip Hammond announced the end of the current business rates exemption for small solar panel installations. The cut takes effect next month.

A government spokesman previously said: "A range of factors are considered in rating state schools for business rates purposes, including improvements to buildings.

"Overall, state schools will see a small drop their rateable values following the recent revaluation."

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BUDGET 2017: TRANSPORT

Grammar school taxis could cost '£5,000 a pupil'...



FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

Plans to fund free transport for disadvantaged pupils to grammar schools could leave councils and schools out of pocket, with one Oxfordshire councillor warning that the move could cost up to £5,000 a child in taxi fares.

In Wednesday's Budget, the chancellor Philip Hammond announced that the government's "extended rights" transport scheme will soon include selective schools. He allocated £20 million for the scheme between 2018 and 2022.

Pupils who are entitled to free school meals or whose parents claim maximum working tax credits will be entitled to free transport to grammar schools between 2 and 15 miles from their homes. How far they are expected to travel without free transport depends on their age.

But the scheme's financial viability has already been questioned, with particular concerns over rural areas and non-selective authorities that border areas with grammar schools.

Councils currently administer the free school transport scheme.

John Howson, an education academic and county councillor in Oxfordshire, said his authority could be left to foot the bill for transporting pupils from the county's northern villages to grammar schools in nearby Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.

"Local authorities with non-selective schools should not have to pay the transport costs under any new rules should children opt to attend selective schools in another authority," he said.

"The new arrangements could cost council taxpayers up to £5,000 per child per year if a taxi had to be provided."

In Suffolk, school transport is already deemed "an expensive and massively complex exercise".



Philip Hammond

Rachel Gooch, a secondary school governor, said bussing pupils from a 15-mile radius in her area "may involve stops in perhaps 50 villages and hamlets".

"My school does this currently, running 30 buses that can take an hour to arrive. For a smaller school with fewer buses making more stops, it will take even longer and cost a fortune.

"Meanwhile, will we be bussing those who live next to the grammar but don't get in [to the grammar] to another school further away?"

There are also fears that the move could adversely affect pupil numbers, and therefore funding levels, at under-subscribed comprehensive or secondary moderns near selective schools.

Unions have also asked why grammar schools are prioritised when free transport schemes in some areas face significant cuts.

Mary Bousted, the general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, accused the chancellor of "throwing more money at grammar schools", and said the government's spending pledges were

"totally insufficient" to tackle the wider funding crisis in schools.

Hammond said that for "many parents the cost of travel can be a barrier to exercising that choice".

"Pupils typically travel three times as far to attend selective schools, so we will extend free school transport to include all children on free school meals who attend a selective school.

"We are resolved that talent alone should determine the opportunities a child enjoys."

PAWIRE

...WHILE COUNCILS LOSE £6M FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT

The government has slashed more than £6 million from the money it hands to councils for free school transport schemes.

Latest figures show it paid councils £18.8 million to fund their schemes this year – compared with £25.1 million in 2014-15.

It insists the level of funding paid for each pupil eligible for free transport has "remained the same for the past two years".

But *Schools Week* has previously reported how the cut is forcing councils to make up the cash from other parts of their budgets, with many reducing their free school transport offer.

Essex will now only pay for transport to a child's nearest school with places, a change that saves it an estimated £238,000 a year.

West Berkshire also aims to save £387,000 each year by

cutting back on the level of service it offers.

Cornwall has lost the most cash – £310,000 over the two years.

Kent and Essex councils have lost more than £200,000, with another 16 councils losing more than £100,000.

Chancellor Philip Hammond's new £200 million package to extend the free transport scheme is only for disadvantaged pupils to travel to grammar schools.

Richard Watts, chair of the Local Government Authority's children and young people's board, said: "While councils are extremely supportive of transport being provided to children most in need, any new provision must be fully funded and not place an additional financial burden on councils."

The government funding allows councils to pay for home-to-school travel for children from low-income families who go to schools beyond a statutory walking distances. The number of pupils entitled to cash is calculated from spring census data each year.

Research from the Campaign for Better Transport, published in 2015, found that nearly four in five councils had reduced their school transport offer since 2010.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "Local authorities are expected to use their Local Government Finance Settlement appropriately to meet their local needs, including the requirement for home-to-school travel and transport."



THE LAST OF THE LOLLIPOP BRIGADE

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Exclusive

Councils across the country are slashing their school crossing patrol budgets despite growing pupil numbers and increasing child pedestrian injuries.

About £2.5 million less was spent in the past academic year compared with 2013-14.

An exclusive investigation by *Schools Week* has found that more than two thirds of councils have cut their budget for crossings in the past three years, leaving many schools to cover the cost of keeping pupils safe.

Plymouth City Council spent 89 per cent less than it did three years ago, followed by Liverpool, which reduced its expenditure by 58 per cent.

Both councils say they told schools in their

areas that they must pay for the patrols themselves – a situation mirrored in many other areas.

Jon Richards, head of education at Unison, said: "The government's increasingly thin attempts to pretend that school funding is adequate clearly do not cover the massive cuts to local authority grants, which have a huge impact on school support services.

"To hope that schools will be able to pick up the cost of crossing patrols

when they are already facing huge cuts to their budgets is a fantasy."

The number of child pedestrian casualties during the morning school run, from 6am to 9am, has risen 3 per cent from 1,009 in 2013-14 to 1,046 in 2015-16, according to latest figures from Road Safety Analysis.

Similarly, the number of casualties in the afternoon pick-up from 3pm to 6pm went up 2 per cent from 2,937 to 2,986 – a rise that has prompted many headteachers and councils to arm their school patrol officers with body cameras in an attempt to clamp down on dangerous driving.

Despite the rise in casualties, two in three councils slashed their school crossing patrol budgets over the same period, according to figures from 123 of England's 152 local authorities.

Plymouth, which had by far the biggest percentage cut from £98,830 to £10,675, said the reduction was so drastic because the service was now "primarily paid for" by schools.

A spokesperson for Liverpool, which cut its £600,000 budget in 2013-14 to less than £250,000 last year, said more than 60 schools in its area "volunteered" to pay for their own school crossing patrol in 2015-16. Each of these schools had to fork out £5,000.

John Gibbons, a branch convenor for Unison in Liverpool, said the council's proposal was "self-defeating" because half of the area's schools would not be paying for the service but would still receive it?

"Schools are getting battered now with their own budgets. What should you cut back on as a school who has to find £5,000 to pay for patrols that should be the council's responsibility?"

The Liverpool spokesperson said the council did "recognise that schools are facing tougher financial circumstances" and had decided to reinstate this funding from the local authority's base budget from 2017-18.

In Rochdale, council leaders were forced to scrap plans to charge schools for the services after half of its schools said they could not afford to pay.

Meanwhile, a consultation continues in Trafford on axing school crossing patrols altogether unless nearby schools or community groups pay for them.

The council's bosses, who are aiming to save £380,000 a year, have been deluged with protests from irate parents and schools, with many heads saying they cannot afford to prop up the service.

And Walsall Council, which has cut its patrol budget by 36 per cent over the past three years, is proposing to get rid of 39 crossing patrols to save £85,000.

Matthew Draper, head of Mayfield Preparatory School, has started a petition on the council's website to keep the service.

Unison's Richards said: "We can now see that funding cuts are not just damaging children's education they are increasing the risks to their safety.

"A missed lesson could cost a pupil a qualification. A missing crossing patrol could cost them their life."



TOP TEN

Council	2013/14 (£)	2015/16 (£)	% difference
Plymouth City Council	98,830	10,675	-89
Liverpool City Council	606,267	249,492	-58
Ealing Council	45,913	23,789	-48
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead	20,290	11,613	-42
Coventry City Council	356,019	210,434	-40
Walsall Council	591,218	374,613	-36
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	177,370	114,057	-35
City of Wolverhampton Council	412,940	276,923	-32
Gloucestershire County Council	210,136	142,575	-32
West Berkshire Council	64,661	44,407	-31

NEWS

SCHOOLWORK STUDY WILL SHAPE FUTURE OF CURRICULUM

SAM KING

@KINGSAMANTHA_

The biggest-ever archive of pupils' schoolwork is being collected as part of a three year-project looking at how children use language as they get older.

Samples of writing from English, history and science lessons from pupils aged five to 16 will be investigated by the "Growth in Grammar" project, led by researchers at the University of Exeter.

Thousands of pieces of work will be collected from schools across the UK, before being collated, digitised and finally made available as a free online resource for other researchers and education professionals in late 2018.

Researchers hope the database will lead to a better understanding of the way children use grammar, to help support teachers and improve the design of the school curriculum.

Lead researcher Philip Durrant, Exeter's senior lecturer in language education, explained: "We know with adults what features they change when addressing a formal audience or writing a story – what we don't know is how children do that."

Using literature from the 1930s and previous studies which measure markers of progress in text, the researchers aim to identify 700 key features to track student progress. One marker is when and how pupils cross words out on the page.

Teachers and families must give permission for the work to be used, and each sample will be anonymised to protect pupils' identities.

The project began in August 2015 and received £317,843 of funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), giving it the capacity to analyse five thousand pieces of work from schools.

So far researchers have collected 1,500 samples, with the study due to conclude in August 2018.

Durrant says the research will result in "the most extensive archive of authentic written work in schools to date". Samples will be collected up until autumn this year, before analysis begins.

"We see this as a way of giving teachers and students greater awareness and control over the linguistic features that are critical for ensuring all students get to be the best writers they can be," he told *Schools Week*.

Comparisons can be made with the British National Corpus (BNC), a 100-million-word collection of samples of written and spoken language showing how words and attitudes have shifted.

Full findings from the latest version of the study – the Spoken BNC2014 – will be released at the end of 2017, though early findings on words concerning education were released in 2015.

The early release revealed that the word "education" appears more frequently in conversation these days – appearing 42 times per million words, compared with only 26 times per million in the 1990s dataset.

£215 million SEND pledge is a 'blunt instrument'

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Special needs funding is now being allocated as "a blunt instrument", with cash handed out based on population growth, rather than more sophisticated measures, according to a major charity.

The Department for Education (DfE) last week announced it was setting aside new funds to improve special educational needs (SEND) provision in mainstream schools from 2018-22.

The money will allow existing schools to, for example, add more mobility equipment and specialised classrooms.

However, it will be allocated based on projected population growth, rather than flowing to areas with the greatest need.

Simon Knights, the director of education at the National Education Trust, said the funding was "unlikely to fully address the significant capacity issues" in the special needs sector.

Using the "blunt instrument" of demographic growth will not "necessarily target funding towards those areas with the greatest need", he said, calling for a national audit of special needs places capacity.

The £215 million boost followed an investigation by *Schools Week* (pictured) which found councils last year spent £480 million to place SEND pupils at private special schools because there were not enough places in state-funded mainstream and special schools. Surrey council, for example, spent £31 million to fund SEND pupils at independent special schools.

An analysis of the new scheme shows that the councils which spend the most on private special school provision per pupil will not receive the biggest slices of funding from the DfE.

Only two of the councils that spend the most per pupil on private special school provision, Hertfordshire and Barking and Dagenham, make it into the top 15 of the new funding allocation.

However, some councils that spent the most overall (in sum total, rather than per pupil) have ended up as big winners.

Surrey, Kent, Essex and Hampshire – all among the top six councils for total private special school spend – are in the top six for the highest allocations from the new money, receiving between £3.7 million and £6.6 million each.

However, other councils with large overall spends have not made it into the highest allocations of funding.

These include Devon, Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lancashire and Somerset – which spent between £9 million and £16 million in 2015-16

Meanwhile, several councils with a lower spend have received more funding, including six London boroughs, Birmingham, West Sussex and Leeds.

Peter Imray, a freelance adviser on SEND



and a former teacher, said that £215 million was "no way near enough, not with the needs of the most complex children – which can be £200,000 per year for one child".

Even then, the projected population growth figures might not be accurate, he added, as children with the most severe needs are not always included in the data.

The government wants the new funds to be spent on expanding existing classrooms to accommodate mobility aids, on new mobility equipment, and to create storage facilities for wheelchairs.

Other suggestions include creating "learning kitchens" so young people can learn independent living, building sensory rooms or hygiene suites, and expanding special units currently attached to schools.

Edward Timpson, the children's minister, said the investment would enable local councils to "build new classrooms and improve facilities for pupils, ensuring that no child is left behind".

Final whistle for football club's free school

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

A free school set up by Bolton Wanderers Football Club will close later this year owing the government £500,000 – much of which could be written off.

Bolton Wanderers Free School (BWFS), which opened in September 2014, shares the club's Macron stadium.

Its trustees say they decided to close the school after only 95 youngsters enrolled in 2015, fewer than half of the 200 anticipated in its first year and well short of its 400 capacity. They say it is "not financially viable into the future".

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) will now work to "minimise" losses on clawing back a £495,000 loan.

In January *Schools Week* reported that the government wrote off another £700,000 of loans in 2013-14, and £100,000 in 2014-15 for free schools that could not afford repayments.

BWFS's closure was revealed on the same day of the government spring Budget announcement of £320 million for 140 new free schools.

Labour MP Diana Johnson, who previously promised to flag the financial mismanagement of free schools to the National Audit Office, said it was "irresponsible" for the government to "waste

money on a chaotic free school funding system that is simply not fit for purpose".

New free schools are initially funded on anticipated numbers. The EFA then reviews how many pupils are on roll at the end of that year and retrospectively retrieves or hands out extra funding.

Schools Week revealed last December that the Department for Education (DfE) needed to claw back £11 million from more than 100 free schools after they failed to recruit expected numbers in the past academic year.

BWFS has a debt of £566,207 for its pupil number adjustment (PNA) but to date has only repaid £70,776, according to a freedom of information response last month.

