



Department  
for Education

# **Educational Excellence Everywhere**

**March 2016**



# **Educational Excellence Everywhere**

**Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for Education  
by Command of Her Majesty**

**March 2016**



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## Foreword by the Secretary of State for Education



Education has the power to transform lives and, for me, is a matter of social justice – extending opportunity to every child, wherever they live and whatever their background. Good schools and a well-educated population make our country stronger, fairer, wealthier and more secure, and higher standards in the classroom mean better life chances for everyone. Investing in our education system is an investment in the future of our nation.

In 2010, we inherited an education system where 1 in 3 young people left primary school unable to read, write and add up properly; where the number of young people studying core academic subjects had halved in 13 years. Far too many schools were failing, and far too many children were left out or left behind. Recent international assessments, comparing the performance of our young people in 2011/2012 with their international peers, have shown that our education standards have remained static, at best, whilst other countries have moved ahead.

Over the course of the last Parliament we put in place bold reforms to drive up standards in schools. We tackled grade inflation and restored the integrity of our qualifications, introduced a new, more ambitious national curriculum, raised the bar for entry to the teaching profession, and gave more freedom and autonomy to headteachers and leaders through the academies and free schools programme.

Thanks to the hard work of thousands of teachers, headteachers and governors, huge progress was made and schools today are better than ever before. However, there still remain too many pockets of educational underperformance – areas where too many young people miss out on the chance to benefit from the best possible education. This is deeply unfair.

So this white paper sets out our plans for the next five years, building on and extending our reforms to achieve educational excellence everywhere. Where great schools, great leaders and great teachers exist, we will let them do what they do best – helping every child to achieve their full potential. Where they do not, we will step in to build capacity, raise standards and provide confidence for parents and children. We will put children and parents first. We will set high expectations for every child, ensuring that there are no forgotten groups or areas and we will focus on outcomes.

All the policies in this white paper follow that approach. To make sure that our plans are consistent and coherent, we have followed five guiding principles, as set out in our departmental strategy overview at Annex A.

We believe in supported autonomy: aligning funding, control, responsibility and accountability in one place, as close to the front line as possible, and ensuring that institutions can collaborate and access the support they need to set them up for success. And we will work to build a system which is responsive to need and performance, ensuring that institutions respond to changing needs. Autonomy will be both earned and lost, with our most successful leaders extending their influence, and weaker ones doing the opposite.

To put these principles into practice, we will move to a system where every school is an academy. And to harness the opportunity that greater autonomy provides, we will do more to ensure the profession has the tools it needs to succeed: improving teacher training and qualifications and ensuring a strong, diverse pipeline of leaders. In particular, we will place a sharp new focus on areas of the country where standards are unacceptably low and where chronic underperformance is compounded by a lack of capacity to improve.

It's an ambitious programme, and an exciting one. But the prize of securing educational excellence everywhere means it is the right thing to do. I hope that teachers, leaders, governors and parents will join us in working to improve standards across the country and will make the most of the opportunities on offer.

Children only get one chance at education and every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential. As a parent, I know only too well that childhood is short, and when it comes to a child's education, there's no time to waste. Access to a great education is not a luxury but a right for everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicky Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicky Morgan MP

Secretary of State for Education

# Chapter 1: Our vision for educational excellence everywhere

1.1. Education is at the heart of this government's agenda.

1.2. An excellent education unlocks opportunity, helping children from all backgrounds to shape their own destiny. Wherever they live and whatever their background, ability or needs, every child and young person in this country deserves a world class education that allows them to reach their full potential and prepares them to succeed in adult life in modern Britain.

1.3. Education is the hallmark of a civilised society, the engine of social justice and economic growth, the foundation of our culture and the best investment we can make in the future of our country. The better educated our society, the fairer, more cohesive, productive and innovative it can be. This is vital to Britain's position in the 21st century. Our education system must compete with those around the world – because while we improve, so do they.

## Significant progress has been made

1.4. In 2010, the English education system faced significant challenges. One in three children left primary school without the firm grounding in the basics that they would need to succeed at secondary school. Exam grade inflation was rife, and too many young people studied qualifications that were not valued by employers or universities. Too many of the country's best teachers and school leaders felt constrained by unnecessary red tape, unable to do what they knew was right. Too many schools were underperforming – especially in the poorest communities.

1.5. As a result of our ambitious reforms over the last Parliament, and the hard work of teachers and leaders, English schools are now better than ever before:

- a. Record numbers of children are now taught in Good or Outstanding schools, 1.4 million more pupils than in 2010
- b. Since the introduction of the phonics reading check in 2012, 120,000 more children are now on track to become excellent readers
- c. Four out of five pupils now achieve the expected standard or higher in reading, writing and maths at the end of primary school, and one in four pupils exceed the expected standard – up from just one in five in 2012
- d. The proportion of pupils taking core academic subjects at GCSE has risen by 78%
- e. A record 18% of new teachers who started training in 2015 have a first class degree, and 81% of teachers and senior leaders say behaviour in their schools is good or very good



- f. Persistent absence from school is down by 40% since 2010/11, and the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training is the lowest ever

1.6. Many of these gains have been made possible by a fundamental shift in the school system. More of the best school leaders are running their schools without interference. Schools can now train their own teachers, and communities can set up their own schools. Multi-academy trusts (MATs) and teaching school alliances have spread collaboration across the country, with the best school leaders providing challenge and support for underperforming schools. The school-led system is becoming a reality. And more importantly, it is delivering results.

## **But this progress isn't felt everywhere**

1.7. Five years on, our schools system still has further to go. We need to extend and embed the last Parliament's reforms so that pupils and families across the country benefit; and we must raise our game again to reflect higher expectations from employers and universities, and to keep up with other leading countries around the world. Other education systems – from Shanghai and Singapore to Poland and Germany – are improving even faster than we are.

1.8. Although four out of five children now achieve the expected standards at primary school, one in five still does not, and around two in five young people leave secondary school without five or more A\*-C GCSEs or equivalents including English and maths. Poor children still have worse educational outcomes at every stage and we have a long tail of low attainment – 17% of UK students fail to reach “modern functional literacy”<sup>1</sup>, compared to just 11% in Canada.

1.9. Most importantly of all, these problems are particularly acute in some areas – too many children still suffer a poor education because of where they live. There are increasing numbers of outstanding and inspirational schools, but this excellence is not yet a reality across the whole country. There remain areas of chronic underperformance, where low standards are exacerbated by a lack of capacity to improve.

1.10. This challenge of achieving excellence everywhere is illustrated in the map below<sup>2</sup>, based on a combined measure of local school performance and ability to access the key ingredients needed to sustain improvement – high quality teachers, leaders, system leaders, and sponsors:

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<sup>1</sup> OECD (2012): PISA, What Students Know and Can Do, Volume I

<sup>2</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)

# The Challenge of Achieving Educational Excellence Everywhere

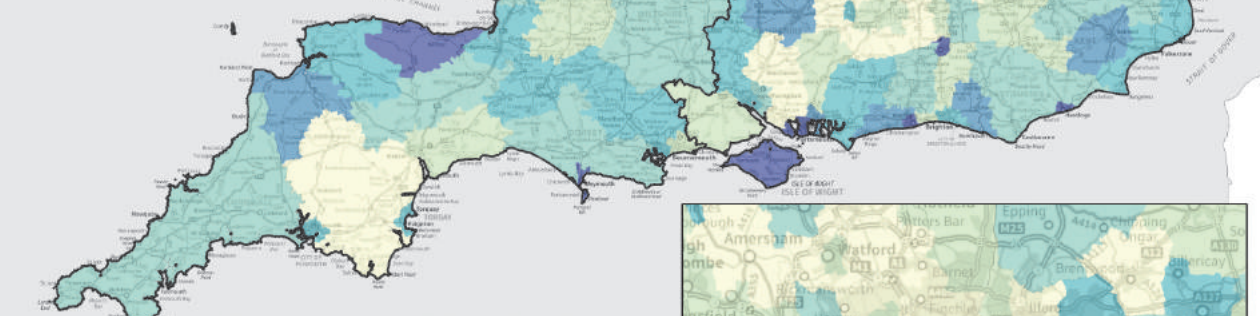
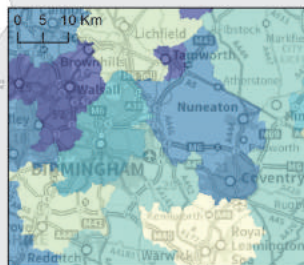
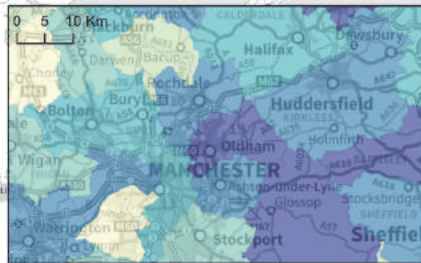
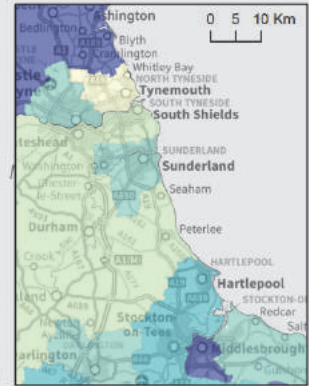
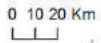
(Overall indicator, based on local performance and capacity to improve)



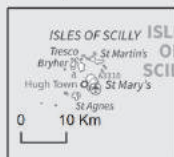
## Combined standards and capacity assessment



— RSC Regions



I. Scilly



### Indicators - see accompanying methodology guide for details

#### Standards:

- KS4 Attainment 8, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS4 Progress 8, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS2 Attainment Reading, Writing, and Maths, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS1-2 Value Added, 2015 (10% weight)
- Access to a good secondary school, 2014 (10% weight)

#### Capacity:

- Primary NLE / Teaching School Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)
- Secondary NLE / Teaching School Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)
- Quality of Primary Leadership, 2015 (8% weight)
- Quality of Secondary Leadership, 2015 (8% weight)
- ITT Provider Coverage, 2015 (8% weight)
- Academy Sponsor Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)



## Our goal is to achieve educational excellence everywhere

1.11. This white paper sets out our plans to deliver educational excellence everywhere, so that every child and young person can access world class provision, achieving to the best of his or her ability regardless of location, prior attainment and background. This goal is made up of two distinct parts:

- a. **Excellence:** first, we will continue to set unapologetically high expectations for all children. This country's best schools and highest performing areas already show us how relentlessly ambitious we can and should be for children from all backgrounds, and we believe that when the bar is raised, everyone benefits
- b. **Everywhere:** second, we will focus on intensively tackling areas of the country that have lagged behind for too long. Wherever they live, whatever their background, prior attainment or needs, every child deserves a high quality education. We will do more to support communities where underperformance has become entrenched and ensure they can learn from the areas, leaders and schools that have made such impressive progress over the last five years

1.12. This is at the heart of the Department for Education's (DfE's) overarching strategy, which is set out briefly at Annex A. We have also published a fuller statement of DfE's strategy<sup>3</sup> and will set out more detail about our plans to protect children's safety and promote their wellbeing, and to prepare all young people for adult life, later this year.

