

## In the News (4 July 2016)

**Featured news: Ofsted figures suggests record numbers of pupils attending good or outstanding schools, school population continues to increase, proportion of unqualified teachers rises, calls for the government to remove asbestos from all schools following another death, concerns over Brexit delays affecting funding consultations and teacher pay and 'no difference' between maintained and academy status for KS2 attainment levels**

[According to Ofsted figures released last week, record numbers of pupils \(1.4 million\) are attending either good or outstanding schools \(29 June 2016\). The BBC is also reporting on the figures.](#)

[According to figures from the DfE, the school population has increased by 121,000 since last year, with 470,000 more pupils in the school system compared to 2009 \(BBC News, 28 June 2016\).](#)

[Analysis of school workforce figures carried out by TES suggests there are overall more teachers in the system and a reduction in vacancies, however the proportion of unqualified teachers has risen \(from 4.5% to 4.9% between 2014 to 2015\), that more are leaving the profession than are joining, and the ratios of pupils to teachers are higher in nursery and secondary schools compared with the previous year, and also with 2011 figures \(30 June 2016\).](#)

[Calls for the government to remove asbestos from all schools and colleges have been stepped up following the death of a teacher \(The TES, 1 July 2016\).](#) On Sunday, Sue Stephens, who was a primary school teacher in Buckinghamshire for almost 30 years, died of the asbestos-related cancer mesothelioma.

[There is considerable concern that the delay in announcing the second round of National Funding Formula consultations due to Brexit will cause overall delays to fairer funding models and pay rises for teachers \(The TES, 30 June 2016\).](#)

[Research by the NFER suggests there is no difference between academies and maintained schools in attainment at key stage 2 \(The TES, 28 June 2016\).](#) At GCSE, the proportion of academy pupils achieving five or more A\*-C grades, including English and maths, was higher than in maintained schools.

## School policies and structures

[The Durand Academy Trust \(DAT\) in South London has been issued with a "pre-termination warning notice", following a series of similar cautions about the way the trust is run \(The TES, 5 July 2016\).](#) The Trust was opened by Sir Greg Martin, who has received a £400,000 salary made up of basic salary, pension contributions and from the leisure centre he still operates on the site (he retired last August).

[Christine Quinn, CEO and Executive Principal at Ninestiles Academy Trust, will take over from Pank Patel as Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands on 3 October 2016 \(DfE, 29 June 2016\).](#)

[Following the DfE approval of the closure of Merseyside borough's only sixth form, the area will have no A-level provision \(BBC News, 30 June 2016\).](#) The DfE have pledged to have another A-level plan in place by 2017.

[The Isle of Wight Council has been told that it can challenge the High Court decision which threw out the case of a father, Jon Platt, taking his daughter on a week-long term holiday, meaning he 'had no case to answer' and no fine to pay \(The TES, 30 June 2016\).](#) The ruling caused the government to announce that it would consider making alterations to the law over absences, which comes under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

[A London primary school is currently involved in a disagreement with an education charity that funds fee-paying schools over a strip of grassy playground on which the charity wants to build almshouses for the elderly \(The Guardian, 3 July 2016\).](#)

[According to the Guardian report on the school census data, the proportion of children in England getting free school meals has fallen to its lowest level for 15 years \(14.5% of pupils in maintained primaries receive free school meals\) \(29 June 2016\).](#) The figures exclude pupils receiving lunches through the universal infant free school meal programme, counting only those eligible based on household income or benefits. Some suggest the universal infant FSM provision introduced in 2014 removed the incentive for parents to sign up for FSM.

#### Curriculum, standards and testing

[The Design and Technology Association has said that 'Uncertainties' around teachers' career prospects and the status of the subject in schools have led to shortages of the subject's teachers \(The TES, 4 July 2016\).](#) The DTA claim that the lack of D&T teaching in the EBacc was partly to blame where there is a particular lack of teachers ready to teach the subject from September 2016.