The school was supposed to repay the full amount by August, but headteacher Toni Carr wrote to the EFA last year explaining the school was "not in a position" to meet the deadline.

The EFA then agreed to defer the repayment until August next year.

A DfE spokesperson said the department was working with the school to "ensure all outstanding liabilities, including PNA repayments, are minimised".

The decision to close BWFS follows an Ofsted inspection last year that rated



the school inadequate in all areas, with inspectors raising concerns about a "culture of low aspirations".

Carr said year 13 pupils at the 16 to 19 school will continue with their current courses and complete them this summer.

"I also wish to assure you that we will endeavour to ensure that teaching and learning within the college will continue with the present teaching staff and therefore ensure that students are prepared for examinations this summer."

Trustees say the decision to close followed "extensive discussions" with the DfE and EFA.

Schools run by football clubs have struggled in recent years. Tottenham UTC, sponsored by Tottenham Hotspur, will close this summer. It had just 134 pupils on roll in January last year.

It will be replaced on the same site by the London Academy of Excellence Tottenham, a sixth-form college.

NEWS

Teacher trainers blast DfE for hiding allocation data

BILLY CAMDEN

@BILLYCAMDEN

Investigates

The government is under fire for its “unprecedented” refusal to reveal the full allocations for next year’s initial teacher training (ITT), even though officials have had the information for nearly six months.

Teacher training providers including universities and schools were told last September how many students they could take onto their programmes for the academic year 2017-18.

At the same time, the Department for Education published its new methodology for allotting teacher training places, awarding the “best” providers with three-year allocations for the first time.

However, the department has not yet made this data public, even though it has in the past always published it when it gave individual institutions their new trainee numbers.

ITT experts say they need the data now. In particular, they want to know the number of places allocated across different routes: through higher education institutions (HEI), school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT), and School Direct, to get an accurate picture of recruitment and local needs and to “plan for the future”.

The Labour peer Baroness Donaghy requested the data through a question in the House of Lords in November, but the academies minister Lord Nash would only say the allocations would be published “in



James Noble-Rogers

due course”.

Subsequently, the executive director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), James Noble-Rogers, lodged a Freedom of Information request for the release of the data, but the DfE again refused to release it last month.

Noble-Rogers said that, at a time when both headteachers and Ofsted are concerned by a crisis in teacher supply, it is “outrageous that training places are being allocated under a veil of secrecy”.

Provisional figures for trainee teacher recruitment during this academic year, published by the DfE in November, show that fewer people are starting ITT courses.

While 27,761 postgraduates chose an ITT route for the academic year 2015-16, 532 fewer (27,229) signed up this year.

This fall is part of a larger trend; in 2011, more than 35,000 people signed up for ITT courses, representing a fall of around 7,000 candidates – even though figures for

this year and the last included Teach First applicants for the first time.

Noble-Rogers told *Schools Week* that the DfE’s failure to publish this year’s allocations meant that “high-calibre providers of significant numbers of newly qualified teachers to the system – both HEI and SCITTs – have no basis on which to plan for a secure future”.

He added: “Experts need the data to make a judgement about the extent to which the allocation of places at a regional level will meet local teacher supply needs.

“At a national level, we need the totals for each phase and subject to calculate the extent to which applications are likely to meet those targets. The applications process is already well under way, and if experts can’t analyse the data now it will be too late to offer timely advice.

“The DfE has already entered into discussions about the allocations methodology for 2018-19, and yet it is difficult for us to take part in informed discussions because we don’t know what happened for 2017-18.”

Martin Thompson, the executive director of the National Association of School-Based Teacher Trainers, echoed this criticism, adding that without the data, “it is difficult for schools and providers to get an accurate picture of recruitment and local needs so that they can meet and prepare”.

A DfE spokesperson told *Schools Week* that the information would be made public “in due course”.

Heads ready to resign over ‘unacceptable’ cuts

Richard Slade, who heads up Plumcroft Primary School in Greenwich, told delegates at an event on Tuesday that “a lot” of headteachers have told him they are considering throwing in the towel due to the extent of redundancies they must now oversee.

Plumcroft faces a £400,000 cut in funding by 2019-20.

“It’s unacceptable,” he told the Westminster Education Forum. “I’m going to stand by my principals and moral imperative. I love what I do, but there comes a point where resignation is the only option.”

He said the mass resignation of experienced heads would be a “tragedy for the wider system”.

Delegates also criticised the government’s decision to fund new grammar schools, while James Heapey, the Conservative MP who chaired the event, described the move as a “dreadful” and “political” project.

Slade raised his concerns during a debate about the government’s plans to implement a national funding formula to reduce historical inequalities in school funding.

However, Tony Foot, the Education Funding Agency’s (EFA) director of funding, said he was worried the funding formula and school budget pressures were “getting a little blurred”.

He argued that cost pressures driven by rising pension and national insurance contributions would have occurred whether or not school funding reform is implemented.

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NEWS: OFSTED

WATCHDOG ENDS LETTERS PRAISING 'EXCEPTIONAL' HEADS

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Ofsted has dropped a commitment to send letters to headteachers doing an "exceptional turnaround job" at other schools after just one year and only five letters sent.

The scheme was introduced by former chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw in September 2015 as a way to recognise heads "taking risks, putting themselves out and disseminating good practice beyond their institution" – those who took on improvement roles at underperforming schools nearby.

The letters were also sent to the education secretary, with recipients named in Ofsted's annual report.

However, just five leaders were recognised in the first year, and the watchdog has now told its inspectors that they are no longer expected to recommend candidates.

Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's chief inspector, said the commitment was never a "core part of inspections".

"Leadership is a set of people, not just a single person," she told *Schools Week*. "For me, raising the significance of leadership and management judgment – making people realise it is something that has really valuable information in its own right about teams – is the more important thing to do."

When he introduced the idea, Wilshaw said that recognising turnaround heads who had "played a key role in turning around other institutions" would inspire others to follow their example.

But *Schools Week* reported in 2015 that the scheme received a "nervous reaction" from some heads, who said it could create a "formal hierarchy where supporting other schools is seen as kudos".

Ofsted's 2016 annual report recognised just five heads: Bradley Taylor of Chiltern Gate School in Buckinghamshire, Dr Tom Canning at Tollgate Primary School in Newham, Kerrie Lewis from Condover Church of England Primary School in Shropshire, Fiona Todd, of St Oswald's Worleston in Cheshire, and Janet Collins of Springfield House Community Special School near Birmingham.

Spielman added that "collecting a few top names" turned out to be "remarkably difficult", and is something "best left to secretaries of state".

She pointed out that the "focus on the individual judgements and not collapsing everything down into the bottom line" was wrong, because wider judgements beyond individual heads did matter.

"I want to make sure we understand how each of the judgments help informs the system and informs improvements," she said.

She will continue to write personal letters to heads of every school rated 'requires improvement' overall but which received a 'good' or 'outstanding' score for leadership or management, as well as schools that leave special measures.

An Ofsted spokesperson said that the exceptional leaders initiative had been "related to a personal commitment" made by Wilshaw to support some leaders during the first year of Ofsted's new inspection arrangements.

First inspection reliability study shows 92% consistency

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

A landmark reliability study has found that Ofsted inspectors come to the same judgments around 90 per cent of the time.

On Tuesday, the education watchdog published the findings of its double inspections study – in which pairs of inspectors were sent to the same school but worked independently, to see if they came to the same conclusions.

The visits, which were first reported by *Schools Week* two years ago, involved short inspections on 26 primary schools rated 'good' to test the inspectorate's consistency.

The report found that inspectors agreed on the outcomes in 92 per cent of short inspections, a result which chief inspector Amanda Spielman described as a "positive view of inspector consistency".

Writing in an online blog, she said Ofsted should "routinely be looking at issues of consistency and reliability", adding: "Even more importantly, we should be looking at the validity of inspection: is inspection succeeding in measuring what it is intended to measure?"

In 22 cases, both inspectors came to the same conclusion – either the school remained 'good', or there was a need for a new, full inspection.

Of the two cases in which the judgements differed, one was ascribed to "subjective interpretation" of the same evidence, while the other was caused by "study design", rather than differing conclusions.

Two further cases did not feature in the final analysis. One was dropped after a safeguarding issue was discovered, while the other was abandoned because one inspector had influenced the other.

Spielman told *Schools Week* that the findings "give us some level of reassurance that inspectors are applying



the short inspection construct reasonably consistently".

But while the watchdog can do a "great deal" to minimise the impact of bias in human judgments, she admitted that "we are unlikely to ever reach a position where perfect consistency can be guaranteed".

"If it was perfect it would actually get a bit worrying if it was too mechanistic," she said. "That would suggest it's all a bit too narrow – there's not enough space for inspectors to dig in."

Alan Passingham, one of the report's authors, told *Schools Week* the additional scrutiny on inspectors' decisions was "incredibly powerful", and said they had found it to be "good professional development".

"They often inspect on their own," he said. "There's no way to test themselves on 'are we doing the right thing?'"

However the report did find that some views varied. While some inspectors found it "reassuring" to come to the same conclusion as a colleague, others said the reliability focus was "professionally uncomfortable" and found not "having ownership of the

inspection frustrating".

Passingham also said these reliability checks could be used as part of inspector training in the future.

Spielman added: "I think it is [a useful thing for them to go through]. I don't think anybody should get isolated in their practice and interesting thing to reflect on."

The report, the first ever reliability study of the inspection process, is "just a first step towards a continuing programme of research into inspection", while a further reliability study across a larger sample of primary schools with more independent observers "may be warranted".

It found four factors associated with reliability, including the "triangulation" of senior leaders' views against evidence collected during the inspection, and the level of inspector training, although Ofsted said the latter point required "further study".

"We are beginning to shape up what this research programme should look like," said Spielman. "But this is not a quick hit in which everything is sorted at once; rather, it will be a steady process in which questions are addressed systematically."

Careless talk costs double inspection pilot

JOHN DICKENS
@JOHNDICKENSSW

Exclusive

Ofsted was forced to beef up safeguards during its double inspection reliability study, after some inspectors, who had been expected to come to their final judgments independently, were found to be discussing their findings.

The education watchdog published the findings of its tests on the reliability of short inspections on Tuesday morning.

Schools Week first reported the pilot in February 2015, and was given an exclusive preview of the findings.

Under the tests, pairs of inspectors visited 26 primary schools with 'good' ratings, and conducted short inspections, delivering what were meant to be two distinct verdicts on whether schools should maintain their ratings or be subjected to full inspections.

In 22 of the 24 cases analysed, with two dropped from the final analysis, the inspectors came to the same conclusion. However the report reveals that during

an earlier pilot in 2015 involving seven schools, some inspectors were found to have "spoken frequently" during their inspections. In two instances, inspectors came up with "single shared outcome" instead of separate decisions.

The report explains that in both cases one inspector identified the need for a full inspection, then discussed the findings with their colleague, before they subsequently reached the same decision.

Schools Week previously reported that the findings were raised in an interim report of the study which will not be published.

However the final report, published this week, does include a summary of the interim review findings.

Alan Passingham, one of the report's authors, told *Schools Week* that inspectors "didn't quite get what we were trying to achieve" in the earlier pilot.

"They were doing little things such as a wave to each other – minor things that could prejudice judgments.

"We took that on board and included protocols [in the final study] to ensure less

of that kind of behaviour was going on."

In the second round of reliability tests, inspectors had to complete summary evaluation forms and give them to their superiors in sealed brown envelopes before meeting to agree a final outcome.

The inspectors were also given different roles, with one required to "concede authority" to another if their inspections overlapped.

Independent observers were meanwhile appointed to oversee some inspections, following discussions with Ofsted's expert panel of advisors.

"We can't be absolutely sure we've managed to nullify [all problems]," admitted Passingham, "but there is enough evidence to reassure us that if there was interaction it was likely to be unintentional."

The pairs of inspectors did still meet the headteacher at the same time at the start of the inspection to develop lines of enquiry.

The report concluded that this was likely to introduce an "element of confirmation bias" to the study, but said it had been done to avoid additional burden on the school.

INTERVIEW

AMANDA SPIELMAN: Is Ofsted measuring what we think we're measuring?

LAURA MCINERNEY

@MISS_MCINERNEY

Two months into the job and Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's new chief inspector, has shot out of the traps as you would expect – with research in hand.

Criticised by the education select committee for lacking passion, Spielman is well-known for being a data-nerd. As chair of qualifications regulator Ofqual, she zeroed in on making decisions based on lengthy research programmes and hard numbers rather than hunches.

She hopes to do the same at Ofsted, and says this week's publication of a study on the reliability of inspectors is just a start.

"I can take no credit for it," she admits, as the work originally started two years ago, "but I was impressed by the thorough analysis of the work that went into the design."

It is the start of a thorough look at inspection, in an attempt to understand how – or whether – it really works.

"This is the beginning of structuring a programme so we can pick off the most important questions to answer," she says.

The reliability of Ofsted inspectors – that is, the extent to which they come to the same conclusion – is found in the report to be pretty high, at slightly over 90 per cent. But Spielman is more worried about validity – that is, the extent to which inspections accurately measure the quality of a school.

"Validity is the single biggest thing we should be focusing on in the research programme going forward," she says. "It's the same construct when you're testing a qualification. Are you measuring what you intend? Are you measuring what you think you're measuring? And is it in ways that are efficient, useful and constructive?"

This will come as a relief for those headteachers who have long wondered whether Ofsted is over-reliant on data, or if its grades are too dependent on the whims of individual inspectors.

Last year, *Schools Week* reported that a "robo-inspector", created using an algorithm from Arbor Education, was able to reliably predict when inspectors would award a 'good' rating, purely by using a school's performance data. However, 'inadequate' and 'outstanding' ratings were handed out on a less predictable basis.