## Our approach: supported autonomy to drive up standards for all

1.13. This white paper sets out our approach to achieving educational excellence everywhere: putting the best leaders at the heart of the school system, with the support to thrive; recruiting and developing great teachers wherever they are needed; setting high expectations for all – supported by fair, stretching accountability measures; and enabling pupils, parents, and communities to demand more from their schools.

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<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>



1.14. We believe that the fastest and most sustainable way for schools to improve is for government to trust this country's most effective education leaders, giving them freedom and power, and holding them to account for unapologetically high standards for every child, measured rigorously and fairly. This system will respond to performance, extending the reach of the most successful leaders and acting promptly to reduce the influence of those who aren't delivering for our children. But it will also do more to set up these leaders for success, ensuring they have the necessary tools to seize the opportunities provided by greater autonomy and ensuring that for as long as it is required, support is available for them to draw on when they choose. This model underpins every one of the reforms set out in this white paper.

1.15. In 2010, we started an historic devolution of power from local and central government to the best school leaders. In the words of educational pioneers Sir Michael Barber and Joel Klein, "you can mandate adequacy but you cannot mandate greatness; it has to be unleashed<sup>4</sup>". Over the next five years, we will continue that devolution of power, while helping to develop a smarter system in which these teachers and leaders can work.

1.16. This white paper seeks to take our reforms to the next level – supporting improvement by building capacity and creating the conditions that will allow schools in all areas to use their freedom effectively, rather than just intervening in the case of failure. In other words, we are providing not just autonomy, but also the support where it is needed to enable the school-led system to spread excellence right across the country. As set out in our Strategy Overview at Annex A, this approach is underpinned by a set of guiding principles.

## **Outcomes not methods**

1.17. We believe that outcomes matter more than methods, and that there is rarely one, standardised solution that will work in every classroom for government to impose.

1.18. The elected government should set out the outcomes – what needs to be achieved for the public money invested in education. But we start from the basis that the country's best school leaders know what works, and that good, enthusiastic leaders should be able to use their creativity, innovation, professional expertise and up-to-date evidence to drive up standards.

1.19. So this government will very rarely dictate how these outcomes should be achieved – it will encourage and support teachers and leaders to develop the best possible solutions for their pupils, and will hold them to account for rigorous, fairly-measured outcomes.

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<sup>4</sup> Joel Klein, quoted in Sir Michael Barber, *Instruction to deliver* (London: Methuen publishing, 2008)

## High expectations for every child

1.20. Every part of our model is based on high expectations for every child. Children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds already achieve the highest outcomes in some schools, thanks to some of the best teachers and leaders in this country. We must share that level of ambition for every pupil, avoiding the trap of designing policies that accept lower aspirations for some. Equally, we reject the notion that our schools should limit their focus on bringing every child up to a minimum level – instead, they should stretch every child, including the most able, to reach their full potential.

1.21. To achieve this, every proposal in this white paper **puts children and young people first**. This continues our approach from the last five years – from allowing communities to establish their own new schools to placing children and parents at the heart of decisions on support for children with special educational needs or disability.

## Building capacity through supported autonomy

1.22. Since 2010, we've been determined to grant our best school leaders the autonomy they need to deliver excellence.

1.23. But we know that greater autonomy on its own will not lead to excellence everywhere. It isn't enough to set school leaders free if they can't access the resources and expertise they need to make the most of that freedom. Some schools and some parts of the country don't yet have the high quality teachers and leaders they need to drive up standards; some leaders can't yet access the partnerships or resources to deliver real improvements.

1.24. We must avoid the situation where, over the next five years, the strong get stronger and the weak fall even further behind. To prevent this, we will do more to strengthen the school-led system by ensuring that extra support is available for schools and leaders to draw on where it is needed, while it is needed.

1.25. Crucially, this does not involve stifling academy freedoms, or the re-emergence of a micromanaging government – good schools will remain responsible for their own improvement, free from interference. It means carefully developing and targeting the scaffolding – from initial teacher training (ITT) to school improvement support – so that there are no areas where autonomous leaders are unable to access the support and tools they need from within the system.

## Responsive to need and performance

1.26. We know that many systems improve because of the arrival of new challengers, introducing new ways of doing things. For too long, local authorities were unchallenged in their provision of state-funded schools in a particular area, no matter whether they performed well (as some did) or badly (as too many did, for too long). Academies offered an alternative – breaking the monopoly, and allowing the best schools and leaders to extend their influence, taking over from weaker ones.

1.27. But autonomy is not apathy. We believe in a school-led system not as an end in itself but because it is the best way to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people. We must therefore take a keen interest in whether autonomous leaders are successful. Those that achieve great outcomes for children should be encouraged and enabled to extend their reach and to keep raising their game. Those that do not can be challenged and given access to support to improve, or turned around by stronger providers.

## **Realising educational excellence everywhere**

1.28. This approach means that our education system can benefit from characteristics that we know will deliver the best possible outcomes for children and parents: responsiveness to need and performance; competition and collaboration; more local control; no geographic monopolies; the ability to innovate and scale up what works.

1.29. But we also recognise that more is needed. To enable the school-led system to deliver for all children in all areas it needs additional support to help build the capacity to drive sustainable self-improvement. So we will both empower our best leaders and do more to set them up for success, particularly in the areas of greatest need.

1.30. Achieving educational excellence everywhere relies on the commitment and dedication of everyone involved in our education system – leaders, teachers, sponsors, members of governing boards, and parents. In the coming years, we will work with them to transform the lives of children in every part of this country, for good.

## **Seven main elements to educational excellence everywhere**

1.31. This white paper therefore sets out the seven elements we intend to pursue to deliver educational excellence everywhere.

### **Great teachers – everywhere they're needed**

1.32. The quality of teaching is more important to pupil outcomes than anything else a school can control, so it is essential that the education system can recruit, train, develop and retain the best possible teachers.

1.33. Teaching is attracting some of the best-qualified entrants ever and perceptions of teaching remain – rightly – very high. We are also seeing record numbers of teachers, with 454,000 teachers in schools in 2014, and retention rates have remained stable for the last two decades.

1.34. But teacher recruitment is becoming more difficult as the economy grows stronger, competition for the best graduates and career changers increases and we face smaller pools of graduates from which to recruit in key subjects. At the same time, the number of teachers we need is steadily increasing as pupil numbers grow, and as schools invest more teaching hours in core subjects, the demand for teachers in some subjects is rising even faster. So we recognise that the challenge is increasing, and we will need to improve continuously the proportion of each graduating class that is attracted to teaching.

1.35. Schools will continue to play the central role in the management, training, retention, development, pay and performance-management of existing teachers, particularly as more schools become academies. More school leaders will be trusted to make their own decisions about who to employ and how much to pay them, and reforms throughout this white paper will equip schools to do so – from fair funding, to the opportunities for flexible working and career development offered by leading a larger group of schools. In turn, work to strengthen school leadership will support more, better leaders to help improve retention, while reforms to inspection will remove perverse incentives that might dissuade the best teachers from working in the most challenging schools.

1.36. In addition to setting up a system that promotes great teaching, in this chapter we set out how government will better support schools with:

- a. **Recruitment:** we will reform the National College for Teaching and Leadership, ensuring that in addition to delivering our leadership remit, we are better able to design and deliver well-targeted incentives, teacher recruitment campaigns and opportunities that attract sufficient, high quality new entrants to the profession, including those who are looking to return to the classroom. To reduce the costs of recruitment for schools in a more challenging labour market, we will create simple web tools that enable schools to advertise vacancies for free and a new national teacher vacancy website so that aspiring and current teachers can find posts quickly and easily
- b. **ITT delivery:** we will reform our allocation of teacher training places so that ITT is delivered by the best Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and school-led providers where new entrants are most needed, where places are most likely to be filled, and where training is most likely to be delivered well. We will also continue to increase the proportion of ITT offered by the best schools – those up-to-date with what works best in the classroom and with the keenest interest in maintaining rigorous ITT standards – and provide greater certainty to the best school and HEI providers by exploring ways to offer multi-year allocations
- c. **ITT content:** we will strengthen ITT content, focusing on helping new teachers enter the classroom with sufficient subject knowledge, practical behaviour management skills, understanding of special educational needs, and a greater understanding of the most up-to-date research on how pupils learn. We'll ensure discredited ideas unsupported by firm evidence are not promoted to new teachers