[Ofsted's Chief Inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw has said that too many children and young people are not getting the service they deserve and that it is unacceptable that around three quarters of children's services are inadequate or require improvement \(BBC News, 28 June 2016\).](#)

[A college has been ordered to pay £5,000 to a former student who claimed that a certificate for a course she completed was issued a year late \(BBC News, 4 July 2016\).](#) Monika Maldrik says she finished all the assignments for a Higher National Diploma in health and social care management at ABI College, West London in May 2015. Ms Maldrik, says she has so far been unable to apply for better jobs because of the delay in issuing the certificate.

[Last week, MPs heard from the Amanda Spielman during a pre-appointment meeting for the post of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector from October 2016.](#) Ms Spielman was asked a variety of questions, including on her background in the academies system, probing on her viewpoints of structures and performance. One of her responses reflected the fact that she does not believe academisation is the single correct model for schools and that focus should instead be on what happens in the classroom. [The BBC is also reporting the story in relation to the questioning over Ms Spielman's lack of teaching and social care experience.](#)

[Russell Hobby, general secretary of the NAHT union, has said a major overhaul of England's exam system that was designed to raise standards risks holding back teaching and learning \(The TES, 30 June 2016\).](#)

[Today Education Secretary Nicky Morgan has issued a statement on Sats test results saying that any potentially lower grades this time are due to the tests being tougher and so should not be compared to previous years \(BBC News, 4 July 2016\).](#)

[The Scottish Conservative Party has said that the value of testing pupils at age 5 is 'negligible' \(The TES, 4 July 2016\).](#)

[Ofqual has announced plans for a major investigation into GCSE and A-level marking errors \(The TES, 30 June 2016\).](#) The investigation is not specifically linked to the exams taken this summer.

[Mastery of maths and also phonics are expected to be a feature of the new initial teaching training programme which will be published over the next few weeks \(The TES, 1 July 2016\).](#)

### Teaching and learning

[The Schools minister Nick Gibb told the House of Commons that the 'free market' would ensure teachers are paid high salaries despite schools facing significant strains on their budgets \(The TES, 4 July 2016\).](#)

[Education Secretary Nicky Morgan has written to the Head of NUT Kevin Courtney outlining concerns about the teacher's strike \(4 July 2016\). Chair of the Junior Doctors committee has lent his support to the teachers strike.](#)

[A new blueprint of education in Scotland is seeking to reduce workload and increase school autonomy \(The TES, 29 June 2016\).](#)

### EU and continuing political party changes

[The DfE released a statement on their website in relation to the EU referendum result, and its continued commitment to providing a world-class education to all children \(1 July 2016\).](#) The statement also reiterates the legal position on all schools having a behaviour policy containing measures on tackling bullying.

[Labour MP Angela Rayner has been appointed shadow education secretary \(The TES, 1 July 2016\).](#) Ms Rayner, who is MP for Ashton-under-Lyne in Tameside, Greater Manchester, was the third person to hold the post within a week since last week.

### **Government guidance, consultations and announcements**

[The DfE has published guidance on what academies, free schools and 16-19 colleges should publish on their website \(30 June 2016\).](#)

[The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills \(BIS\) has published policy on how BIS Prevent advisors will monitor compliance with the Prevent counter-terrorism Duty in non-publicly funded and unregulated further education providers \(30 June 2016\).](#)

[The EFA has published the Pupil Premium allocations for 2016-17, with first quarter payments to academies on 6 July 2016 \(30 June 2016\).](#)

[The EFA has also published provisional UIFSM allocations for 2016-17 \(30 June 2016\).](#)

[The EFA has published the Academies Financial Handbook 2016 setting out the financial management, control and reporting requirements for all academies \(1 July 2016\).](#)

[The DfE has published guidance on handling staff strikes in schools which outlines how to keep schools open and the law on trade disputes and picketing \(1 July 2016\).](#)

[The statutory guidance on schools causing concern has been updated to include information on the DfE intervention powers in pupil referral units judged inadequate by Ofsted \(27 June 2016\).](#) From 27 June 2016, the Secretary of State has had a duty to make an academy order in respect of a PRU that has been judged inadequate (requires significant improvement or special measures) by Ofsted, requiring it to become an alternative provision (AP) academy. This duty will apply to PRUs judged inadequate prior to 27 June 2016, in addition to PRUs that are judged inadequate subsequently. There are also other details in the document regarding the role of RSCs and how parents are kept informed.