Spielman believes that no test should ever be perfect – "I would be worried if reliability were 100 per cent," she says of the study this week, suggesting that such high scores could indicate cheating.

Furthermore, she cautions against viewing inspection as a mechanistic process, and wants to go beyond a formula that says 'if this is found then that outcome is given'.

This is particularly important regarding Ofsted's guidance on qualifications gaming and off-rolling. Sean Harford, the inspectorate's director of education, has recently written to inspectors telling them



Amanda Spielman

they should be looking for any evidence of schools putting pupils in for inappropriate qualifications purely to garnish performance data, or of their taking poorly performing pupils off roll during their final year so they aren't included in published exam results.

But Spielman says no specific action should be required if an inspector finds evidence of such behaviours.

"They look at the published data, take it into account and interpret it, and use it to inform the rest of the inspection work they do," she says. "So if there was some data suggesting significant off-rolling, then it would become one of the lines of inquiry inspectors would pursue in discussion with management."

"They would understand what was happening, and that could feed into other judgments as well. It feeds into leadership

and management, for example."

Nor do schools need to be concerned by the announcement last week that Ofsted would help police the planned introduction of compulsory sex and relationship education across all schools, including academies, which were previously exempt.

Ofsted already looks at such provision as part of their personal development, behaviour and welfare judgment, she contends.

"The best way of looking at these changes is to say that they give us a stronger basis for commenting on what we see. It gives us a stronger position to criticise or take it into account in an overall judgment, but it's not something new for us."

What is newer for inspectors – another concern of Spielman's – is the extent to which changes to GCSE and A-level examinations over the next few years are

playing havoc with the usefulness of school data. Where teachers could previously estimate pupil outcomes with reasonable accuracy, the complete overhaul of grading – including GCSEs moving to a numerical instead of a lettered grade system – makes it almost impossible for teachers to make predictions.

It is also likely that schools will have more volatile results over the next few years, and they could see results dropping in some subjects. This isn't due to any changes in teaching quality, but to other aspects of the exam regulation system, which Spielman knows only too well from her time at Ofqual.

To that end, she has asked Ofsted's data and insight team to draw up a list of inferences that inspectors will and will not be able to make from data from next year.

"We know that with the new grading, nobody at the moment has a sense of what grades look like in terms of standard of work. So there's more uncertainty than usual at school level. We are trying to make sure that inspectors are also getting to grips with it, and are in as good a position as possible to make use of the new data and minimise the likelihood of it being misinterpreted."

"You're dealing with grades, distributions and things you've never seen before. Sometimes the more dangerous thing is for people to think they can see a trend when it's not actually telling them anything."

"It's helpful to be really clear about this. It's about making sure that people have good advice on what represents a significantly different dataset. That's not necessarily something that you want every inspector to individually try to work out."

Hers is a very different approach to that of her predecessor, Sir Michael Wilshaw, who never gave an inch on Ofsted's abilities to inspect – going so far as to brand academic reports questioning their reliability as "tosh and nonsense".

In contrast to Sir Michael, Spielman wants her inspectors to consider the entire leadership and management teams at a school, rather than just headteachers.

"The leadership and management judgment is the thing that really reflects the quality of the whole leadership of a school, not just a named top leader but a group. We all know that leadership is actually a set of people, not just a single person. The 'management' word is quite important as well."

There is however one team which she still has to win over: although Ofsted is an independent body, its priorities are set by government ministers.

Still, Spielman is nonchalant about dealing with the government: "I am onto minister number 12," she laughs.

But does she think she'll be able to stand up to them?

She purses her lips: "I think I'll be precisely as steely as I always was. I don't think I've changed my spots."

NEWS

Asbestos in schools: The hidden

JESS STAUFENBERG

@STAUFENBERGJ

Exclusive

Asbestos has been disturbed at schools in a way that could affect the health of staff and pupils on at least 90 separate occasions in the last five years, *Schools Week* can exclusively reveal.

Although all forms of the deadly substance have been banned as building materials for decades, it is found in about 85 per cent of schools – and was reported to councils as having been “disturbed” on 93 occasions over five years, meaning “possible exposure” to teachers, builders, caretakers or pupils between 2011 and 2016, according to Freedom of Information requests.

Campaigners say these accidental disturbances call into question the government’s claims that the presence of asbestos – which causes several aggressive forms of cancer – in schools is safe if not disturbed.

At one school, balloons released during a science experiment knocked asbestos in the ceiling to the floor – forcing all teachers and pupils to change their clothes. In another, a Second World War mask pupils held to their faces was found to contain crocidolite, the most lethal blue form of asbestos.

A spokesperson for the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) said teaching unions were joining forces to call for the proactive removal of asbestos in as many schools as possible, and to ensure all staff were properly trained about its handling.

“How can you ever guarantee that asbestos is not going to be disturbed?”

“What might be safe in an office is not suitable in a school; there are footballs being kicked and teachers pinning into walls.”

Russell Hobby, general secretary of NAHT, added that the Department for Education (DfE) was “simply not taking the risk of asbestos in schools and academies seriously enough”.

A National Audit Office report released last month found asbestos was a “potentially dangerous issue” in most schools, and warned it could be disturbed by “unruly” pupils or teachers attaching work to walls.

Lucie Stephens, the asbestos campaigner who shared the FoI responses with *Schools Week*, said her findings “completely call into question the guidance from the government of safe-if-not-disturbed”.

“If it’s being managed so well in schools, then they wouldn’t be disturbing it,” she said. “Saying ‘it’s safe’ is just the government trying to wash their hands.”

Asbestos, which comes in three main forms, was used as insulation and fireproofing in non-domestic buildings from the 1920s to the 1980s. The more deadly brown and blue varieties were banned

in 1985, while the use of white asbestos was finally stopped in 1999. All schools built before 2000 are assumed to contain asbestos.

The FoI requests to councils revealed asbestos had been disturbed in 51 schools over the past five years – a figure campaigners described as “the tip of the iceberg”, since many teachers do not recognise asbestos when they find it.

In Lancashire, primary school teachers rummaging in a store room found damaged asbestos around a pipe. An administration officer in Milton Keynes similarly “disturbed asbestos pipe lagging” in a cupboard while moving archives.

Meanwhile, a contractor working “in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act” disturbed asbestos at a Cambridgeshire primary school. Another “put his foot through the ceiling into the empty classroom below” out of school hours.

One school even had to evacuate its premises. Whiston Academy in Rotherham was forced to move into another building in 2013 after refurbishment works “identified asbestos in the ceiling”. Pupils could only return after air safety tests had been carried out.

The Health and Safety Executive, which sets asbestos regulations and describes it as “the hidden killer”, holds that “as long as asbestos is in good condition, well-managed and unlikely to be damaged or disturbed, it is not a significant risk to the health of teachers and pupils”.

Nevertheless, councils have paid out more than £10 million in compensation claims to teachers and former pupils for exposure to asbestos over the past five years.

Almost 250 staff and former pupils made claims for asbestos exposure between 2011 and 2016, with just under half (48 per cent) winning compensation. The claimants all had mesothelioma, a cancer which develops as a result of asbestos exposure.

Among the claimants was an ex-pupil in Devon who, along with four school staff members, said they had been victims of negligent management of asbestos at school. All but one member of the group won their case.

In the past five years Haringey council paid out £329,922 for three claims, Birmingham paid £500,000 for five claims and Durham paid £225,680 to just one claimant last year.

Peter Williams, head of asbestos claims at the law firm Fieldfisher, said claims take three months to one year to settle, because councils have to trawl through so much historical evidence.

Pupils are less likely than staff to remember exposure incidents, making it harder for them to prove negligence, he added.



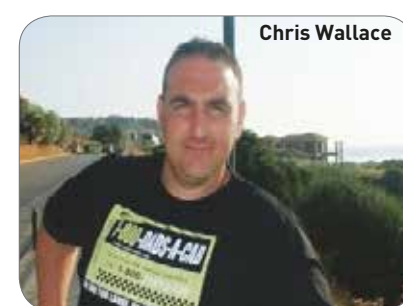
CHRIS WALLACE: THE PUPIL

Chris Wallace was diagnosed with mesothelioma nine years ago at the age 31, after being exposed to it as a pupil in Devon.

“I remember the asbestos very clearly, as there were a lot of lessons down in the basement where there were overhead asbestos-lagged pipes. This was in north Devon during the late 80s and early 90s. I remember lots of boys, myself included, liked to swing on the pipes, and the chalky asbestos dust came off onto our hands and clothing.

“I also remember the prefab temporary classrooms. The walls were thin and got damaged really easily, and in areas where there were holes I used to put my hand through and touch the asbestos lagging inside. I could see the white asbestos dust on my hands.

“I know I am lucky to still carry on with a full life at the age of 39, and manage the stomach pain and tiredness symptoms. But in a way it is frightening, as the longer I survive, the more difficult it is for me psychologically. My legal case was settled, which I was relieved about. But it is a paltry sum given that I will



Chris Wallace

lose my life early.

“For everyone diagnosed with mesothelioma, the government will pay out a lump sum and the amount depends upon your age at the time of diagnosis.

“But the sting in the tail is that this lump sum payment is deducted from your final compensation payment and repaid to the government. Had I been allowed to keep my lump sum payment, this would have made a lot of difference to me and my family.

“I have a wife, Kathleen, and two children, George and Madison. I work part-time and I run the football youth team. Who knows what the future holds? It could be more chemotherapy or even surgery, but at the moment, as I am able to have a full life, this is the priority.”

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n scandal of 'the hidden killer'



DODGY ASBESTOS SURVEYS COSTING SCHOOLS 'MILLIONS'

The government is buying up sites for free schools using out-of-date asbestos surveys, potentially costing the public purse millions of pounds each for costly refurbishments when the carcinogenic substance is found later.

"Pressure" on the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to find free school sites has caused it to rely on surveys of "varying quality" which often fail to identify all the asbestos in a building, experts have told *Schools Week*.

This contradicts a statement made last year by the minister for vulnerable children, Edward Timpson, who said the EFA should carry out asbestos surveys before buying a site if "further investigation" were warranted.

Schools Week understands that at least six schools have been given the go-ahead without an asbestos survey carried out by the EFA. Several requested more money when it was subsequently found, Freedom of Information responses have shown.

Paul Beaumont, who runs an asbestos surveying firm, said removal costs could run as high as £5 million in the worst cases.

"I'm aware of schools that have spent hundreds of thousand just having surveys carried out. One school in particular spent what I believe was arriving £1.2 million just to have asbestos removed.

"Then there's the cost of reinstalling and making the school serviceable again."

Rachel Reeves, the Labour MP who chairs the Asbestos In Schools steering group, said the "failure" of the government to perform suitable asbestos surveys at every site built before 2000, when asbestos was finally outlawed, was "grossly negligent".

Schools which are "unaware" of asbestos on site are putting staff and pupils at risk of cancer, she told *Schools Week*.

An asbestos survey carried out three years after Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Blackburn converted to a free school in 2013 revealed "high-risk" asbestos in the basement, on pipes and as "residue" in walls, all removed at an unknown cost.

Similarly, Bradford Girls Grammar School provided the EFA with a survey from 2008 before being given the go-ahead to convert. Later works to build a swimming pool revealed extensive asbestos, the "majority of which" has since been removed, said a spokesperson. The £56,000 cost was funded partly by the EFA and partly by the school.

Meanwhile pupils and staff at Parkfield School in Bournemouth, which had been meant to move to a new site in September last year, are stuck in temporary premises

after a survey revealed extensive asbestos at the new site.

In correspondence with schools campaigner Andrew Jolley, the EFA admitted it "could have been clearer" that it had relied on a 2011 site appraisal which had been "commissioned by the landowner", and that it did not carry out a separate new survey.

It admitted that the appraisal "was not a detailed asbestos survey"

but that it had "helped inform the acquisition deal".

The 2011 appraisal used to buy Parkfield's new site was five pages long – but the subsequent asbestos survey ran to 100 pages, and revealed 10 cases of high-risk asbestos, which is still being removed.

The EFA does not give breakdowns of asbestos-removal costs, but capital costs recorded by the Department for Education (DfE) show £2.14 million was given to Parkfield Education, the trust that set up the school, in six months in 2013 alone.

The Nottingham University Academy of Science and Technology (NUAST), was given a green light by the EFA before a subsequent survey revealed white asbestos in floor debris and around pipework. It was removed before the school could move in.

The "political pressure" to find school sites means the EFA is relying on "rushed" building surveys, according to John McClean, who chairs the Joint Union Asbestos Committee.

Beaumont, said surveyors were sometimes able to obtain their licences in just two or three days, and "unreliable" reports were a "common occurrence".

Full asbestos surveys are expensive, he said. A sample for lab analysis costs between £5 and £20, and up to 20,000 samples might be needed. Fireproofing, insulation and various other parts of the building might then need replacing.

"It would usually involve the demolition of the whole school. Then you need to build new ones, and there is no funding for that," he said. "The answer is much better management and better surveys, and training all staff."

A spokesperson for the DfE said the government was investing £23 billion in school buildings by 2021, which would "help ensure asbestos is managed safely and that the amount in school buildings continues to reduce over time".

They added the DfE was working with the Health and Safety Executive to transform the way asbestos data in schools was collected in order to improve understanding.

SUE STEPHENS: THE TEACHER

Sue Stephens a former teacher, died at 68 in June 2016, as a result of illness caused by exposure to asbestos. Her daughter, Lucie, writes:

"Mum had an incredible way with children. Over 30 years in the classroom she taught hundreds of four- to six-year-olds. One of her pupils wrote to her before she died, saying 'I still remember your kindness and warm smile on my first day at primary school.'

"She finally retired with Dad, whom she was married to for more than 45 years, and they decided to move to Devon. They were both beekeepers, keen gardeners and walkers.