- d. **Accrediting new teachers:** we will replace the current ‘Qualified Teacher Status’ (QTS) with a stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools. This new accreditation will raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, better recognising advanced subject knowledge and pedagogy that is rooted in up-to-date evidence. The new process will put the best headteachers in charge of accrediting new entrants to the profession, and give schools more scope to bring in experts from other fields – for example, a talented musician or coder – and put them on a pathway to full accreditation, where their skills can be recognised
- e. **Deployment:** we will help ensure the best teachers and middle leaders work in the most challenging areas by developing the new National Teaching Service
- f. **Continuing professional development (CPD) and teaching materials:** we will ensure there is a sufficient supply of high-quality CPD provision and that teachers have greater access to high quality teaching materials to improve workload and effectiveness. We will also introduce a new Standard for Teachers’ Professional Development to help schools improve the quality and availability of CPD. We will examine the feasibility of incentivising teaching schools to publish their research and CPD materials on an ‘open-source’ basis
- g. **Strong, evidence-informed profession:** we want to support teachers by fostering a world-leading, vibrant teaching profession. That means continuing to address some of the main issues that teachers tell us cause them to leave the profession, including workload and unnecessary bureaucracy, stripping back unnecessary requirements and helping schools understand where they can avoid gold-plating. It also means supporting the establishment of a new, independent College of Teaching – a professional body along the lines of the Royal Medical Colleges – that will help spread good practice in areas like professional development and the effective use of evidence in education. This will include the establishment of a new peer-reviewed British education journal, independent of government. We will continue to work in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation to expand its role in improving and spreading the evidence on what works in education – including expanding its remit to support evidence-based teaching, character education, and preventing poor outcomes

## Great leaders running our schools and at the heart of our system

1.37. We want to put more power into the hands of the best school and system leaders, and to extend their reach. A more autonomous school system is even more dependent on outstanding educational leaders. So we will ensure these leaders are set up well to exercise the new responsibilities they are offered, with a particular focus on building capacity in the areas that need it most. In this chapter, we set out our approach to support existing leaders and help to develop the outstanding leaders of the future:



- a. **Building the infrastructure to support great leaders:** the growth of multi-academy trusts (MATs) expands the reach and influence of the most successful leaders so more children can benefit from their expertise, and offers many more senior roles and rapid progression opportunities, ensuring the best leaders can play new, more influential roles across more schools. MATs and teaching school alliances – both of which will grow in the areas where they're most needed – provide opportunities for existing leaders, and will also deliver more and better leadership development training and boost capacity in challenging areas
- b. **Designing new, world-leading National Professional Qualifications:** we will convene leading headteachers, MAT CEOs and other experts to design new voluntary National Professional Qualifications for each level of leadership, to better prepare new leaders for the full range of leadership roles. These new qualifications will not be mandatory, but instead will set a 'gold standard' against which licensed providers can develop their own innovative programmes for leadership development
- c. **Rebalancing incentives to attract the best leaders to challenging areas:** we will rebalance incentives in the accountability system so that great leaders are encouraged to work in challenging schools and areas. We will emphasise the progress that pupils make, and will introduce an 'improvement period' during which schools won't be inspected by Ofsted, to allow the time and stability to put in train sustainable improvement. As set out in chapter 8, we will implement fair national funding formulae so schools facing the toughest challenges have a fair chance of recruiting strong leaders
- d. **Supporting top middle leaders to relocate to challenging areas:** we will introduce the National Teaching Service to support strong middle leaders to move to work in some of the nation's most challenging areas, aligning it with existing targeted leadership programmes for maximum impact
- e. **Launching a new Excellence in Leadership Fund:** this will encourage the best MATs and other providers to develop innovative ways of boosting leadership in areas where great leaders are most needed. It will also help us to better support schools to develop a strong and diverse pipeline of great school and system leaders, through specific activity aimed at groups that are still under-represented in leadership positions

1.38. High quality governance is vital as we devolve more power from local and national government to schools. Governing boards need to be skills-based and focused on the strategic functions of setting a vision and holding school leaders to account for the educational and financial performance of their schools. As more schools become academies and operate under the governance of MATs, the best governing boards will assume responsibility for more schools, and the weakest boards will be removed through sharper accountability. MAT boards must clearly set out details of their governance arrangements in a scheme of delegation.

1.39. We will continue to help governing boards to recruit skilled people, and place stronger expectations on them to ensure their members undertake appropriate induction and training. We will provide all governing boards with clearer performance information about their schools, to help them discharge their role. We will also establish a database of everyone involved in governance and we intend to legislate to enable us to bar unsuitable individuals from being governors of maintained schools, to mirror the existing barring power for academies and independent schools.

## **A school-led system with every school an academy, empowered pupils, parents and communities and a clearly defined role for local government**

1.40. Teachers can be most effective if they're working in great schools, supported by great leaders. The fourth chapter sets out how we intend to create the conditions for excellent teachers and headteachers to thrive.

1.41. **Spreading excellent practice and ending the two-tier system:** The 2010 white paper *The Importance of Teaching*<sup>5</sup> set out the concept of the 'self-improving, school-led system,' and this remains at the core of our approach: good schools should be responsible for improving themselves and each other. The academy system is now sufficiently mature to take a step that wouldn't have been possible in 2010. This white paper sets out how, by the end of 2020, all remaining maintained schools will be academies or in the process of conversion.

1.42. We will take new powers to direct schools to become academies in local authority areas which are underperforming or where the local authority no longer has capacity to maintain its schools; or where schools have not started the process of becoming an academy by 2020. This process will be complete by the end of 2022, by which point local authorities will no longer maintain any schools, so they can focus on delivering their core functions.

1.43. When every school is an academy, groups of schools will be able to span geographic boundaries, with the best MATs expanding to run schools in our toughest areas in a way that no high-performing local authority ever could. This provides real accountability, competitive pressure and choice – improving performance, enabling innovation and scaling success.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf)

1.44. This step will also simplify the current situation, where we have two parallel school systems with two ways of allocating funding and two sets of legislation. This parallel system is unnecessarily complex and sets up an unnecessary conflict of interest for local authorities. Local authorities should act as advocates for their electorate, challenging school providers to deliver high educational standards and better outcomes for children; but it is hard for them to play this role when they themselves are accountable for some schools.

1.45. To retain expertise in the system and ensure children continue to benefit from the best talent in local authorities, we expect that some individuals working in local authority teams will leave to set up new trusts or join existing ones and become academy sponsors.

1.46. **Most schools in dynamic MATs:** The second part of chapter 4 sets out how we intend to create a self-improving school system that prevents underperformance. We want schools to operate in strong, resilient structures that work to drive up standards so that external intervention is only necessary in exceptional circumstances. This will mean:

- a. We expect most schools will form or join MATs so proven educational models can spread and grow, and the best leaders can extend their influence by running multiple schools. Children will benefit from their schools being part of a larger whole – with improved opportunities and support for teachers and leaders; better teaching and a broader curriculum and more opportunities for children; more robust governance; and back-office arrangements that free more funding for the classroom
- b. Apart from in exceptional circumstances, the smallest schools will have to form or join a MAT. But other successful, sustainable schools will still be able to continue as Single Academy Trusts if they choose to do so
- c. The size and influence of each MAT will vary according to performance. The best MATs will flourish, taking over and turning around weaker schools, while underperforming MATs will be challenged and their schools passed to better leadership

1.47. **Intervention in coasting and failing schools:** Where academies or MATs are underperforming, Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) will continue to take action promptly. Where MATs are on track to deal with underperformance they should be left to do so. But where the cost of turbulence is outweighed by the damage caused by leaving children in an underperforming school, intervention to transform that school must happen as promptly and seamlessly as possible.

1.48. **New free schools and UTCs to enable parents and communities to demand more for their children:** As well as taking action to transform underperforming schools, we will support the establishment of new schools to drive up standards and stimulate competition. We will build upon the success of the free school programme to open at least 500 new schools by 2020 – and will strengthen the university technical colleges programme so young people can benefit from high quality technical education.

1.49. By stimulating competition to provide a new school we will ensure the best possible provider can run it – whether they are existing local schools replicating themselves to spread their success, parent and community groups wanting to provide a particular kind of school in their local area, or successful teachers and leaders from elsewhere in the country spreading great practice to new areas.

1.50. **A balanced legal framework:** We will engage MATs, sponsors, academies, dioceses and the wider schools sector to ensure that the legal framework for academies is fit for the long term. This will require us to strike the right balance of freedoms for and controls over academies.

1.51. **To support these changes, we will empower pupils, parents and local communities:** We will put children and parents first and establish a clearly defined role for local government. Every part of our model puts pupils first – setting unapologetically high expectations to maximise their talents – and to support this, we must do more to ensure all parents have a more significant voice in schools. This will include:

- a. **Parent Portal:** we will launch a new online Parent Portal to provide parents with a one-stop shop, clearly and simply setting out the information they need to know about the school system and how to support their child
- b. **Complaints:** where parents and pupils feel their voice isn't being heard, they need clear, appropriate channels for complaints – just as patients can complain about health services, for instance. So we will provide guidance on handling complaints to help ensure a common approach to which all schools and MATs adhere, so that parents know where to go if they have a problem. We will also make it simpler to escalate complaints beyond the governing board to the DfE, and beyond that to a public service ombudsman
- c. **Admissions:** our priority is to ensure parents can easily understand how to get a place at their local schools. We will seek views on a number of changes to the school admissions system to make it simpler and clearer. In particular, to make it easier for parents to navigate the school system, we will seek views on requiring local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions and handle the administration of the independent admission appeals function; and on creating a single route for escalating any complaints about the maladministration of appeals

- d. **Parental satisfaction:** we are committed to ensuring that parents' views are given due consideration by schools, and will consider how parents may be able to petition RSCs for their school to move to a different MAT where there is underperformance or other exceptional circumstances. Ofsted already plans to launch an improved Parent View website in autumn 2016, and we will look at going further so that parents are prompted to share their views of the school more frequently, not just during inspection – and these views are given more prominence

1.52. **A clearly defined role for local authorities:** Devolving power to individual school and system leaders sits squarely within this government's devolution agenda. That means that the role of local – or combined – authorities will change. They will take on a more focused and clearly-defined remit so they can concentrate on delivering their core functions. The local authority's education duties will focus on three areas:

- a. Ensuring every child has a school place
- b. Ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met
- c. Acting as champions for all parents and families

### **Preventing underperformance and helping schools go from good to great: school-led improvement, with scaffolding and support where it's needed**

1.53. Supported autonomy means strengthening the infrastructure that supports all schools and their leaders to collaborate effectively. This is core to the role of MATs but we will also designate teaching school alliances to develop networks that promote effective school-to-school support and local innovation. And we will continue to appoint more National Leaders of Education (NLEs) to ensure school improvement support is available when and, importantly, where it's needed.