"But in 2014, Mum was diagnosed with mesothelioma. We were all stunned. Mum had always been extremely fit through exercise classes and lots of walking. She was given 12 months to live – her diagnosis was too late for any surgery. She did bravely go on with chemotherapy and radiotherapy, but sadly neither treatment was very effective. She died last year. It's devastating.

"A Freedom of Information request



shows that asbestos was present in Mum's classroom but she was never told about it. What tormented Mum is that she could have protected her children; she had all the little ones in reception.

"We promised Mum we would try to do something to prevent more people suffering as she did. We have a petition to encourage the government to remove asbestos from schools, and we want all schools to produce an annual report for parents and teachers. The US already has this, and once the asbestos is gone, schools will become safer places for staff and children."

NEWS

MANCHESTER SUPREMO IS NEW COMMISSIONER

John Edwards, the current director of education and skills at Manchester city council, will be the new regional schools commissioner for the east Midlands and the Humber.

He will take over from Jennifer Bexon-Smith after she retires later this year, and will oversee the performance of 970 academies and free schools in his region.

He has worked at Manchester council since February 2013, with a portfolio that includes schools, early years, youth, 14-to-19 and adult skills.

Before this, he was assistant director for learning and skills at Kirklees council, after working in schools across Yorkshire for more than 10 years, as a maths teacher, head of sixth form and a senior leader.

Councillor Sheila Newman, the executive member for children's services at the council, said he had been instrumental in ensuring Manchester had a "family of schools – with local schools working together, talking to each other, sharing their expertise, skills and knowledge".

Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, added he was "thrilled" at the appointment.

"John was selected from a strong national field and will bring a wealth of experience and talent from his work in Manchester that has improved the life chances of many young people."

Sir David had been looking to fill a second commissioner role after Vicky Beer, RSC for Lancashire and west Yorkshire said she was stepping down, but she rescinded her resignation last month.

Staff offered therapy to manage work pressure

ALIX ROBERTSON

@SCHOOLSWEEK

Exclusive

An alternative provision multi-academy trust has extended student therapeutic services to staff to help them to manage the challenges and pressures of their work.

Speaking at the WomenEd unconference event in London on Saturday, Sarah Hardy, executive head of the TBAP Teaching School Alliance, explained how the programme, which began in September, benefits staff.

"If we are healthy and emotionally resilient then that's the best thing for helping our children, because we are modelling that behaviour ourselves and can pass on those skills," she said.

Before September the TBAP multi-academy trust, established in 2013 to deliver alternative provision education in west London, bought therapeutic services for its students from external organisations, such as the local authority's child and mental health services.

But it decided to bring specialists into its team from last September.

"They are co-located within our schools, they are part of our staff team and are involved our training and CPD," she said.

This integration allowed support services to be extended to staff through a "staff supervision programme", to help them to manage challenging situations with students.



Sarah Hardy

"At the moment the programme is quite leadership-led, it's delivered where the head of school or executive head has identified something that needs a supportive response," Hardy said.

She added that bringing the services in-house had given the specialists a clearer understanding of the demands of the alternative provision sector.

Support is available for a variety of situations, including domestic violence in a staff member's personal life or a traumatic child protection issue at school.

Hardy explained how her own experiences of growing up with an alcoholic mother made her appreciate the importance of providing staff with space to reflect how their work might affect their mental health

and wellbeing.

"It took me a long time to get to a point where I acknowledged that being brought up by an addict actually created a lot of difficulties in my emotional responses."

So far, she said, the programme had worked effectively.

She spoke of the introduction of a new key stage 3 curriculum model, designed for the most disengaged students. "That group of staff was working in a new way together and they found it a challenge.

"The staff supervision is working with that team to establish a new set of principles around how they support each other so that they can then support the children.

"Instead of the staffroom nastiness and a 'he said, she said' culture, it allows for conversations supported by an expert who can help them to work through the issues to reach a positive conclusion together."

Hardy discussed the new approach in a session on leadership entitled "Can I lead without compromising myself?" at the WomenEd event in Regent High School, central London.

She said she hoped it would encourage attendees to "reflect on what they are and aren't prepared to accept in their leadership journey" and "become more self-aware".

WomenEd will hold a national conference at Sheffield Hallam Institute of Education on September 30.

All you wanted to know about sex education... but were afraid to ask

FREDDIE WHITTAKER

@FCDWHITTAKER

The government has announced it will introduce compulsory sex and relationship education for all schools, including academies.

What happens next?

The policy has been added to the children and social work bill which is currently making its way through parliament.

If passed, all the law will do is place a duty on Justine Greening, the education secretary, to bring forward further laws, known as 'regulations', to make the changes to the curriculum and extend them to academies.

The amendment to existing laws will also mean that in the future, if the secretary of state wants to make the teaching of personal, social, health and economics education (PSHE) to be compulsory then she can do that too. But that is likely to happen at a later date than the sex and relationship curriculum changes.

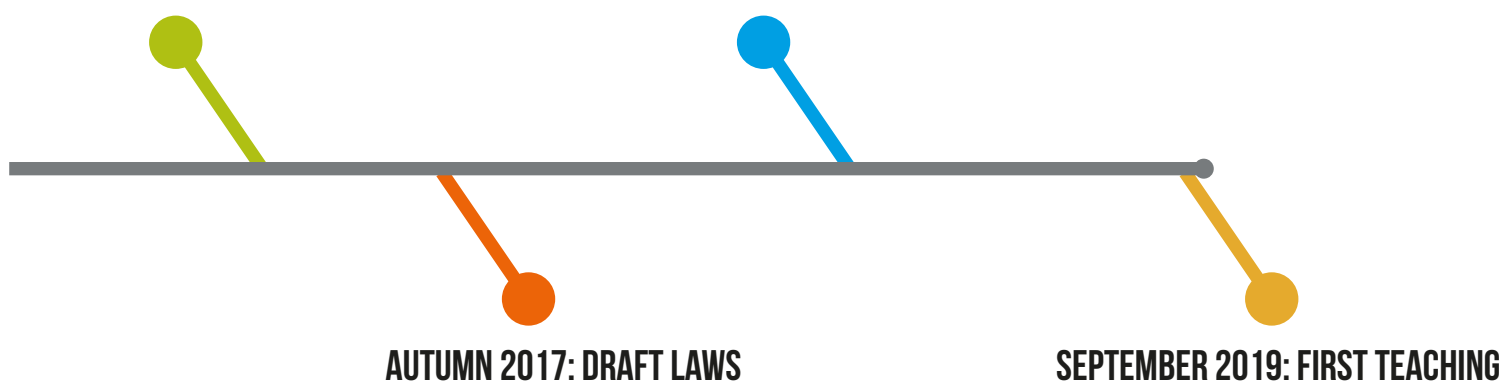
Spring 2017: Engagement

Officials will now start considering what should go into the new sex and relationships curriculum. The government has emphasised in many documents its intention to work with schools on the content. The policy paper says it will be developed with the "significant involvement of the teaching profession".

Evidence will be sought from schools

SPRING 2017: ENGAGEMENT

LATE 2017/EARLY 2018: PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



and their staff, along with parents, pupils, safeguarding and subject experts, faith groups and voluntary organisations, but it is yet to be revealed what form this exercise will take.

Autumn 2017: Draft laws

Once the content is decided, the government will publish draft regulations, the new laws and a consultation, though there's not yet any word on how long the process will last.

The government's own 'consultation principles' document says ministers should judge the length of a consultation on legal advice and take into account "the nature and impact of the proposal".

This is the stage where differences over the proposed content of the subjects could emerge, with the curriculum for

relationships education at primary level likely to be a particular bone of contention.

There has already been some disquiet among some backbench Conservative MPs over what they see as state meddling in parenting, and this could be echoed by others if it is felt that the guidance is too prescriptive over issues like same-sex relationships.

Late 2017/early 2018: Parliamentary debates

After the consultation concludes, the new legislation and guidance will be put to parliament and debated.

September 2019: First teaching

The government intends to pass the new laws at least one full year before they come into effect, so assuming that all goes

well, schools will start teaching sex and relationships education from the start of the 2019-20 school year.

I am in a religious school, does this affect me?

Yes. Religious schools will still be expected to teach the sex and relationships curriculum, but they will be able to do so with due regard to their religious values.

Aren't academies exempt from interference in the curriculum?

No. As long as something isn't specifically prohibited in the contract an academy trust holds with the government to run a school, its 'funding agreement', then the government can still write laws that the academy must take into account.

The Telegraph
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NEWS



**Stream classes and fast track the brightest.. Yes!
Any other bright ideas for ending the baby boom in
six instead of ten years?**

EDITOR'S COMMENT

@miss_mcinerney | laura.mcinerney@schoolsweek.co.uk

We need to fix existing schools, not just build more of them

People are getting their knickers in a twist this week about a bunch of separate budget-related things but keep talking about them as if they are all the same issue. It is not helpful.

The golden thread between the problems is money. There is only so much cash to go around, which is making the school community grumpy and fidgety.

But it is unhelpful to conflate, say, money for new schools – which is a real need that we shouldn't beat up the government for trying to solve – with thoughts about grammar schools, for example.

Here are five important (and separate) things to know:

1. We need lots of new schools . . . blame it on the recent baby boom
2. All new schools will be "free schools" because the government committed to opening them in its 2015 manifesto. They are not special or magical; they are just new schools.
3. Existing schools need about £6.7 billion so their building condition is "at least satisfactory". The government is offering in this budget £216 million.
4. There is, however, money for grammar schools: £50 million has already been set aside for them and some of the new school money will

also go into them.

5. School budgets overall – not just for buildings – are really squeezed at the minute, and this means lots of people are losing their jobs and services are being cut back.

Hence, three things are going on – a need for new schools, a need to fix existing schools, and a need to fund the day-to-day running of schools.

New schools have been reasonably well-served. A chunk of cash is being put aside for free schools, which are really just new schools, and they are increasingly built in areas where the local council has identified a need.

It's not silly of the chancellor to put money into the project. Kids need places and the government promised it would build 500 schools. Sure, there are issues with free schools. They've historically been rushed, land costs are expensive, and – as our report on asbestos safety in free schools on page 11 shows – in their haste to get them opened the government sometimes cuts safety corners that it later pays dearly for.

What is more interesting is the smaller amount of money for school improvements. Children across the country are in full-to-bursting classrooms, many of which are damp with poor ventilation and lighting, so

contributing to sickness and teacher turnover. There are still schools that had long-awaited buildings cancelled in 2010 that have no date for renovation.

At first, this seems terrible. But, could it be that there's a clever plan?

In ten years, when the baby boom peters out and Brexit delivers lower immigration, there will be half-empty shiny new schools and others with roofs falling in. At that point it would make sense to move the kids from the falling-apart schools into the shiny ones and sell off the land, neatly making money for the Treasury in the long-term and saving on repair costs in the short-term. Plus, given the move towards online learning and remote-working, one might even believe that by 2027 more children will be educated at home, and that even fewer school buildings will be needed. Lack of investment now could end up being a smart move.

On paper, it's a glorious plan. Especially if you're in an office thinking it up. But it's far, far less glorious when it's your classroom that's freezing in the winter, or your child whose asthma kicks off because she is sitting in a mould-ridden room, six hours a day.

Which is why people are getting angry about grammar schools. Putting aside whether they are a good thing or not, the fact is that they are an expensive thing. Building new schools costs. Transporting children 15 miles to these schools will be even more expensive. And doing so in the face of super-squeezed budgets, when it could have a detrimental impact on local schools in terms of funding and the loss of a genuinely comprehensive intake, feels like wilful neglect.

Then there's the overall school budget issue, in which leaders are trying to do more with less. Toby Young, head of the New Schools Network, complained in the media this week that the issue of new schools is separate to budgets overall.

He's right. To an extent.

The country needs more schools and it is getting the money for them. But it also needs decent buildings and great teachers, and more money is needed for those too. Funding one issue does not mean you get away with not funding everything else.





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- The confidence and ability to lead and inspire others
- Experience of leading school improvement
- Enthusiasm, common sense and good humour.

Please note, this is a re-advertisement; previous applicants will be considered. Closing date Monday 20th March, 9am.

For further details, including how to apply, please visit www.stclementdanes.org.uk

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and staff. This post will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.



Evidence Based Education
Head of Research Engagement

Salary: upon request
Location: Durham

What is it?

The Head of Research Engagement is expected to lead the development and delivery of Evidence Based Education's Research Support Partnership programmes and other research-related activities. Working with the Director of Education, the Head of Research Engagement will play a key role in Evidence Based Education's development as a trusted partner to schools, charities, universities and government departments.

What will you do?

Key functions of this role are:

- Responsibility for the development and delivery of existing Research Support Partnerships (RSPs);
- Seeking and developing new RSPs;
- Managing the remote (office-based) support and customer care for all RSP participants (including email, phone and video conferencing);
- Assisting the Director of Education to develop system-wide research engagement training and support services;
- Developing tools (e.g., online guides) for school-based research engagement by teachers and school leaders engaged in RSPs;

What are we looking for?

We need someone who is self-motivated, flexible, able to build relationships, bring together

diverse ideas and perspectives, and develop credibility with teachers, school leaders, policy-makers and academics around the world.

The Head of Research Engagement should have a higher degree, preferably in either Education or Psychology. Experience of teaching in either schools, FE or HE and a deep interest in using evidence to inform decision-making in education settings is also essential.

What is Evidence Based Education?

EBE is an international education training and consultancy organisation. We train and support teachers, school leaders and policy-makers to use robust evidence to inform their decisions for the benefit of student outcomes. All our work aligns with the best available evidence on teachers' learning, and we only design programmes for scale and sustainability.

EBE has very strong links with Durham University, the University of Tübingen, the Education Endowment Foundation and Cambridge Assessment. We work with education organisations all around the world, and we're based near Durham in the beautiful north-east of England.