1.54. Building this infrastructure will support all schools to succeed, with schools themselves working together to drive up standards, sharing what works and learning from what doesn't. We will focus on ensuring there is extra support and challenge in areas of the country where too many schools are falling behind, and where there aren't enough of the best teachers and leaders to turn things around. Chapter 5 sets out our approach, which includes:

- a. **Shifting responsibility for school improvement:** the best leaders will play a wider role across the system, as we transfer responsibility for school improvement from local authorities to schools and system leaders – teaching schools, NLEs and other designated system leaders – to spread expertise and best practice. This will mean those who have experience of realising high standards and turning schools around are positioned to drive change across the system. Where schools are performing well, they will choose and organise their own school improvement support when they consider it necessary; only if they're underperforming and don't have a plan or the means to improve will RSCs do so on their behalf
- b. **Full national coverage and increased impact of system leaders:** we will set up every school, wherever it is in the country, to access support, collaboration and best practice by ensuring we have full coverage of system leaders in every area. We will use a new, more sophisticated approach to designate up to 300 more teaching schools and 800 more NLEs where they're most needed, relying on timely and accurate data rather than relying heavily on Ofsted judgements. We will put in place the right incentives and brokerage to ensure that the work of teaching schools, NLEs and SLEs is more focused and reaches the most vulnerable schools. We will also better target school improvement funding to where it's most needed, funding system leaders to help build capacity and engage with schools most in need of support, and RSCs to commission the turnaround of failing and coasting schools
- c. **Better brokerage of school improvement support:** we will establish new and better means of brokering school improvement to help schools find the partners and support they need without needing to depend on local or central government
- d. **More great sponsors, where they are needed:** in the new school system, most school improvement will take place within effective MATs. So we will ensure there are enough strong academy sponsors from business, charitable organisations and existing strong schools available to transform schools that need their support, particularly in the toughest areas. At the heart of this approach will be supporting the strongest schools and sponsors to expand their reach
- e. **New intensive focus on the most challenging areas:** we will focus our programmes on areas of chronic, persistent underperformance, where not enough children have a high quality school place and where there is insufficient capacity to drive improvement. We'll target a wide range of our interventions toward these Achieving Excellence Areas – from building teaching and leadership capacity to school improvement funding and sponsorship. This will aim to jump-start an even faster rise in standards than we expect to see elsewhere

## High expectations and a world-leading curriculum for all

1.55. Every child deserves to leave education with the knowledge and skills that open access to the best possible opportunities in life. In chapter 6 we set out our approach, which includes:

- a. **World-leading curricula:** in the last Parliament, we introduced a new, more ambitious national curriculum and reformed qualifications and assessment standards; this Parliament, our reform programme is well underway. Once these changes are complete, our aim is to give schools and colleges as much curriculum stability as possible to deliver these ambitious reforms. We will embed a knowledge-based curriculum as the cornerstone of an excellent, academically rigorous education up to the age of 16, establishing the national curriculum as an ambitious benchmark which autonomous academies can use and improve upon. Given the curriculum's increased stretch – especially at primary – we will monitor its implementation and increase support for teachers to help them deliver it effectively
- b. **Embedding changes to assessment:** we are reforming national assessments and qualifications – with a particular focus on ensuring every child leaves primary school with the essential building blocks to succeed at secondary. Reforms over the last five years mean that GCSEs and A levels are viewed as rigorous, trusted examinations. This Parliament, we will embed the existing changes to these gold standard qualifications and ensure the vast majority of pupils study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)
- c. **Character and resilience:** education should prepare children for adult life, giving them the skills and character traits needed to succeed academically, have a fulfilling career, and make a positive contribution to British society. The country's leading state and independent schools instil these character traits throughout school life and other schools can learn from their example. So we will introduce more support for schools to expand the range of evidence-based, character-building opportunities they provide to pupils and make available funding so that it is easier for 25% of secondary schools to extend their school day to include a wider range of activities, such as sport, arts and debating. We will expand the National Citizen Service so every pupil has the opportunity to take part. We will also work with a group of leading headteachers and practitioners to produce an action plan for improving personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) provision

- d. **Meeting the needs of neglected groups of children:** we will also focus on boosting the attainment of four groups of children neglected by the previous curriculum and accountability system: ensuring all schools stretch both their lowest-attaining and most academically able pupils; improving support for children with special educational needs and disability; and reforming the alternative provision (AP) system so that mainstream schools remain accountable for the education of pupils in AP and are responsible for commissioning high quality provision

## **Fair, stretching accountability, ambitious for every child**

1.56. A more autonomous school-led system depends even more heavily on a fair and effective accountability system, helping to identify any schools or areas that need extra challenge or support.

1.57. An effective accountability system ensures that professionals are held accountable for the outcomes of their decisions using fair, intelligent, reliable and carefully-balanced measures of success and failure. These measures must avoid creating perverse incentives or unduly hindering innovation. They must also recognise the risk and challenge teachers and headteachers take on when re-locating to work in our most challenging schools. And they should be proportionate, giving schools and groups time to improve while reacting in time to avoid chronic failure that irredeemably damages any child's education.

1.58. In an academised system, where schools will be more locally accountable to academy trusts with whom parents have a direct relationship, it is even more important that parents and governing boards should be able to challenge schools and hold them to account. When a school is performing well, there should be minimal interference by central government. The school's governing board remains free to drive improvement, provided it meets national expectations.

1.59. This chapter sets out our approach, which comprises:

- a. **Embedding more effective and fairer accountability measures:** we will embed existing reforms to primary, secondary and 16-19 accountability. These emphasise progress for all children (at every level of attainment) and their destinations. And they measure more ambitious outcomes – for example, considering a larger group of qualifications in the Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures, and ensuring more children follow a core academic curriculum in the EBacc. These reforms will ensure our measures are fair: highlighting where a school is doing better for a child than the same child would have done elsewhere. No longer will those with high-attaining intakes be able to rest on their laurels; nor will school leaders be disincentivised from taking on the most challenging schools



- b. **Fair and focused school inspection:** we will work with Ofsted to ensure inspection is fair and increasingly focused on underperformance, where it can add most value. Inspection of schools graded Good or Outstanding will be proportionate to a transparent assessment of risk. And Ofsted will consult on removing the separate graded judgments on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to help clarify that the focus of inspection is on outcomes and to reduce burdens on schools and teachers
- c. **Launching new accountability measures for MATs:** we will publish new performance tables for MATs in addition to the continued publication and focus on inspection and performance data at individual school level
- d. **Accountability to parents and governors:** we will increase accountability to parents and governors by providing them with the right information – in easy-to-navigate formats – to give a clear picture of how their schools are performing and where improvements can be made
- e. **Checks and balances by the best headteachers:** where government needs to take a view on how to respond to school performance, we will rely on the expert educational judgment of the RSCs. Headteacher Boards, which will continue to comprise top headteachers elected by their peers and appointed for their track records, will provide an important check and balance for academy leaders to scrutinise and challenge the decisions of RSCs

## **The right resources in the right hands: investing every penny where it can do the most good**

1.60. No pupil should be disadvantaged because their school arbitrarily receives less funding than a school with similar costs and pupils. Fair allocation of funding supports every other part of our education system. Schools will only be able to achieve high standards for every pupil, everywhere, when the resources they receive are properly matched to the challenges they face. And as schools are asked to absorb more pressures from within their protected budgets, they will have to reform their current spending: implementing fair national formulae asks the most generously funded to support their less-generously funded peers, many of whom are already operating more efficiently. So Chapter 8 sets out how we will introduce new, fair national funding formulae to allocate school and high needs funding.

- a. **National funding formulae:** the careful, well-planned design and implementation of new national funding formulae for schools and high needs is one of our highest reform priorities. The new formulae will be fairer, make better use of taxpayers' investment by putting resources where they're most needed, and provide more financial sustainability. The formulae mean funding will reflect the circumstances of children and local costs – weighting funding by the level of challenge, not arbitrary historical factors

- b. **Pupil premium:** we will continue the pupil premium, and improve its effectiveness by encouraging schools and virtual school heads to adopt evidence-based strategies, drawing on evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation
- c. **Financial health and efficiency:** we also want to help schools make the most of every penny. It is more crucial than ever that school leaders have the right tools and expertise to manage their budgets well. We will take a more differentiated and proportionate approach to financial oversight, and better support schools to deliver value for money for children and the taxpayer by ensuring they have the necessary training, tools and guidance – and access to better national procurement frameworks
- d. **School estate:** making the best possible use of resources also means continuing to improve and maintain the condition of the school estate. We will ensure that the bodies responsible for school buildings get a fair share of funding according to their needs – and that they have the right incentives to use it effectively. We will continue to rebuild and refurbish schools in the worst condition across the country

## Chapter 2: Great teachers – everywhere they're needed

Educational excellence everywhere depends on having enough great teachers, wherever they are needed. We want a high quality teaching profession which embraces evidence-based practice to drive up standards in schools. We have already given schools freedom to lead on recruiting, training and developing teachers, and have given leaders discretion over pay to reward their most effective staff. We will:

- a. Help schools to ensure that enough talented teachers are recruited wherever needed, and help schools to build a diverse workforce, with more opportunities for teachers to work flexibly including through part-time work and job sharing
- b. Strengthen university and school-led training, increasing the rigour of ITT content with a greater focus on subject knowledge and evidence-based practice
- c. Continue to move to an increasingly school-led ITT system which recruits enough great teachers in every part of the country, so that the best schools and leaders control which teachers are recruited and how they are trained
- d. Introduce new quality criteria for ITT providers and allocate training places accordingly, providing greater certainty to the best providers – both school and university-led – by giving allocations over several years
- e. Replace Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) with a stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools. This new accreditation will raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, better recognising advanced subject knowledge and pedagogy that is rooted in up-to-date evidence
- f. Help schools by ensuring that great teachers are encouraged to work where they are most needed, including through the National Teaching Service
- g. Support teachers to develop their skills through evidence-based continuing professional development and introduce a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development to help schools improve the quality of CPD
- h. Support the development of a high status, world-leading teaching profession by supporting the establishment of an independent College of Teaching; continuing to reduce unnecessary workload; and increasing teachers' access to and use of high quality evidence – including supporting the establishment of a new, peer-reviewed British education journal; and continuing to work in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation

2.1. No school and no education system can be better than its teachers and no single education reform is more important than fostering and supporting a high quality teaching profession. Pupils in schools across England already benefit from the hundreds of thousands of dedicated teachers who work hard every day to give their pupils the best possible start in life.