Benefits

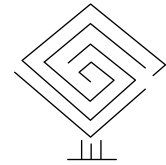
- Generous contributory pension
- 28 days' annual leave, plus bank holidays
- Annual performance-related bonus and increases (discretionary)
- Support for professional qualifications

The closing date for receipt of applications for this post is 14th April 2017 and interviews will be held in the week commencing 24th April 2017.

Business Manager

Salary Description: £35-45,000 depending on experience

Location: London



GOODMAN MASSON

A Multi Academy Trust based in London are looking to recruit a Business Manager for one of their schools in North London in the Colindale area.

The School Business Manager is the school's leading support staff professional and works as part of the Senior Team to assist the Executive Principal in his duty to ensure that the school meets its educational aims. The purpose of this role is to be responsible for providing professional leadership and management of school support staff in partnership with teaching staff, to enhance their effectiveness in order to achieve improved standards of learning and achievement in the school.

To promote the highest standards of business ethos within the administrative function of the school and strategically ensure the most effective use of resources in support of the school's learning objectives.

The School Business Manager is also responsible for the Financial Resource Management, Administration Management, Management Information, ICT/ Human Resource Management, Facility & Property Management and Health & Safety Management of the school.

For more information and to apply, please contact **Phil Southern:**

Tel: (0)20 7019 8866

Email: Phil.southern@goodmanmasson.com

Role Purpose:

- To support the school in delivering high standards of pupil attainment through the provision of efficient and effective business and support services.
- To be a member of the senior leadership team, reporting to the Executive Principal on the delivery of business and support services.
- To take the delegated responsibility for:
 - The operation of the Trusts bank account and payment of bills together with the COO.
 - Management of school finances on a day-to-day basis.
 - Monitoring the school's financial resources, for example through budgeting, financial reporting and ensuring financial probity.
- Leadership, management and development of support staff, so that all support staff understand their roles in supporting the primary purpose of the school to raise pupil attainment and to provide high quality teaching and learning.
- Oversight of school premises, including school housekeeping, repairs and maintenance, development of buildings and the provision of furnishings.
- Health and safety, acting as the appointed Health and Safety Co-ordinator.
- To support the school administrators

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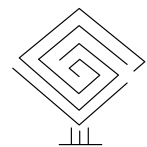
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Finance Officer



GOODMAN MASSON

Reports to: Head of Financial Reporting

Salary: £12-14 per hour

Start date: ASAP

Location: London

An Academy Trust in London are recruiting an ambitious Finance Officer to provide interim support for around 3 months to the Finance Manager in delivering the finance functions for the schools, and assist with other financial tasks to ensure the efficient functioning of the finance team.

The Role

Providing support to the Finance Manager in delivering the finance functions, and assist with other financial tasks to ensure the efficient functioning of the finance team.

The ideal candidate will:

- Have experience of purchase ledger and accounts receivable procedures
- Have experience in working with computerized financial systems and good knowledge of MS Word and Excel
- Be comfortable communicating effectively with non-financial staff and external suppliers
- Be able to work under pressure and to tight deadlines
- Demonstrate a genuine resonance with the trusts mission and values.
- Health and safety, acting as the appointed Health and Safety Co-ordinator.
- To support the school administrators

For more information and to apply, please contact **Phil Southern:**

Tel: (0)20 7019 8866

Email: Phil.southern@goodmanmasson.com

Ark is committed to safeguarding children; successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check



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Start Date: September 2017 or January 2018

Generous salary based on experience + Performance Bonus + Private Medical Insurance + Harris Benefits

Harris Academy Sutton: in association with the Institute of Cancer Research.

The Institute of Cancer Research (ICR) based in Sutton is one of the world's most influential cancer research organisations. The ICR is expanding onto the site of the disused Sutton Hospital in order to form The London Cancer Hub in association with The Royal Marsden Hospital. The campus will be a focal point for talented scientists and clinicians by establishing world-class facilities to attract top researchers and to educate the life science workforce of the future.

The campus will be a community with research buildings, hospital facilities, and a six form entry Harris Academy offering a broad and balanced curriculum with a specialism in Science. Additional funding will be made available to provide state-of-the-art facilities in this new school.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for an ambitious school leader to create an outstanding and unique new school. The post would suit someone looking to extend their experience of headship, or start their first Principalship. The academy opens in September 2018 and will move into its new building in September 2019.

Harris is a federation and not a chain; each Harris Academy is different, reflecting the particular aspirations and leadership style of its Principal.

For a confidential discussion, please call Sir Dan Moynihan, CEO of the Harris Federation, on 020 8253 7777.

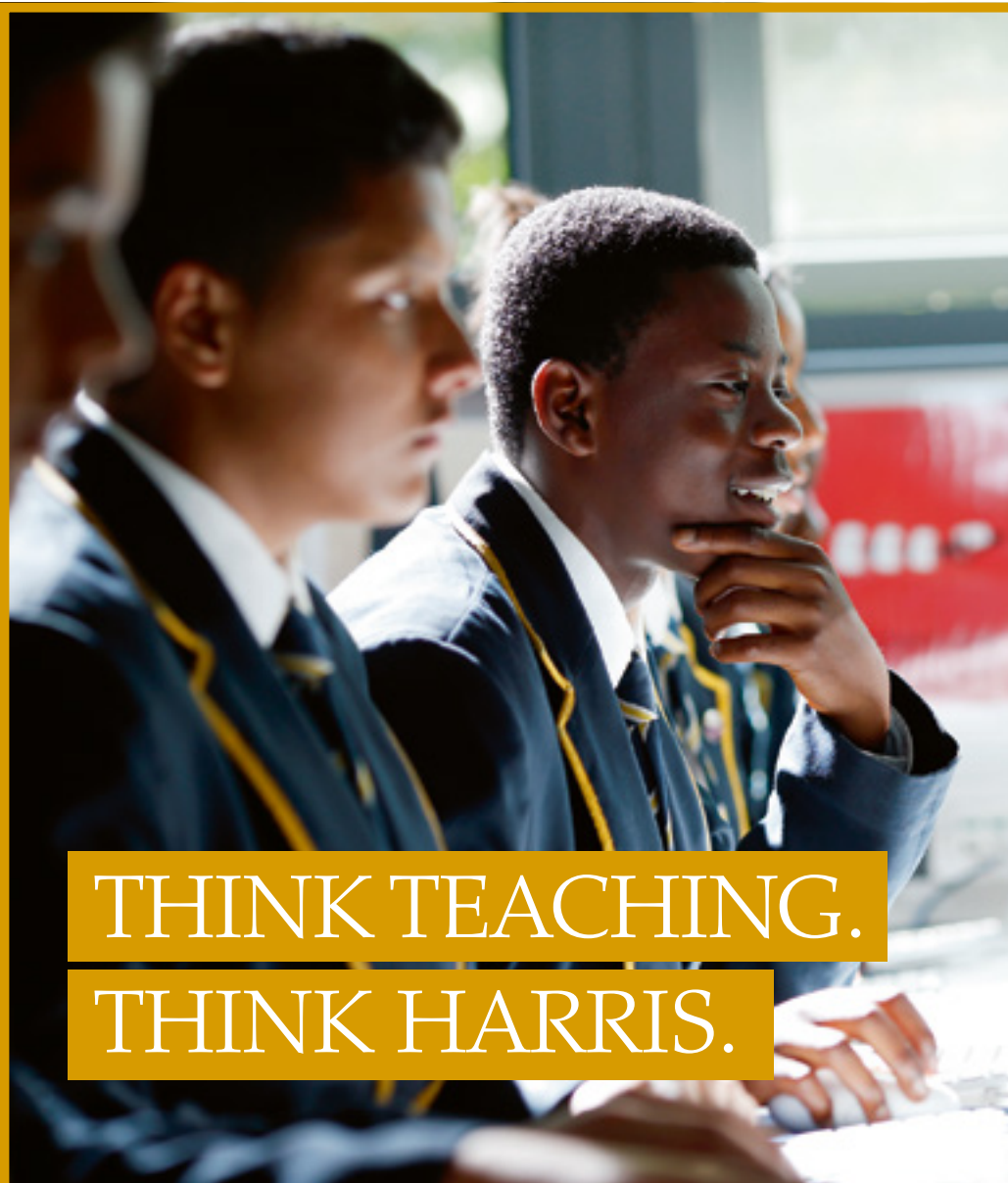
Closing date: 13th March 2017

Harris Academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check.

Discover more at:

www.harriscareers.org.uk

@HF_Careers @HarrisFed



THINK TEACHING.
THINK HARRIS.



PRINCIPAL DESIGNATE

Start Date: September 2017 or January 2018

Generous salary based on experience + Performance Bonus + Private Medical Insurance + Harris Benefits

Harris Academy Wimbledon is a new co-educational secondary school which will move into a brand new building for September 2019 and is at the heart of the regeneration of the High Path area in SW19. It will open into temporary accommodation in September 2018 on the site of the refurbished Adult Education Centre in Whatley Road, London SW20. The academy has strong support from residents in Wimbledon who are keen to see a Harris Academy open there.

We are seeking to appoint a Principal Designate for September 2017. This is an opportunity for an ambitious leader looking either to extend their experience of headship, or to start their first Principalship in a highly supportive and rewarding environment. For first time Principals, we can provide support in the form of individual mentoring from an experienced Harris Principal; for existing headteachers, we offer opportunities to progress to Executive Principalship in the future.

We look for successful leaders with a strong record of school improvement and an ability to lead staff and the community towards the achievement of clear and inspirational goals.

Harris is a federation and not a chain; each Harris Academy is different, reflecting the particular aspirations and leadership style of its Principal. All of our primary and secondary Academies are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted and we are recognised for transforming the life chances of the children and teenagers we educate.

For a confidential discussion, please call Sir Dan Moynihan, CEO of the Harris Federation, on: 020 8253 7777.

Closing date: 13th March 2017

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SCHOOLS WEEK



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READERS' REPLY



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WEBSITE

Sex and relationship lessons compulsory from 2019

f Matthew McGee

Great news. When it comes to education, this is one of the few sensible ideas the Tories have had since they were re-elected in 2010.

Be prepared, the scouts are coming to a school near you

f Nikki AD

Brilliant. It will bring the skills list from class and family; first aid, cooking, using a map, etc.

Lucy Emma Carter

A school that my friend works at down south does this! She said it's brilliant!

Caroline Reed

I really like the badges they can earn. Could we do a forest schools set of pin badges or certificates?

Mackayla Millar

This would be amazing! Where do I sign?

@FiDaisyG

Sounds like an excellent idea. Children will be prepared for far more than just secondary school!

@frdragonspouse

What if a parent doesn't want their child to be a scout? "No reason to opt out" but do they get the option?

Hundreds of SEND pupils forced into private schools

@kev_kevmurphy63

A real lack of planning and thinking by council officials with regard to out of area placements, think about families.

@huxleyhead

Why do these councils not open their own state special schools?! Utter waste of money! Strategic thinking?!!!

The difference a wealthy sponsor can make

... Sarah Thurlby, address supplied

Expecting schools to rely on the benevolence of rich sponsors (or contributions from well-heeled parents) widens and entrenches the divide between the privileged and underprivileged. Why should children in poorer areas where their schools don't have these connections be deprived of school trips, sports

competitions or other enrichment activities? It's the same thing that has led to private schools being able to offer superior facilities. All children should have access to excellent facilities and these sorts of enrichment activities without it being a matter of an accident of birth (as Michael Gove used to put it).

Schools must promote vocational courses

f Simon Very

I used to be a college teacher. It was no secret that schools in the college's area with sixth forms tried pretty hard to hang on to their progressing GCSE completers; they needed to for funding. If the funding model for institutions wasn't based on retention, but on whether learners got sent somewhere most appropriate for them, then there wouldn't have been inappropriate competition between college and school.

Charlie Geogheghan-Breen

Erm, the government downgraded vocational qualifications so schools cannot use them as a measurement of success. No wonder they are not interested

Desperate for a supply teacher? There's an app for that

@HoldHeadUpHigh

Interesting concept and I can see the advantages if the safeguarding is robust. Anything to save on agency fees.

@ajjolley

Major concerns over the amount of vetting being done; schools need to do lots of checks, in many cases defeating the object of an easy app. Also wonder how well this works in rural areas. There is a reason Uber doesn't do deepest Dorset; same issues would apply to supply Uber apps.

History column: Who started ASCL?

... Colin Richards, Cumbria

Was there unwitting sexism in the answer to who started ASCL? Very appropriately Frances Buss and Dorothea Beale are credited with founding the Association of Headmistresses but there is no mention of the Headmasters Association founded around the same time, and equally a forerunner to modern-day ASCL.

[Editor's note: It was about the same time. But the Association of Headmistresses was first, according to ASCL's own website. So no sexism, just chronology!]

Multi-faith assembly claim denied by Brent

REPLY OF THE WEEK

Rachel Brindle, address supplied



Why can't we just take the religion out of state schools completely (unless they are voluntary-aided or fee-paying) and let schools do their "worship lessons" in core RE? Should not assemblies be a fun gathering time for school instructions, imparting information between pupil/teacher/parent, and a short celebration of individual and school success? There is so much more to talk about and unite each school community than the divide of religion, eg, health and diet, scientific discovery, citizenship, preparation for a school performance or music event, the arts. Or is it because in Britain, religion is so entrenched in the fabric of our politics and society that we dare not change things?

REPLY OF THE WEEK RECEIVES A SCHOOLS WEEK MUG!



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PROFILE

FREDDIE WHITTAKER
@FCDWHITTAKER

**Geoff Barton, general secretary-designate,
Association of School and College Leaders**

Geoff Barton strides around his school with the pride of a parent whose child has won a prize for being the best in everything.

As he paces the corridors, talking about the debating team's successes, espousing the virtues of a Shanghai exchange programme and introducing pupils left, right, and centre, it is hard to imagine he will ever be ready to leave this school that he loves.

But Barton's work at King Edward VI School in Bury St Edmunds is almost done.

After 15 years, and following its transformation from a medium-sized upper secondary to a large secondary for pupils aged 11 upwards, the 54-year-old soon will begin a new life as the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).

Barton's landslide victory on an anti-establishment platform in the recent ASCL election, has prompted speculation about the future of the traditionally moderate union. But he insists those who expect him to take ASCL sharply to the left have got him wrong.

"I'm certainly not coming in to man the barricades for strike action," he says. "It would be pretty unthinkable for ASCL members also to be thinking that."

Barton understands and supports the "articulation of fury" by heads who are campaigning against school cuts in areas such as East Cheshire, West Sussex and Surrey, but he insists he has not been elected to "just sound off all the time".

"I don't think that'll get us anywhere. It might be cathartic for a few people for a few weeks, but largely they would feel a sense of disappointment because, ultimately, what's the difference between me doing that from here in Suffolk and being able to do it on a national platform?"

At the same time, he too has lost sleep over his own school's financial position, and says funding is the main issue facing the sector, followed closely by teacher recruitment and retention.

"I've had sleepless nights wondering about which members of staff we are going to have to make redundant; this is a time when a union that represents school leaders needs to really understand how policy plays out in offices like this."

As someone who didn't shy away from senior roles early in his career, it is hardly surprising that Barton has chosen to take on a new leadership challenge. His original ambition – to travel the country as a consultant on whole-school literacy – doesn't seem to suit him.

Born in Stafford in October 1962, he went to Walton Comprehensive School, where he admits being "not at all interested" and only managing to "drift into the sixth form".

However, sixth-form lessons on Shakespeare's *Henry V* with his English teacher Roy Samson set him on his current path.

"I'd never read any Shakespeare. I remember the complete incomprehension and sense of being out of my depth, and then watching a teacher who had the ability to make things simple, but not too simple, and to give clarity to a vocabulary that was so unfamiliar to me.

"I remember that I was genuinely mesmerised and thinking, 'I want to do that!'"

Samson encouraged the young Barton in his ambitions, and put him in front of a class of year 7s. He became his "all-encompassing" role model. The pair still speak.

"I did a degree in English (and linguistics, at Lancaster) and then a PGCE (at Leicester) – and it was because of Roy Samson. It wasn't that I just wanted to teach English, I wanted to teach English like he taught English, and I wanted to dress like him, walk like him and talk like him."

"I'M NOT COMING IN TO MAN THE BARRICADES FOR STRIKE ACTION"

Barton's first teaching job was at Garforth Comprehensive School in Leeds, where he met his wife Philippa and where he eventually became second to the head of English. He then moved to Huntington School in York, where he led the English department and was assistant head of the sixth form.

Following a five-year deputy headship at Suffolk's Thurston Community College, Barton joined King Edward VI as head in 2002.

He is an experienced leader, but the stewardship of a union representing school heads, business managers and college principals at a time when all of education struggles under the strain of funding cuts and widespread reform is no small task.

He admits there are areas he needs to learn more about – further education, for example – and says the voice of school business managers is likely to become more important as the academies programme continues.

Barton is used to speaking out – he's been highly critical of Ofsted's over-reliance on data and government policies on selection and forced academisation – but his new job will require pragmatism and a seat at the table opposite political figures he has railed against throughout his career.

But the battles over issues such as grammar schools will, he claims, be won "through a very clear argument and based on principles", and says that despite his "ranty man" side, he is someone who works through relationships and trust.

"It might just be that what Justine Greening, and people at Ofsted, and people at Ofqual and so on, realise, is that actually there's a lot of new kids on the block all of a sudden, and we all have a shared and vested interest in wanting to improve the system.

"We can do that without resorting to industrial action."

However, to achieve improvement, Barton says the government needs to take the pressure off, financially and in relation to curriculum reform.

He wants a moratorium on ministers' "constant tinkering", to allow school leaders to focus on quality and to enable Ofsted to improve the consistency of its inspections.

Ofsted comes up a lot during our interview – hardly surprising, given Barton's history with the watchdog.

When Hardwick Middle School, also in Bury St Edmunds, was slapped with an inadequate rating in 2014, just 13 weeks after King Edward VI took it on in a partnership agreement, Barton opted to go in fighting. He complained and, following a frustrating run through Ofsted's complaints procedure, lost.

Barton, who still claims Ofsted relied too heavily on data that "was not of our making", says he does not regret his decision to challenge the ruling, and he remains critical of the organisation and its former boss, Sir Michael Wilshaw.

He claims Wilshaw tried too hard to be "the nation's headteacher" and talked to leaders "as if we were the rather hapless members of his school staff".

No such stick for Ofsted's new head honcho. Barton publicly backed Amanda Spielman for the job, praising her track record in "managing large institutions and putting them right".

GEOFF

He is also a fan of the schools commissioner, Sir David Carter, and not just because of their shared love of Level 42 and *The West Wing*. He even says that he agrees with the schools minister Nick Gibb that "knowledge matters".

Outspoken he may be, but ASCL members gathering in Birmingham this weekend for the union's annual conference will hear little from their leader-in-waiting. He says he will spend his time at the sidelines, meeting members and staff in preparation for his first day in the job on April 18.

However, it is clear that he will be an active general secretary; one who is keen to spend as much time as possible leading his staff at the union's headquarters in Leicester, where he has bought a house and intends to be based.

Despite this, he admits Suffolk will always be home to him, his wife Philippa, who will continue to teach art at King Edward VI, and their two grown-up sons.

"It will be a very different lifestyle," he admits, "But we like the idea, and we're going to do something that will bring a new richness to what we do here."



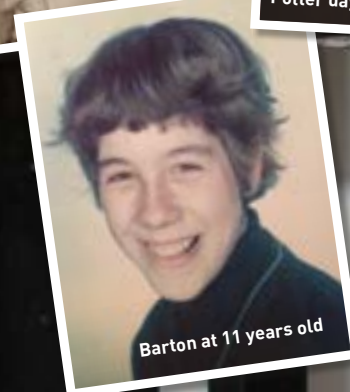
Barton in his office



Barton aged six months



King Edward VI sixth form's Harry Potter day, 2012



Barton at 11 years old

BARTON

CV

Education

1974-81 Walton Comprehensive School, Stafford

1981-84 Lancaster University, English and linguistics

1984-85 University of Leicester, PGCE

Employment

1985-90 Garforth Comprehensive School, Leeds, teacher, then IT Inset co-ordinator, then second in English

1990-97 Huntington School, York, head of English, assistant head of sixth form

1997- April 2002 Thurston Community College, Suffolk, deputy head

April 2002 – present King Edward VI School, Bury St Edmunds, headteacher

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What is your favourite book?

For all its flaws and irritations, Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

Who was your biggest inspiration for going into teaching?

Roy Samson, my English teacher when I was in the sixth form. He still visits and still inspires.

What is your favourite cuisine?

French. Not fancy, just great ingredients beautifully cooked

What is your favourite holiday destination?

Greek Islands, especially Crete

If you could go back to any era, where would you go?

Elizabethan England, provided I could have a 20th-century bathroom

OPINION



MEI LIM

Headteacher and Scout Leader,
Weyfield Primary Academy

Why we're spending our school budget on scouts

As anyone who works in a challenging school will know, when children's lives are consistently chaotic and their influences less than positive, they do not come to school ready to learn. They have neither the desire nor resilience to sit in a classroom and practise their times tables; they see no bearing on their life in the short or long term.

This is often the case at our school, whose leafy environs in Guildford, Surrey belie the challenging reality of our intake. The majority of pupils live on two neighbouring estates, one of which has 40 per cent workless households. The proportion of pupils classed as SEN, pupil premium and EAL is above average, mobility is high and attendance is poor. Even when parents wish to support their child's learning and expand their horizons, they do not always have the skills, knowledge or means to do so.

And that's where Scouting comes in.

The stories of improved confidence, self-esteem and leadership skills I heard during a talk last year on Scouting in schools made an overwhelming impression on me: this was exactly what our pupils needed. They needed an opportunity to learn in different ways, to have "everyday adventure" and to develop life skills. The presentation was on "learning by doing" at TKAT's Horizon Primary Academy, which had structured its timetable to incorporate Scouting on Friday afternoons. Although Scouting at Horizon was still relatively new, the positive impact on attendance, behaviour for learning, engagement and, consequently, attainment was already starting to emerge.

Following Horizon's lead, I proposed Scouting as a core part of our school development plan and am grateful that my governors and trust shared my enthusiasm – we all knew something radically different had to be tried if we were ever going to break the cycle of generational disadvantage. My deputy headteacher kick-started a lengthy process of meetings with the Scouts Association and Guildford West District, who have been incredibly supportive in making our dream a reality.

After hosting several taster sessions, we were finally able to officially launch 1st Weyfield as a registered Scouts Group last month, when over 90 pupils in years 4 and 5 chose to join. Watching the children make their promise in front of parents was genuinely moving; already, their sense of

pride was palpable. We've since appointed Sixers and Seconders in each Cub Pack, giving leadership opportunities to children who have shown potential to be excellent role models. One of their first responsibilities will be presenting at a local community youth fundraising event later this month.

Scouting at Weyfield is still in its trial phase. While it has been wonderful to see the children engaged in a range of activities on Friday afternoons, we remain cautiously optimistic about the tangible benefits. We are using several measures to track impact, such as a strengths and difficulties questionnaire as part of our Achievement for All programme, which all children completed in December and will re-visit in July. We will evaluate the outcomes carefully at the end of this year before deciding whether to extend the offer.

When children's lives are chaotic they do not come ready to learn

Long-term funding continues to be a priority: like most schools, we have been exercising austerity measures for the best part of three years and this is not set to change. We have reviewed and re-brokered all our service level agreements and made significant operational savings, channelling everything into enhancing the curriculum. If we can demonstrate impact, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil has the opportunity to be invested as a Scout and that means assuming all the costs.

My ultimate hope is that by participating in Scouting our children will be in a better place to learn, physically and emotionally. I also want our young people to feel empowered and connected as part of a global movement – and this is proving true for the school as a whole. The passion for Scouting from the local community and other Scout Groups has already led to new partnerships for Weyfield. We've had teachers applying for jobs because they used to be a Scout and I hope the opportunity to train as a Scout Leader will help retain existing staff. In short, the positive externalities may be immeasurable and, hopefully, life-changing.



CLAIRE DORER

Chief executive, National Association of
Independent Schools and
Non-Maintained Special Schools

How to make the best use of independent special schools

It is in everyone's interests to get SEND support right, says Claire Dorer. For many pupils that means a place in an independent special school

It's rare to see media coverage on special needs provision in non-maintained and independent special schools (NMISS) without cost being mentioned. Generally this is in relation to absolute costs and their supposed relationship to costs in the maintained sector.

In response, back in 2012, the National Association of Independent Schools and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NASS) commissioned accountancy firm Baker Tilly to explore comparative costs in different settings. The report concluded that if you compare like-for-like costs, including transport, therapies and short breaks, placements in NMISS for some children can be cheaper than equivalent local authority packages of support. For example, weekly boarding in a NMISS was found to be £22,000 a year cheaper than equivalent local authority packages of support.

This makes some sense when you consider that most NMISS were set up to meet mainly complex and low-incidence SEND, areas in which some schools struggle. Tribunals have consistently supported the argument that when we compare costs we must look at the cost to the whole public purse, not simply compare teaching and learning costs in a maintained school with the full fee in NMISS. On this basis, the cost differential between NMISS and local authority provision is rarely as extreme as it is believed to be.

In an attempt to move discussions about cost on a little, in 2012 NASS also carried out its first study on social return on investment. Essentially, we wanted to know whether meeting SEND effectively in childhood delivers economic benefits to the public purse in later life.

It does! Looking at eight schools, we identified public purse savings of £24.5 million over the lifetime of students from just one year group. Young people have better chances of leading independent lives, in work or in further study, when their education needs are met well. Their families experience less stress and ill health, and many find they are able to return to work.

While this argument won't apply to NMISS alone, it makes a powerful case why it is in everyone's interests to get SEND support right.

NASS is currently conducting a survey of parents with children in NMISS as part of our evidence-gathering for the Lenehan review. To date, 300 parents have responded. Of those, more than 70 per cent went through two or more schools before their child was placed in a NMISS, with 10 per cent going through four or more schools. Almost 40 per cent went through, or started, tribunal proceedings before getting their place. None of this paints a picture of local authorities making spur-of-the-moment decisions to place children in NMISS.

The cost differential is rarely as extreme as it is believed to be

The pressure on maintained special schools is significant and well documented. This is in part due to a population bulge and increasing numbers of children with SEND, but it's not the full story. In 12 years with NASS I have seen numerous strategies that have talked about how new provision, first through Building Schools for the Future and now through special free schools, would address local demand and reduce use of NMISS.

In some cases, new special school provision may be a valid solution, but unless we find ways of meeting SEND more effectively in mainstream, we won't stop an upwards "demand push" for more special schools and, when those schools also fill up, for more NMISS places.

If we are serious about there being a real "continuum of SEND provision", we have to think about how different types of school best contribute to the wider system. That might make a NMISS placement the best option for some, possibly as a short-term intervention before a return to lower intensity provision.

However, we under-use the expertise that we have in all types of special school to work to improve SEND provision in mainstream. This, I would argue, is where we should focus our energy. For too many children, by the time they secure a wanted and valued place in a NMISS they, and their families, have already been failed by the system too many times. If anything causes us outrage, it should be this.