2.2. It is essential that schools in all areas can recruit, train, develop and retain excellent teachers. We have already given head teachers the powers they need to do this well, including significant reforms to the performance management framework in 2012. The management, training, retention, development and pay of existing teachers are now rightly the responsibility of headteachers, free from unnecessary bureaucratic interference and central prescription. In line with our focus on outcomes not methods, the teaching profession is no longer forced to conform to an orthodoxy on teaching methods through national strategies, or an ‘Ofsted preferred teaching style’.

2.3. Our reforms to strengthen leadership training (in chapter 3) will mean that more, better trained leaders can boost retention and offer the leadership and management that will improve classroom teachers’ practice; our funding changes (chapter 8) will ensure that schools in the most challenging areas have more resources to invest in attracting, developing and retaining the best teachers. Reforming inspection (chapter 7) will remove perverse incentives that might dissuade the best teachers from working in the most challenging schools.

2.4. By 2020, we want to build on these changes so that the school-led system is in control and the teaching profession takes its rightful place alongside other learned professions like law and medicine – generating innovative, evidence-based practice and setting the highest standards of practice and professional development.

## **Attracting and recruiting world class teachers**

2.5. Teaching offers rewards and challenges like no other profession, and continues to attract the brightest graduates and career changers. A record 18% of new teachers who started training in 2015 have a first class degree.

2.6. We have recruited over 1,000 more secondary graduate trainee teachers this year than last<sup>6</sup> and the number of people returning to the profession has reached the highest level ever recorded<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2015-to-2016>

<sup>7</sup> Source: Table C1b from School Workforce in England, 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2014>. Time series starts in November 2011

2.7. However, we recognise that teacher recruitment is becoming more difficult as the economy grows stronger and competition for the best candidates increases. The challenges are particularly acute in some areas of the country and the number of teachers we need is increasing as pupil numbers grow.

2.8. As schools invest more teaching hours in core subjects, demand for teachers in certain subjects is rising even faster; last year we exceeded recruitment targets for primary, English, history and PE and achieved over 90% of targets in chemistry and mathematics, but recruitment remains particularly challenging in subjects like computing and physics.

We will ensure that enough talented teachers are recruited, wherever they're needed

2.9. We have already taken specific steps to improve teacher recruitment:

- a. Offering bursaries and scholarships worth up to £30,000 tax free in 2016/17 to trainees with a first class degree training to teach physics, and increased bursaries in other EBacc subjects
- b. Piloting Supporting Returning Teachers, a new programme to encourage qualified secondary school teachers to return to the classroom
- c. Expanding Teach First so it can help to attract talented teachers into some of the most deprived and challenging areas in England
- d. Improving support to potential career changers through the Get into Teaching phone line
- e. Targeting career changers and new graduates through the Your Future | Their Future marketing campaign, focusing on priority subjects

2.10. We are focusing specifically on increasing recruitment in shortage STEM subjects:

- a. Launching the prestigious Future Teaching Scholars programme to attract A level students with a passion for maths or physics into teaching
- b. Introducing a programme to recruit maths and physics 'chairs' – post-doctoral maths and physics researchers, who can combine teaching with further study in their universities
- c. Supporting some of the best universities to develop new 'opt-in' undergraduate courses, providing a new pathway for physics, maths and computing students to train to teach alongside their other studies
- d. Providing paid internships to maths and physics undergraduates to experience teaching before committing to it as a career
- e. Ensuring that teacher subject specialism training (TSST) is available to improve the maths and physics subject knowledge of existing non-specialist teachers

2.11. But we recognise that we must do more. To support schools to address these challenges we are taking steps to improve our understanding of how the teacher labour market varies between schools in different areas.

2.12. We will reform the NCTL, ensuring that in addition to delivering our leadership remit, we are better able to design and deliver well-targeted incentives, teacher recruitment campaigns and opportunities that attract sufficient, high quality new entrants and returners to the profession, particularly in those subjects where recruitment is most difficult.

2.13. To reduce costs of recruitment for schools in a more challenging labour market, we will create simple web tools to enable schools to advertise vacancies more easily and a new, free national teacher vacancy website so that aspiring and current teachers can find posts quickly and easily – transforming the current system and reducing the burden on schools when budgets are tight.

2.14. At the same time we want to do more to encourage and support schools to actively use the freedoms we have given them over pay and reward for teachers to recruit teachers in priority subjects and retain their best teachers.

2.15. And, as set out below, we will also support the school-led system to improve the content and delivery of ITT, which will help in turn to tackle barriers to recruitment and retention.

We will help schools to build a diverse workforce, with more opportunities for teachers to work flexibly including through part-time work and job sharing

2.16. We must ensure that we do not lose talented teachers because they cannot work flexibly (including part-time and job sharing) around their caring and family commitments. We want schools to be leading in this area, offering equal opportunities for all and modelling these values for children and young people. But while the percentage of teachers working part-time has stayed steady in recent years (at around 22%), it is still significantly lower than in the general population – around 8.6% of male teachers work part-time, compared to 13% of men in the workforce nationally; 26.4% of female teachers work part-time, compared to 42% of women in the workforce nationally.

2.17. This is not just a problem for equality in the teaching workforce, it is also preventing the profession from attracting and keeping high quality teachers.

2.18. Our new vacancy website will provide a new, simple way for schools to advertise part-time and job-share opportunities, making it much easier for candidates to find these roles. We will also encourage schools to develop part-time training routes into teaching, and provide guidance on how best to make part-time and job-sharing arrangements work in practice (including HR issues such as calculating pay, the impact on pensions, and terms and conditions). We will work with the profession and employers to raise the profile of part-time teaching and publish case studies of schools which are making effective use of part-time teachers, including innovative support through crèches and child-minding facilities to assist staff.

## **Strengthening initial teacher training**

2.19. It is crucial that teachers receive high quality initial teacher training (ITT) that prepares them for a successful and fulfilling career in the classroom.

We will strengthen university and school-led teacher training, increasing the rigour of ITT content with a greater focus on subject knowledge and evidence-based practice

2.20. Following the independent review of ITT chaired by Sir Andrew Carter in 2014, our focus for further reform to ITT will be on improving the quality of training so that all new teachers enter the classroom with advanced subject knowledge, practical behaviour management skills, and a greater understanding of evidence-based practice and how to adapt their teaching to unlock the full potential of pupils with a wide range of different needs (see chapter 6).

2.21. Building on Sir Andrew Carter's recommendations, an independent working group chaired by Stephen Munday is now developing a clear framework for ITT core content which will help to prepare trainees to meet the Teachers' Standards at the right level.

2.22. Tom Bennett, a teacher and behaviour expert, is reviewing how well ITT prepares teachers for behaviour management, which will contribute to the framework; and as high quality mentoring is something that new trainees find most helpful, the Teaching Schools Council is developing a new standard for ITT mentors to help define and spread good practice. All three groups will publish their reports in the coming months.

We will continue to move to an increasingly school-led ITT system which recruits enough great teachers in every part of the country, so that the best schools and leaders control which teachers are recruited and how they are trained

2.23. We know that when teachers have extensive ITT in schools, they perform better<sup>8</sup>. Since 2010 we have encouraged the shift towards a school-led ITT system, with schools taking greater responsibility for all aspects of teacher training from the selection and recruitment of candidates to the design and delivery of training programmes. The growth of high quality school-led providers has been significant and for the first time this year, over half of trainee teachers are being trained through school-led routes.

2.24. The number of accredited school-led ITT providers (SCITTs) has doubled in the last four years, and the School Direct programme – in which schools partner with an accredited ITT provider to deliver training – will train over 10,000 new teachers this year, up from 350 trainees in 2012.

2.25. However, as the map below shows, access to all ITT provision currently varies widely across the country<sup>9</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup> Musset (2010); Reinhartz and Stetson (1999); Menter (2010)

<sup>9</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)



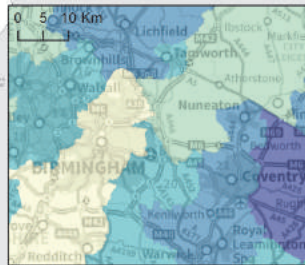
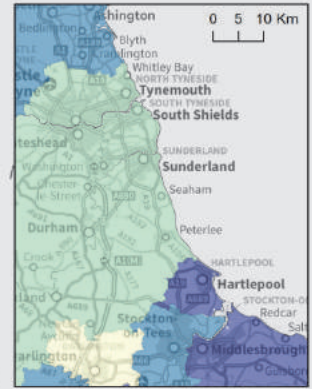
# Schools' Proximity to Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Providers

## ITT Provider Coverage

- 1. Strong
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5. Weak

RSC Regions

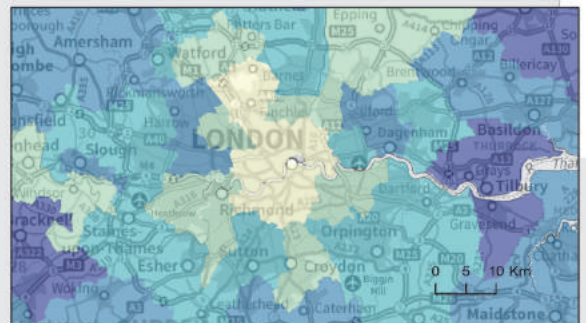
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## I. Scilly



Data Sources  
 DIE, SFR46/2015 Initial teacher training: trainee number census - 2015 to 2016  
 DIE, Edubase, Feb 2016



2.26. We will therefore continue to increase the proportion of ITT delivered and led by schools, while also ensuring that there are sufficient new teachers where they are needed.

2.27. We will accredit new school-led providers and support a major expansion of SCITT-led training, with a particular focus on covering priority subjects and in areas of the country where recruitment is most difficult. We will build the capacity of these providers and incentivise them to train enough high quality new teachers to help meet the needs, not only of the schools where they are trained, but also of the wider system by ‘exporting’ trainees to other schools that need them most.

Notre Dame High School in Sheffield was designated as a teaching school in 2011. It became a School Direct lead school in 2012/13 and – since September 2015 – runs the Sheffield SCITT, one of three accredited ITT providers in Sheffield.

In 2012/13, Notre Dame successfully trained two School Direct trainees, partnered with Leeds Trinity University; the next year, this grew to 30 trainees across 14 schools in the teaching school alliance, and in 2014/15 it grew to 58 trainees across 28 schools. Notre Dame became an accredited SCITT in 2015/16, called The Sheffield SCITT. It further expanded in 2015/16, working with three other school partnerships which will offer training through The Sheffield SCITT.

It now offers over 120 places for teacher trainees, including in subjects like maths and physics where trainees are normally difficult to recruit.

2.28. There will continue to be an important place for high quality universities in ITT with a strong track record in attracting well-qualified graduates. We want the best universities to establish ‘centres of excellence’ in ITT, drawing on their world-leading subject knowledge and research. We will seek to recognise both the best university and school-led ITT through guaranteed, longer-term allocation of training places, allowing providers to plan their provision into the future.

We will introduce new quality criteria for ITT providers and allocate training places accordingly, providing greater certainty to the best providers – both school-led and HEI – by giving them allocations over several years

2.29. New quality criteria will focus on areas such as the quality of training programmes, the effectiveness of providers in recruiting high quality trainees, and the impact of those trainees on standards of teaching in schools. We will assess providers’ ability to meet these criteria and will, in future, factor this into the allocation of training places.

2.30. Providers often find it difficult to build sustainable courses when they only have certainty about the next year's cohort of trainees. We will therefore explore ways to allocate training places to the best providers for multiple years, giving them greater confidence to plan their delivery in the years ahead and invest in the staff and infrastructure they need. We will also withhold future allocations of training places from providers unable to meet the quality criteria.

2.31. We will set out details of our plans to implement these reforms of ITT shortly.

## **Replacing QTS with a new, stronger accreditation**

2.32. Teacher accreditation should demonstrate a teacher's knowledge, skill and ability, and should inspire confidence in the teaching profession as a whole.

2.33. Currently, Qualified Teacher Status is awarded after ITT, often lasting less than a year. That means the bar is comparatively low – a new teacher needs only to demonstrate that they meet the Teachers' Standards at a level appropriate to the end of initial training, before they have acquired any significant experience of life in the classroom.

We will replace Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) with a stronger, more challenging accreditation based on a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom, as judged by great schools. This new accreditation will raise the quality and status of the teaching profession, better recognising advanced subject knowledge and pedagogy that is rooted in up-to-date evidence

2.34. We believe that new teachers should be able to accredit their practice to a standard more like that expected of trainees in other high status professions such as the law, where trainees are required to undertake an initial course (the Legal Practice Course) before embarking on a further period of training that typically lasts for two years. Before qualifying as a chartered accountant, trainees in that profession have to complete 450 days of work experience, which can take anything between 3 and 5 years; by way of comparison, teachers on postgraduate training routes are required to spend just 120 days in the classroom before they are awarded the current Qualified Teacher Status.

2.35. The status held by existing teachers will continue to be recognised in the years ahead. But as an investment to strengthen the quality and status of the teaching profession, we propose to raise the bar for new teachers. We will introduce a more challenging accreditation, recognising the ability to teach well, advanced subject knowledge and understanding and application of up-to-date evidence .

2.36. In future, full accreditation will only be achieved after teachers have demonstrated their proficiency – including the strength of their subject knowledge – over a sustained period in the classroom. Decisions about teachers’ proficiency will continue to be made on the basis of the Teachers’ Standards, which clearly set out what good teaching looks like and were developed by leading practitioners.

2.37. And these decisions on teacher accreditation will now be for schools and headteachers, giving greater decision-making power to those who know best. When schools judge that a teacher has reached the required level for accreditation, informed by the Teachers’ Standards, they will make a recommendation which will be ratified by a high-performing school (such as a teaching school or accredited SCITT) to ensure that the process is objective, transparent and consistent.

2.38. Although we expect that most new teachers will continue to complete ITT and to seek to secure full accreditation, this reform will also give schools more scope to bring in experts from other fields – for example, a talented musician or coder – and put them on a pathway to full accreditation, where their teaching skills can be recognised alongside their expert subject knowledge.

2.39. Academy headteachers will continue to have the flexibility to determine what requirements they make of any potential teacher for employment or promotion – including whether to make this accreditation a mandatory requirement or not, considering how to weigh it against other qualifications and experience the potential teacher may bring. As at present, headteachers will continue to be accountable for those decisions and the quality of teaching in their schools.

2.40. These reforms will help to raise further the quality and status of this country’s teaching profession by setting a higher bar for new teachers and encouraging more high quality professional development early in new teachers’ careers when they need it most.

2.41. We will set out detailed proposals for replacing QTS shortly.



By 2020, a teacher's training may look like this (illustrative example):

Chris graduates from university and gets into teaching through a School Direct course run by a multi-academy trust that has been accredited to deliver school-based training. His initial training builds on the deep subject knowledge he acquired in his degree, and trains him in the most effective methods of teaching his specialist subject. It also gives him a firm grounding in understanding and applying evidence-based practice.

When he successfully completes initial teacher training, Chris is employed to teach in one of the schools in the MAT where he trained. During his first year he has access to a package of support – a dedicated mentor, a reduced teaching timetable and tailored development opportunities (including opportunities to use and apply high quality evidence to support his development) to help him consolidate what he learnt in his initial training.

In January of his second year in the classroom, Chris's mentor and headteacher judge that he is consistently meeting the Teachers' Standards at the required level. The headteacher makes a recommendation to a local teaching school authorised to act as an "external examiner" for teachers seeking accreditation.

The teaching school reviews Chris's practice and is satisfied that Chris is consistently demonstrating the required standard in his teaching. It therefore confirms accreditation and Chris becomes a fully accredited teacher.

## Getting great teachers where they are most needed

2.42. Educational excellence everywhere means improving recruitment and retention of new and experienced teachers in areas of greatest need. Our improved approach to ITT allocations will support this, as will our plans for more equitable funding (chapter 8) and to make accountability fairer to schools in challenging areas (chapter 3). In keeping with our principle of supported autonomy, we will also take additional, targeted steps to boost capacity in areas of greatest need.

We will help schools by ensuring that great teachers are encouraged to work where they are most needed, including through the National Teaching Service

2.43. By 2020, the National Teaching Service (NTS) will place up to 1,500 high-performing teachers and middle leaders into underperforming schools that struggle to attract, recruit and retain high quality teachers and leaders. More information about plans for the NTS can be seen in chapter 3.

2.44. We will also support the school-led system to drive up standards in teachers' continuing professional development (CPD). At the moment, schools find it difficult to choose and fund high quality CPD, their investment in effective CPD lags behind many leading systems, and teachers struggle to find good, local CPD, undermining their careers and the profession as a whole<sup>10</sup>. We will support the school-led system to improve the quality and availability of professional development so that schools can draw on a rich provision of training and teaching materials to help teachers develop their skills.

We will support teachers to develop their skills throughout their careers through high quality CPD and introduce a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development to help schools improve the quality and availability of CPD

2.45. We have set up an independent expert group of teachers, leaders and academics to create a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development, due to be published in spring 2016. This will set out a gold standard for effective CPD, helping schools to identify good practice, raising expectations among teachers, schools and providers and – we hope – being used to challenge ineffective practice and improve quality.

2.46. Schools are increasingly taking the lead in developing and delivering high quality professional development – supported and led by the national network of almost 700 teaching schools. As set out in chapter 5, we will expand this network to ensure full coverage across the country, to ensure teachers in all areas have access to high quality school-based ITT and evidence-based professional development opportunities. We will also look at the feasibility of incentivising teaching schools to publish their research and CPD materials on an 'open-source' basis, further helping to reduce teacher workload.

## **Supporting teachers in and beyond the classroom**

2.47. Our vision of educational excellence everywhere relies on the commitment of hundreds of thousands of teachers, and we will help to ensure that teaching is a fulfilling and rewarding career.

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<sup>10</sup> A World Class Teaching Profession, Government Response (March 2015)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/430227/150319\\_WCTP\\_response.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/430227/150319_WCTP_response.pdf)

2.48. Research into teacher retention consistently identifies that teachers enjoy working with children and young people, and take pride in teaching them and supporting them to develop and grow in maturity.<sup>11</sup> However, it also shows that unnecessary workload and poor pupil behaviour frustrate teachers and erode their energy, and are the biggest factors of teachers choosing to leave the profession.<sup>12</sup> We will build on this evidence and focus on the issues that teachers tell us make them think about leaving.