This week the Treasury announced more funding for technical education, in particular "T-levels". But what are they? Funding specialist Gemma Gathercole explains

T-levels is the name given by the media to a planned overhaul of technical education. Between now and 2022, 15 new pathways will be developed in 15 sectors, areas in which substantial technical training is required for employment. These courses are also sometimes referred to as tech levels.

Are T-levels new?

No, the plans have been in place for some months, but there will now be an additional investment of £500 million by September 2022.

Can pupils study T-levels now?

No. These new routes are in development. The first "pathfinder" routes are planned for teaching in September 2019. The rest should be in place by September 2022.

What areas will T-levels cover?

Technical routes will be developed in 15 sector areas:

- Agriculture, environmental and animal care
- Business and administrative
- Catering and hospitality
- Childcare and education
- Construction
- Creative and design



GEMMA GATHERCOLE

Head of funding and assessment, Lsect

What are 'T-levels'?

- Digital
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Hair and beauty
- Health and science
- Legal, finance and accounting
- Protective services
- Sales, marketing and procurement
- Social care
- Transport and logistics

Will there be 15 qualifications to choose from?

No. There will be more than 15. There are 15 "sectors". Some are broad and cover a range of occupational areas, so it wouldn't be possible to develop a single qualification that would cover the whole area. For example, the "digital" route can be broken down into

three broad occupational areas (IT support and services; software and applications design and development; data and digital

“**The technical routes are about more than just qualifications**”

business services). However, the "creative and design" route, which covers occupations from furniture maker to journalist, may be split into more sub-sections.

How many qualifications will there be?

This hasn't been decided. The final decision will be informed by industry panels.

Are T-levels new qualifications?

Yes and no. New qualifications will be developed. But the announcement of 15 technical routes is about more than just qualifications. Employer-led panels will develop new "standards" that will underpin both the T-levels and apprenticeships.

So are T-levels new BTECs?

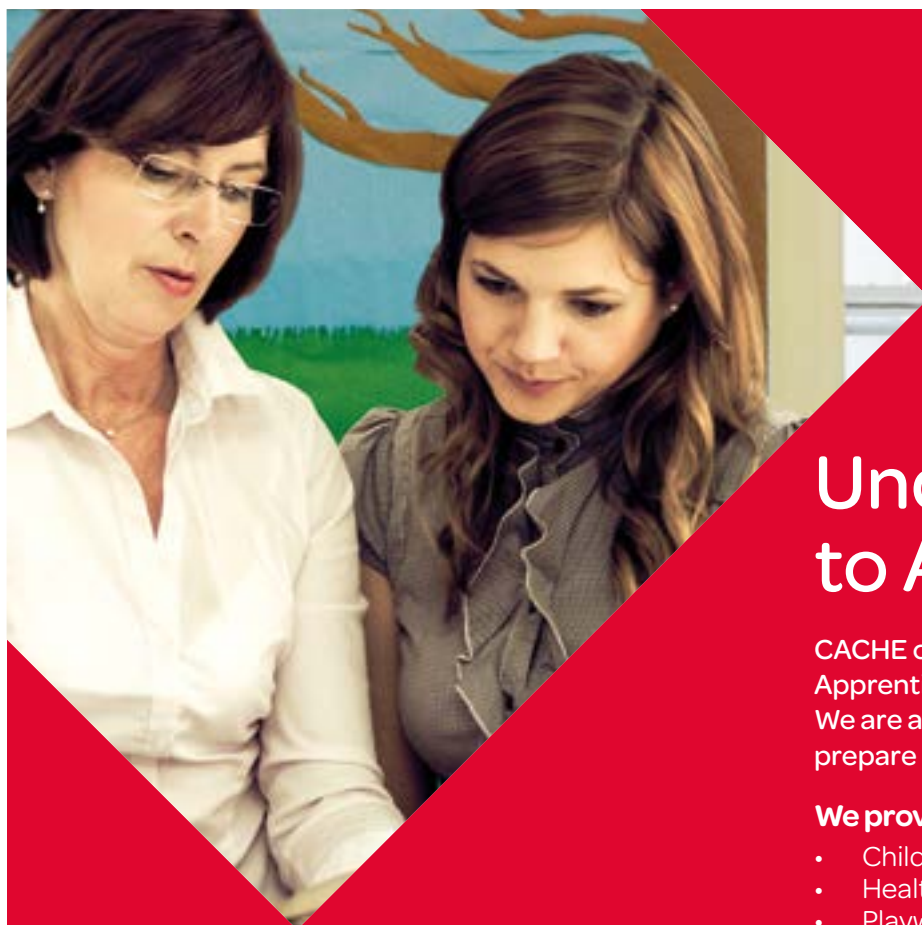
BTEC is a brand used for qualifications offered by Pearson and run alongside other existing vocational qualifications. Pearson, with other awarding organisations, may offer new T-levels, but there will be a tendering process to determine which organisations offer these new qualifications.

Can schools and sixth forms offer T-levels?

It's possible some technical routes can be offered in schools, but it's more likely they will be offered by colleges. Eleven of the 15 routes will be available as two-year college courses or as apprenticeships. Four are likely to be apprenticeship only: protective services; sales, marketing and procurement; social care; and transport and logistics.

Is this the same as the TechBac?

No. The TechBac is a specific product created by qualification provider City and Guilds for 14 to 19-year-olds that combines a City & Guilds technical qualification and workplace skills.



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REVIEWS

TOP BLOGS
OF THE WEEK

To view individual blogs visit
www.schoolsweek.co.uk/reviews



Our blog reviewer of the week is Emma Mattinson-Hardy, union organiser and former primary school teacher @emmaannhardy

We need to talk about the army of elephants

@rethinking_ed

James Mannion asks whether all the reforms we discuss are merely "rearranging the chairs on the Titanic". First impressions of Twitter appear to show strong entrenched differences in opinion, but there is a surprising amount that we all simply accept as educational truths.

Mannion challenges us to broaden our thinking. "The scope of current discourses around education appears to be broadly limited to sharing good practice, within the institutions and organisational structures of the system that generally pre-date our entry into the profession.

"These discourses take place within a set of assumptions about our education system which – as far as I can discern – have gone largely unexamined since the 1970s."

He lists the "unquestioned assumptions" about education such as: "We should educate children in batches according to chronological age... Some students need to fail exams in order for others to pass" and finally invites us to answer "If you could design an education system from the ground up, to what extent would it resemble the one we have?"

The glass ceiling in the classroom

@sylviahshelly

If we were to redesign education would we want a mixed system? This blogger presents a persuasive argument for single-sex education.

"No one privileged the boys' football team over the girls' one – there were no boys. No one told me I couldn't take physics because the class was already full of boys – there

were no boys. Uptake for STEM subjects was strong. Being vocal was second nature to most of these pupils."

I believe that gender stereotypes have become more entrenched in the past decade – look at gendered yogurts and pink Duplo!

"While girls may get the better grades on the whole, they are not leaving school as confident as their male counterparts and this lack of confidence is undoubtedly part of the women in the workplace problem."

This blog offers practical solutions for dealing with the "classroom glass ceiling" and argues that "the expectations and labels they have of themselves [pupils] are shaped by the way we treat them in schools."

Statutory relationships (and sex) education. Repeat – statutory!

@3Diassociates

Perhaps the only thing we can agree on is that all children need relationships (and sex) education (SRE). I remember feeling extremely shocked when a teacher once told me that when he was asked by parents, "at what age should I get my child a smartphone?" his response was, "when you're happy for them to view porn".

It is pleasing that SRE was a cross political party amendment and signifies an acceptance that whether we like it or not, the world has changed.

This blog argues that to do SRE well, "it also requires a huge shift in thinking – a reinvention of the purpose of education that goes beyond academic attainment or preparing children for adult life to a new realm of inclusive learning fit for the 21st century." It provides numerous links to resources and guides that educators will find useful.

"We are thankful that sense has finally prevailed and the value of nurturing good relationships and managing feelings will be taking its rightful place in the national curriculum."

School leadership and resisting performativity

@debsnet

How radical would your school system be if it was redesigned from scratch? Dr Deborah Netolicky says "'values schizophrenia' is experienced by educators whereby they sacrifice their commitment, judgement and authenticity for [...] performance." How many times have you heard teachers say they have to play the game? Deborah states, "It can be daring and dangerous to advocate for an education that does more than pander to market perception, external measures and competitive league tables [...] We can choose resistance to performative pressures, although not without a price."

A Sociology of Special and Inclusive Education

By Sally Tomlinson

Publisher Routledge

Reviewed by Philip Garner,
professor of education,
University of Northampton



I first encountered Sally Tomlinson's work in the mid-1980s as a masters student. I recall the immediate impact that her writing had on me all those years ago – even as an already experienced classroom teacher, working with what were still called "disruptive pupils".

Her books of around that time, including *A Sociology of Special Education* (1982) and *Special Education and Social Interests* (1984, co-edited with Len Barton) provided me with an elegant, insightful – if somewhat depressing – contextual backdrop to my work: at the sharp end of attempting to meet the exceptional needs of young people largely jettisoned by the system. The lucidity of her arguments in connecting recent developments in special education during the 1980s – the continued preoccupation with categorisation and classification to maintain order and control – came as a welcome insight to my own sense (and that of many others) that these approaches denied the rights of significant numbers of the school-age population.

It has become increasingly unfashionable for practitioners to draw on academic writing, a depressing state that has been fuelled by those who may have the least to gain from an informed and critically reflective teaching profession. The former education secretary Michael Gove was the most recent of those politicians who have attempted Trumpian bluster in their denials that there could be an alternative script to that posited by education's free-market elitists, or that thinkers or "experts" such as Tomlinson are integral to pushing the boundaries of policy and practice.

A Sociology of Special and Inclusive Education is an essential item of kit, however. It gives insights into the beliefs and structures that form the contested ground of inclusive provision in contemporary schools. Like it or not, by no means all schools are oriented towards an "education for all" – often because of an inability and

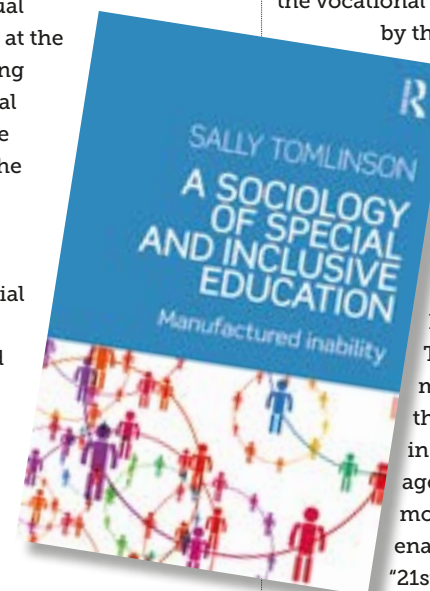
lack of vision to define operational measures to ensure access to curriculum and social opportunities for those of difference. As Tomlinson points out: "When governments and their advisers claim they want to create 'world class education systems' the question must be, whose world would that be for?"

Tomlinson, as in her earlier defining works, insists on the convergence of disability, race and social class as an explanation for the often-marginalised experience of many children in our schools. *A Sociology of Special and Inclusive Education* provides a contemporary mapping of this territory. It serves a useful purpose in reinforcing a (perhaps cynical) view that, despite the 30 or more years of policy effort, a regrettable status quo remains in education. Interrogating the abiding tensions highlighted in the book – old chestnuts such as fixed intelligence, the "professionalisation" of special needs and the vocational nexus encountered post-16

by those with disabilities – is a vital part of any teacher's armoury, equipping us with a resilience grown by developing a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by practitioners.

That said, the book has some shortcomings. There is an absence of any meaningful consideration of the emergence of "leadership" in moving the inclusion agenda forward, and of a more optimistic and enabling definition for "21st-century inclusion". Nor does she fully unpack the nuances and implications of academisation. More comprehensive scrutiny of these would have added further value.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Tomlinson continues to enhance our insights; pretty much the same as she has done for a generation of informed and passionate teachers. It will stimulate frustration, even anger, amongst its readers, irrespective of their persuasion. However, it should be added to those resources that can provoke reflection on what we do in schools, with a view to at last finding positive, less exclusive ways forward.



Next week:

The Power of Different:
The Link Between Disorder
and Genius

By Gail Saltz | Reviewed by
Sarah Wild

Children growing up in poorer families are less likely to get finance jobs because they don't "present" themselves well enough at interviews. That's the gist of a survey released this week by The Sutton Trust, a charity that aims to encourage social mobility.

A press release says the survey quantifies the "brown shoe effect" – that is, the likelihood that if you wear the wrong sort of shoes to a job interview it can count against you.

It doesn't actually show that. It was a survey of 1,008 "senior decision-makers", of which only 131 were senior people in finance, and we don't have their views separated out from the others. But it does show that 82 per cent of surveyed decision-makers felt that unprofessional presentation limited people from a disadvantaged background from getting a job.

This is not a new problem. But you might question if it is merely about shoes. Go back to the 1960s and the groundbreaking work of Basil Bernstein, who looked carefully at the differences in language use between "lower working class" and "middle-class" children.

Bernstein noticed that children from poorer families tended to speak in a "restricted" code: shorter sentences, simple and frequent conjunctions (such as "and" or "then"), and used lots of phrases such as "isn't that right" or "you know what I mean" to get responses from other people.

Children from "middle-class" families

THE PAST WILL MAKE YOU SMARTER



THE BROWN SHOE EFFECT

LAURA MCINERNEY

used more grammatically coherent sentence structures, lots of words that help to specify what is being talked about, and much more use of "I".

He theorised that the richer verbal language enabled a greater ability to make your way through education and – I would expect – makes you much better in an interview where you are expected to coherently explain precisely why you (I) would be better for a job.