2.49. Too much of teachers' time is still spent on unnecessary, unproductive tasks, so we will continue to reduce bureaucracy and tackle unnecessary workload in this Parliament. The Workload Challenge, launched in October 2014, received 44,000 responses, raising complex issues and highlighting that no action by government alone would reduce teachers' workload. A collective effort is needed where government, Ofsted, teaching unions, senior leaders and teachers work together to identify and challenge the culture in and beyond schools which leads to unnecessary workload:

- a. We introduced a new government protocol setting a one-year minimum lead-in time for significant changes to accountability, qualifications or the curriculum and committed not to make substantive changes affecting pupils during the school year, or in the middle of a course resulting in a qualification
- b. Ofsted has likewise committed not to make substantive changes to the School Inspection Handbook or framework during the academic year except where urgent changes to statute or statutory guidance make it necessary
- c. Three review groups involving serving teachers will address concerns around marking, planning and data management, reporting in spring 2016. These groups have looked at the workload implications of certain common practices, and will create a clear set of principles and recommendations aiming to reduce overall workload burden in schools and improve efficiency

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<sup>11</sup> Pearson/LKMco, Why Teach? <http://whyteach.lkmco.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Embargoed-until-Friday-23-October-2015-Why-Teach.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Smithers, A. and Robinson, P., Factors affecting teachers' decisions to leave the profession, Centre for Education and Employment Research, University of Liverpool, for the Department for Education and Skills (2003)

2.50. As set out in chapter 6, we are encouraging the development of more high quality resources and textbooks which can reduce the time it takes teachers to plan effective lessons; MATs also offer much greater opportunities for teachers to share resources. To help teachers crack down on bad behaviour, we have already made it clear that teachers can use reasonable force to maintain behaviour. We have also extended searching powers for banned items and allowed teachers to impose same-day detentions. We are now ensuring that new teachers are trained to deal with low-level disruption that stops pupils learning. As set out above, we have asked behaviour expert Tom Bennett to review behaviour management in ITT and to produce a second report on how to prevent and tackle classroom disruption.

2.51. We have also produced advice on behaviour and mental health to help schools identify where poor behaviour may arise from an unmet mental health need, including advice on how children and young people can be supported and when schools should engage other agencies.

## **Fostering a world-leading, evidence-informed teaching profession**

We will support the development of a high status, world-leading teaching profession, by supporting the establishment of an independent College of Teaching, a new professional body along the lines of the Royal Medical Colleges

2.52. The new College of Teaching will be a professional body like those in other high status professions such as law and medicine. It will be a voluntary membership organisation, independent of government, run by teachers for teachers. The College will lead the profession in taking responsibility for its own improvement, supporting its members' development and – much like the medical colleges – promoting the use of evidence to improve professional practice.

2.53. The College is currently consulting teachers on its proposed offer to members. It will launch and open to members in 2016 and will accredit professional development to ensure that it is high quality, providing peer mentoring and online support to members.

We will increase teachers' access to and use of high quality evidence, ensure teachers are trained in understanding and applying evidence, and support the establishment of a new, peer-reviewed British education journal



2.54. One of the hallmarks of a mature profession is a body of evidence which sets out what works and what doesn't, and which develops and evolves over time. This body of evidence is as valuable in teaching as in any other profession. According to the EEF, the use of mastery teaching methods, for example, can lead to an additional five months' progress over the course of a school year compared to mainstream approaches<sup>13</sup>.

2.55. We believe it is for teachers and leaders to decide which methods they should use to teach. But they should be equipped to make these choices based on the best evidence from the UK and abroad about what really works. That has not always been the case in the past. Fads like Brain Gym – described by Dr Ben Goldacre, the author of 'Bad Science', as "a series of elaborate physical movements with silly pseudoscientific justifications"<sup>14</sup> – attracted followers and were in some places accepted as orthodoxy despite lacking rigorous evidence of success.

2.56. Improvements to literacy teaching in primary schools provide another example. Despite decades of research showing its positive effects<sup>15</sup>, systematic synthetic phonics had been disregarded by many schools, local authorities, and university education faculties. Growing support within the teaching profession led to a number of new synthetic phonics reading schemes. In 2012, we introduced the phonics reading check at the end of Year 1 and three years on, the proportion of 6-year-olds achieving the expected standard in the check has risen by 19 percentage points to 77%, equivalent to 120,000 more children on track to become excellent readers.

2.57. In 2013 the government commissioned a report on Building Evidence into Education<sup>16</sup> from Dr Ben Goldacre, in which he said, "There is a huge prize waiting to be claimed by teachers. By collecting better evidence about what works best, and establishing a culture where this evidence is used as a matter of routine, we can improve outcomes for children, and increase professional independence".

2.58. Teachers are now claiming that prize. The EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit is helping teachers to find and use evidence about the most effective teaching methods to improve standards for all children, including the most disadvantaged. A recent National Audit Office survey found that nearly two thirds of school leaders use the Toolkit – showing that high quality evidence is now more accessible than ever before<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/toolkit-a-z/mastery-learning/>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/may/28/bad-science-goldacre-brain-gym>

<sup>15</sup> including Johnston and Watson's Clackmannanshire study in 2005, which showed incontrovertible gains for pupils taught using phonics compared with alternative approaches

<sup>16</sup> Goldacre B. (2013) Building Evidence into Education, DfE, London, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/building-evidence-into-education>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Funding-for-disadvantaged-pupils.pdf>

2.59. But it is not yet as easy as it should be for teachers to find and use evidence to improve their teaching practice because the evidence base is patchy, difficult to access or to translate into action. Too little research is directly driven by the priorities of teachers and schools; too little is sufficiently robust in quality.

2.60. We will support the teaching profession to access, use and spread high quality evidence, with a greater focus on evidence built into ITT (as above) and leadership qualifications (chapter 3), as well as expanding teaching schools across the country (chapter 5).

2.61. We will also support the establishment of a new, peer-reviewed British education journal by the new College of Teaching, helping to spread cutting edge national and international research in an accessible and relevant format so that teachers can use it to improve their teaching. We hope that, in time, this will play a similar role in teaching as the British Medical Journal has in the medical profession – helping to raise standards and spread evidence-based practice.

2.62. We welcome moves to establish a portal for teachers to access education journals. We will also work with teachers to set up a bank of research questions which, updated annually, will focus funders of research and academics on generating evidence in areas which directly inform classroom teaching.

We will continue to work in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation to expand its role in improving and spreading the evidence on what works in education

2.63. The EEF will continue to improve the education evidence base through its role as the designated What Works Centre for education<sup>18</sup>. Its work will be applicable across the whole education system, and while it will maintain a clear focus on disadvantaged pupils, the evidence it presents will be relevant and beneficial for all pupils. Its remit will be formally expanded to support evidence-based teaching, character education, and preventing poor outcomes post-16, and it will undertake additional communications to highlight the broad applicability of its work to all pupils and schools.

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<sup>18</sup> The What Works Network consists of 7 independent What Works Centres (WWCs) which help to encourage the use of thorough, high quality, independently assessed evidence in shaping decision-making at every level.

## Chapter 3: Great leaders running our schools and at the heart of our system

Our changes are designed to empower and extend the reach of the best leaders. A more autonomous school system is even more reliant on great educational leaders, so we will support the school-led system to better develop and train the next generation of strong school and system leaders, supported by highly skilled governing boards, and act to build capacity in areas where it is most needed. We will:

- a. Encourage more leadership development training to be delivered by successful schools – including teaching school alliances and multi-academy trusts (MATs), both of which will grow in areas where they're most needed
- b. Convene experts to redesign voluntary, world class National Professional Qualifications to prepare leaders more effectively for the full range of leadership roles in the new schools system
- c. Rebalance incentives so that great leaders are not discouraged from working in challenging schools, through a greater emphasis on progress in the accountability system and by introducing 'improvement periods', during which schools will not be inspected by Ofsted
- d. Introduce the new National Teaching Service to support elite teachers and strong middle leaders to move to work in some of the nation's most challenging areas, aligning this with existing targeted leadership programmes for maximum impact
- e. Launch an Excellence in Leadership Fund for the best MATs and other providers to develop innovative ideas to tackle significant leadership challenges in areas where great leaders are most needed
- f. Support schools to develop a strong and diverse pipeline of great school and system leaders, funding activity aimed at groups who are under-represented in leadership positions like women and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender candidates or those from a black and minority ethnic background
- g. Create stronger expectations on governing boards to fill skills gaps, including through training, with help to recruit skilled people; develop a new competency framework for governance in different contexts; and establish a database of everyone involved in governance. We intend to legislate so we can bar unsuitable individuals from being governors of maintained schools (as we can already in academies and independent schools)

3.1. Effective school leadership has a profound impact on the quality of education a child receives. Research from the United States indicates that highly effective headteachers raise the achievement of a typical student in their schools by the equivalent of between two and seven months of learning in a single school year.<sup>19</sup>

3.2. Our vision of a school-led system that delivers educational excellence everywhere depends on extending the reach of the best leaders, putting them at the heart of the education system. We believe that good leaders are best placed to raise standards and improve outcomes for children – by running schools and groups of schools, recruiting and retaining high quality teachers, sharing their expertise to support other schools, and being held to account for rigorous, well-measured outcomes.

3.3. We have already done much in this area. We have funded the successful programmes currently being run by Teaching Leaders and Future Leaders, boosting the quality of middle and senior leadership development in challenging areas. Teach First participants have moved rapidly into leadership roles and growing the programme has expanded this talent pool. And by opening up leadership qualifications for delivery by the best MATs, teaching schools and other providers, we have ensured that more leadership training is now being delivered by those with practical expertise.

3.4. But we also recognise that a more autonomous school-led system is even more dependent on strong educational leaders. To achieve educational excellence everywhere, we need enough great leaders right across the country and, in particular, in challenging schools and areas. So we will do significantly more to help the system develop and train more high quality leaders. In particular, we will create more opportunities for great leaders to work in the schools where they can make the biggest difference, creating a strong and sustainable pipeline of talented, motivated leaders working in challenging areas.

## **Developing the next generation of headteachers and leaders**

3.5. As the school-led system becomes stronger, schools themselves will increasingly take the lead in growing the next generation of leaders: spotting, nurturing and managing talented staff, identifying diverse candidates for leadership in sufficient numbers, and ensuring that current and prospective leaders get the professional development they need.