In his chapter in the 1967

book *Linking Home and School*, Bernstein gives a clear reason as to why he thinks there is a difference. It's in the language children hear. For example, imagine a child on a parent's lap, sitting on the bus.

Parent Hold on tight

Child Why?

Parent You'll fall

Child Why?

Parent I told you to hold tight didn't it?

Or

Parent Hold on tightly, darling

Child Why?

Parent If you don't you will be thrown forward and then you



will fall.

Child Why?

Parent Because if the bus suddenly stops you'll jerk forward.

Child Why?

Parent Hold tightly and don't make such a fuss.

In the first example, the child's curiosity is blunted. Language is only used to give instruction and asking questions is seen as a challenge to authority.

In the second, the child is exposed to connection and consequence. Language is a way to explain and direct.

This is a very basic example of Bernstein's work, which has influenced generations of sociologists. Unfortunately, much of it has become so complicated that it is difficult for teachers to understand what to do with it.

But Bernstein gives two very clear ways that he believes the issue could be overcome.

First, that the "lower the status" of the pupil (presumably, he meant the less good their verbal skills), then the smaller the class they should be in at school. Teacher relationships matter for improvement.

Second, knowing about these differences can open our eyes to these issues and develop programmes, such as the Oracy Project at School 21 in east London, which can help pupils to improve their language skills.

History has done the hard work for us in diagnosing the problem. It's up to us to figure out how to overcome it.



A week in Westminster

Your regular guide to what's going on in central government

THURSDAY:

One consequence of the government scrapping levels in primary assessments in favour of a scaled score approach is that funding given to secondary schools based on pupils' levels no longer makes sense. Hence, the Year 7 catch-up fund, given to pupils who achieved below a level four, was a bit tricky for the Department for Education (DfE) to work out this year.

But, no fear! Today the department released the funding allocations which, it turns out, were just based on last year's, and gave schools a bit more or less if they had more or fewer pupils. This means any school with a substantial change in its pupil demographics could be quids in – or out. But why worry about such practical things, and how long will this ruse continue? We look forward to keeping an eye on it...

FRIDAY:

An insignificant spreadsheet of DfE expenditure today revealed that the College

of Teaching has been given £111,000 to develop three online applications: a website, a membership platform, and a journal/research platform. Last we checked, you could hire a web developer to work full-time for £35,000 a year, so we hope they're getting value for money for that contract.

Four years after then childcare minister Liz Truss first announced a revolution in early years education, ministers finally raised the white flag. Back in 2013, the Tory MP changed the rules so anyone wishing to teach in early years had to have GCSEs in English and maths. She was told, repeatedly, at the time, that this would cause problems and not enough people would be eligible to enter the workforce. But she didn't listen.

On Friday, Caroline Dinenage, the current minister for early years, at last reversed the decision. Apparently the entire sector was correct all along, and had, you guessed it, struggled to fill its vacancies. Hence, from now, anyone wishing to teach the early years can do so as long as they have any qualification at level two in English and

maths, including functional skills.

MONDAY:

Late on Monday afternoon, Week in Westminster learned that the new regional schools commissioner is to be John Edwards, who has now officially been christened by this column as "Jedward".

Jedward has never been a headteacher, instead joining the commissioner team from Manchester City Council where he is a director of education. He isn't the first of his breed to join from a local authority background, though. Tim Coulson, about whom Week in Westminster often hears pretty positive things, also came from an LA background. This is interesting, because we were told the whole point of commissioners was that council people couldn't be trusted to run things...

TUESDAY:

The prime minister today wrote a piece entitled "Why I'm giving education a huge

boost". We were dismayed to discover she didn't mean that we were all getting an enormous chocolate bar, but instead she would hand out a small amount of money for more schools, including grammars. Did she misspell "kicking" as "huge boost"?

Elsewhere, Ofsted got its nerd on and released the first ever study into the reliability of its Ofsted inspectors. Paragraph 84 of the report reveals how several inspectors did not "enjoy" the process of being moderated as they found such observation of their practice to be "professionally uncomfortable". Inspectors don't like being inspected? Who would have guessed!

WEDNESDAY:

Budget. Budget. Budget. (See pages 2, 3 and 4).

CHECK OUT @SCHOOLSWEKLIVE FOR LIVE TWEETS OF WESTMINSTER EVENTS

School Bulletin *with Sam King*

If you have a story you'd like to see featured in the school bulletin, email samantha.king@schoolsweek.co.uk



Prince William launches national scheme

FEATURED

Prince William has launched a new awards programme that aims to harness the skills and experience of former Services personnel to build resilience in schoolchildren.

To mark the launch he visited Llanfoist Fawr primary school in Monmouthshire – one of the first to pilot the SkillForce Prince William Award programme – where he was joined by staff and pupils from Bishopstone primary school in Swindon.

The two schools have been trialling the programme since the beginning of the academic year as part of a year-long pilot involving more than 1,000 pupils in 37 primary and secondary schools.

During his visit the prince completed a construction challenge with pupils, making a free-standing tower from marshmallows and straws within a ten-minute limit.

He also participated in a ball-based teamwork challenge and donned a blindfold to take part in a trust exercise.

Aiming to test teamwork, resilience and determination, the tasks are a sample of the activities that will be included in the scheme, which combine classroom-based and outdoor activities.

The programme ties in activities with personal development, working, community, relationships and the environment, with three award levels, including: pioneer (minimum age 6),



Prince William dons a blindfold during a trust exercise



Building with marshmallows and straws



Taking part in a teamwork challenge

explorer (minimum age 8) and trailblazer (minimum age 12).

"Schools need to prepare children to thrive in a rapidly changing world, and educate them on how they relate to themselves, others and their communities," says Bishopstone's head Emma Lindsay.

"The programme teaches them key skills

that, once instilled, will remain with them for life from first aid to in-depth problem-solving."

The programme, created with education charity SkillForce and organisations such as the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, is due to start in schools from September.

It will be delivered predominantly by former Services personnel working as instructors.



EDCENTRAL NOW FREE FOR TEACHERS

EdCentral, the website that allows education professionals to collaborate, exchange ideas and access industry news, is now free for teachers.

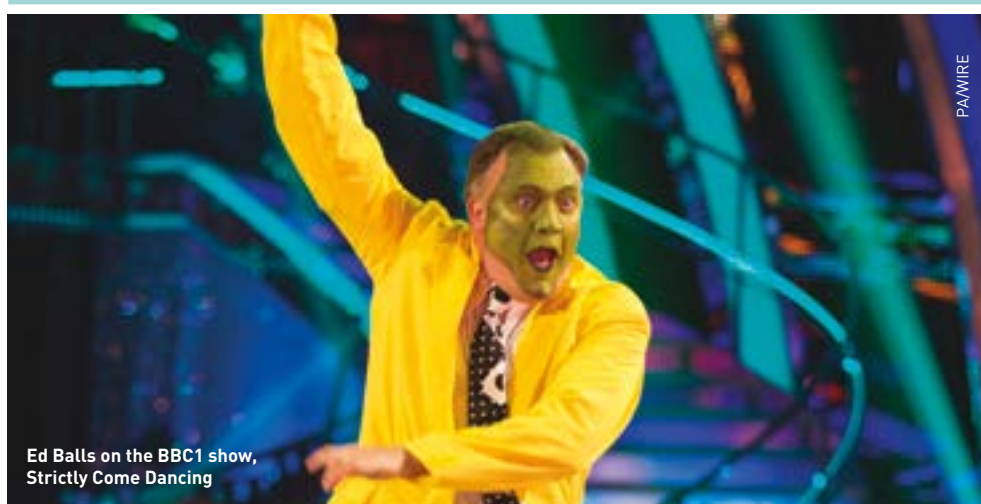
It was previously available only on subscription.

Free access is granted to trainees, academics and people working in schools and colleges, to help education research, but school governors still have to pay £4.99 a month.

Speaking of the decision to make the resource free, the platform's founder Louise Holmes said: "Rather than teachers having to trawl around to try and find information, it's all in one place on EdCentral, so I thought we should open it up. It will save teachers time ... they're time pressured enough."

Would-be users need to have a personal school-related or academic-related email address, or a generic one for their organisation. "We found that some commercial organisations try to sneak in and get a free subscription," Holmes said.

To access the resource, visit edcentral.uk



Ed Balls on the BBC1 show, Strictly Come Dancing

Balls joins literacy award judges

Ed Balls has joined the judging panel for the Wicked young writer awards that recognise the creative talent of 5 to 25-year-olds.

The awards – established by the long-running musical *Wicked* and backed by the National Literacy Awards – are now in their seventh year.

Balls, the former shadow education secretary, joins children's author Cressida Cowell, performance poet and writer Laura Dockrill, and ITV arts editor Nina Nannar.

This year the awards will again feature the For Good category for non-fiction, which encourages applicants to write essays or articles that recognise the positive impact that people can have on each other and the

community.

Balls, who is a long-time fan of *Wicked*, and recently showed off his own rhythmic abilities as *The Mask* on BBC's *Strictly Come Dancing* says: "I've seen the production seven times and I'm always inspired by the message it shares with its audiences.

"Raising literacy levels and encouraging young people to express themselves through creative writing is an important mission that this award helps to champion. Everyone has a story to tell, and I can't wait to read what young people across the UK have to share."

The deadline for applications is March 27.

For details, visit WickedYoungWriterAwards.com



Chef John Whittle with Year 7 students at Thistley Hough academy with John Whittle

Finding the right ingredients

A local chef has been delivering a free crash course in cooking and nutrition to pupils at a Staffordshire school as part of a nationwide healthy eating initiative.

John Whittle shares his skills with Thistley Hough academy pupils through the national Chefs Adopt a School Scheme.

Visiting during food studies sessions, Whittle – executive chef at Staffordshire university – has been teaching the pupils all aspects of catering, from preparing food to serving skills.

The scheme, introduced by the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, focuses on

developing knowledge of healthy eating, nutrition, advanced practical cookery and culinary careers.

"Teaching children about the food they eat and how to cook it is essential so that they can make the right food choices," Whittle says. "It is an essential life skill that can impact the rest of their lives.

"It also has a knock-on effect, as they then share that knowledge with parents and friends, ultimately improving the health of families throughout the region."

For more information, visit chefsadoptaschool.org.uk

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

Ofsted's former chief inspector **Sir Michael Wilshaw** has joined the board of trustees at the Education Policy Institute, an independent research organisation.

Reflecting on his time at Ofsted during a speech at the institute last year, he described his tenure as "a tumultuous five years – occasionally turbulent, sometimes exhilarating but never, ever dull".

He began his teacher training at 18 before his first job at a school in Dock Head, south London.

David Laws, executive chairman of EPI, said of Wilshaw's appointment: "He comes with decades of experience as a successful teacher and as chief inspector. "His contribution, along with that of our other trustees, will support the EPI in its mission to improve education policy through independent, data-driven analysis and research."

Jarlath O'Brien has been appointed director for schools at the Eden Academy Trust.

The trust, which has five schools across west London, specialises in educating children with learning difficulties,



Michael Wilshaw



Jarlath O'Brien



Catherine Anwar

including those with autism and physical or sensory needs.

The former headteacher of Carwarden House school in Surrey will now be responsible for Eden's school improvement services, safeguarding and family services and general oversight of four of its schools.

He has previously worked in comprehensive, independent and special schools and is the author of *Don't Send*

Him In Tomorrow, which evaluates the outcomes of SEND pupils in mainstream schools.

O'Brien says that he is excited to be taking up a new challenge. "Eden shares my focus on doing everything we can to improve the life chances of children with special educational needs and I look

forward to joining the team."

Catherine Anwar is the new chief executive of the Ninestiles Academy Trust, a group of seven schools across Birmingham and neighbouring Solihull.

In her previous role as a senior Ofsted inspector she led focused reviews of multi-academy trusts and inspections of complex academies and free schools.

Before her three years at the inspectorate, she spent eight years as head of Calthorpe Park school in Hampshire.

Anwar says that in Ninestiles she will play a pivotal role in steering the future direction of the trust and its schools.

"The trust is facing an exciting new chapter with plans in place which will see it merge with The Sixth Form College Solihull, creating the first multi-academy trust of its kind in the UK.

"I look forward to helping to navigate the trust on its journey and directing its ambitious plans to expand and prosper."

She takes up her new role on May 1.

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your school, local authority or organisation please let us know by emailing news@schoolsweek.co.uk

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SCHOOLS WEEK Sudoku challenge

8				6	2	4	
			2	7		1	3
	3			1			
		1				5	
	9	6	3		2	4	8
	1			8			
			2			9	
6	5		7	8			
	8	7	4				2

Difficulty:
EASY

		6	1	5			8
	5	1			6		3
	7	8	4	2			
7							8
		3		6		4	
	9						7
				3	1	8	2
	3		6			1	5
8				4	5	3	

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Solutions:
Next week

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Last Week's solutions

1	8	4	2	9	3	5	6	7
5	3	2	6	8	7	1	4	9
7	9	6	4	5	1	3	8	2
2	6	3	8	1	4	7	9	5
4	1	5	3	7	9	6	2	8
9	7	8	5	2	6	4	3	1
8	4	1	7	6	2	9	5	3
6	2	7	9	3	5	8	1	4
3	5	9	1	4	8	2	7	6

Difficulty:
EASY

5	7	1	6	9	3	2	4	8
9	3	6	2	8	4	1	7	5
8	4	2	5	1	7	6	3	9
7	8	9	3	2	5	4	6	1
2	6	5	1	4	9	7	8	3
3	1	4	7	6	8	5	9	2
1	5	3	9	7	6	8	2	4
4	9	7	8	5	2	3	1	6
6	2	8	4	3	1	9	5	7

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Spot the difference to WIN a Schools Week mug



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins a mug. Tweet a picture of your completed spot the difference using @schoolsweek in the tweet.