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<sup>19</sup> Measuring the impact of effective principals, [http://hanushek.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Branch%20Hanushek%20Rivkin%202013%20EdNext%2013%281%29\\_0.pdf](http://hanushek.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/Branch%20Hanushek%20Rivkin%202013%20EdNext%2013%281%29_0.pdf)

We will encourage more leadership development training to be delivered by successful schools – including teaching school alliances and MATs, both of which will grow in areas where they're most needed

3.6. Our approach gives the best leaders the opportunity to play a greater role across more schools, and to spread their success for the benefit of more children than ever. The nature of leadership roles is therefore changing, with executive heads, MAT CEOs and system leaders requiring a new and different mix of skills and experience.

3.7. MAT leaders will often be responsible for many schools, managing larger teams of staff and budgets. Middle leaders will be able to take on more responsibility – a head of subject in a MAT could, for example, lead that subject across 30 schools. And with a view of future staffing requirements across a whole family of schools, MAT CEOs have much greater flexibility to undertake the robust succession planning and talent management which is characteristic of successful institutions, providing their aspiring leaders with the opportunity to gain experience in a variety of schools in the trust.

3.8. Teaching school alliances will also play a vital role as a source of support on which autonomous schools can choose to draw (see chapter 5). As centres of excellence, they will have an explicit focus on providing high quality leadership development activity. We will ensure that teaching school alliances grow to cover the whole country, driving more and better leadership development and boosting capacity in challenging areas.

The Cabot Learning Federation is a teaching school alliance which is part of a multi-academy trust of thirteen academies across Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Weston-super-Mare and Bath. In 2012 it became a licensee to deliver nationally recognised leadership qualifications, and has developed new content on topics such as closing the attainment gap and effective and efficient use of funding, including the pupil premium.

School leaders of the Cabot Learning Federation ensure that they offer content relevant to all leaders, and to specific participants and contexts. These opportunities can include secondments and exchanges between partner schools to expand new leaders' experience; and drawing on the experience of leaders who have successfully turned around schools.

Since 2011/12, 467 staff from the teaching school alliance have completed leadership programmes. A total of 13 staff who took part in the first cohort of the National Professional Qualification for Headship programme in 2013, have since been appointed to headship positions since they started the programme (38%). Since 2011/12 the alliance has developed two Executive Principals, six new Principals (promoted from Vice Principal) and eight new Vice Principals (promoted from Assistant Principal) across the alliance.

We will convene experts to redesign voluntary, world class National Professional Qualifications to prepare leaders more effectively for the full range of leadership roles in the new schools system

3.9. We believe that schools are best placed to recognise teachers with the talent, ambition and commitment to become leaders. To support this, we want to ensure schools and prospective leaders themselves can identify and choose to access high quality leadership development opportunities. We will therefore work with top headteachers, MAT CEOs and other leading experts to develop a reformed suite of world-leading National Professional Qualifications for all levels of leadership in the new system.

3.10. These qualifications will be entirely voluntary, drawing on evidence and the experience of the highest-performing leaders from education and other professions to define (but not prescribe) a 'gold-standard' that schools and other licensed providers can choose to use, adapt and innovate from. These qualifications will equip teachers aspiring to leadership positions with the knowledge and practical skills to manage a complex institution with a significant budget, inspire a large team of teachers and support staff, and ensure that a school's curriculum and teaching methods are backed up by robust evidence.

3.11. We will work closely with new and existing sector-led initiatives as part of this process – including the new Foundation for Leadership in Education – to develop a long term strategy for leadership qualifications. In the coming months, we will work with schools and other interested groups to identify the qualifications which should be developed and how they should be delivered, with a particular focus on ensuring there is sufficient high calibre leadership development available where it is most needed.

By 2020, one possible journey to leadership could look like this (illustrative example): Chek-Yan is accepted on a School Direct place in a Teaching School, which is also part of a MAT. She follows a structured programme, with support and monitoring from experienced teachers.

Once accredited, Chek-Yan quickly progresses. The MAT moves her to a more challenging school after two years to broaden her experience. She continues to receive focused development and support and is part of a peer group across the MAT, which also pays for her to take a nationally recognised middle leader qualification. She reaches head of department five years after accreditation.

Chek-Yan successfully applies to the High Potential Middle Leaders programme and receives intensive training and coaching. Chek-Yan is designated as a Specialist Leader of Education and spends part of her time supporting another school, working alongside a National Leader of Education (NLE). The MAT puts her in charge of leading history improvement across the MAT, under the guidance of an executive head.

Eight years after accreditation, Chek-Yan is successful in a cross-MAT selection board for assistant heads. She becomes increasingly involved in work at regional level and after two years she takes a nationally recognised headship qualification.

Eleven years after Chek-Yan received her accreditation, the MAT expands to sponsor a failing school brokered by the RSC. An executive head oversees the transition and improvement of the school, and suggests that Chek-Yan applies for the headteacher position. Her application is successful, and she gets extensive support from the MAT.

She is keen to become an NLE and then progress to an executive head position within five years. She is already thinking about applying for an executive headship qualification, and wants to progress to CEO.

## Great leaders where they are most needed

3.12. While school leadership is a uniquely rewarding role, there are challenges too, especially in schools with poor results, high levels of deprivation, or in parts of the country where it is hard to recruit. These are the areas where strong school leaders are most needed. Overall, 20% of secondary schools and 13% of primaries are not rated good or outstanding for leadership and management by Ofsted (as at August 2015). This position varies significantly according to region, as shown in the maps<sup>20</sup> below. Addressing this is vital if the school-led system is to deliver excellence everywhere.

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<sup>20</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)

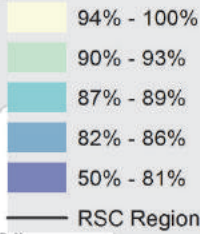


# Quality of Primary School Leadership

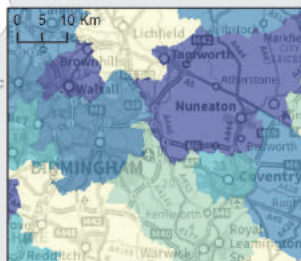
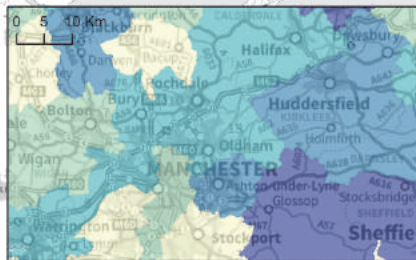
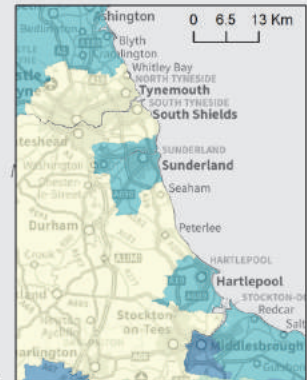
(% pupils in schools with good or outstanding leadership and management)

Department for Education

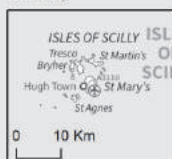
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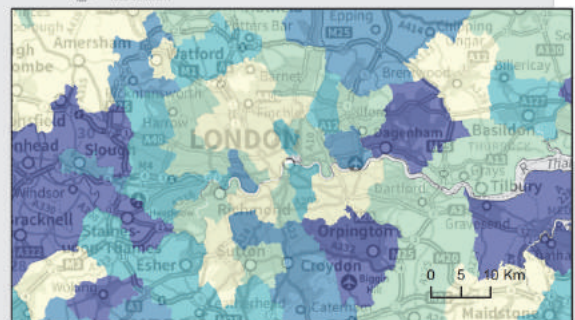
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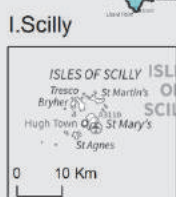
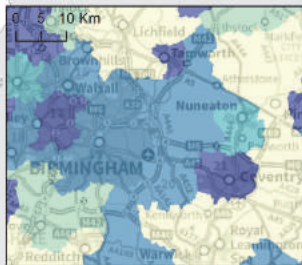
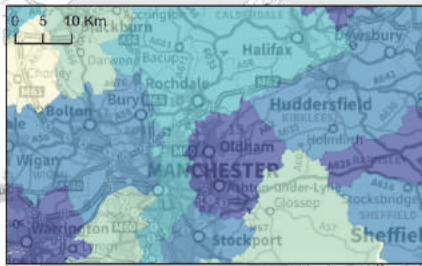
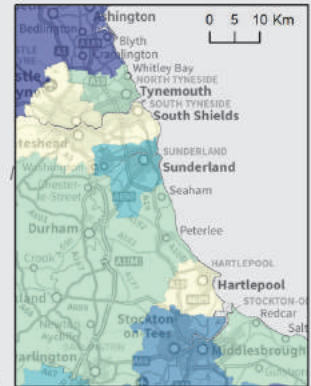
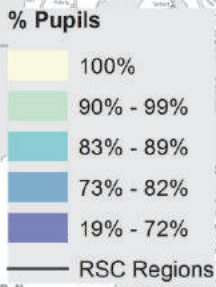
Data Sources  
Ofsted, Maintained schools and academies: inspections and outcomes, Aug 2015



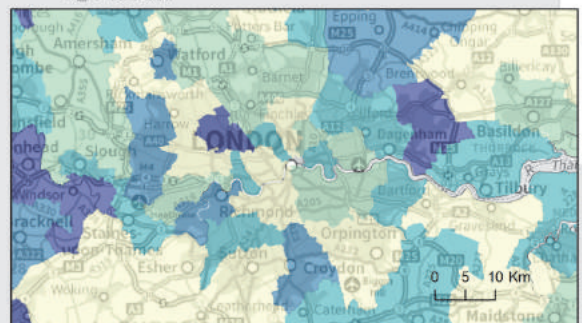


# Quality of Secondary School Leadership

(% pupils in schools with good or outstanding leadership and management)



**Data Sources**  
Ofsted, Maintained schools and academies: inspections and outcomes, Aug 2015



3.13. Many good leaders want to work in a challenging school, because that is where their skills and expertise can have the greatest impact on children's education. However, this can sometimes be seen as a risk for school leaders.

We will rebalance incentives so that great leaders are not discouraged from working in challenging schools, through a greater emphasis on progress in the accountability system and by introducing 'improvement periods', during which schools will not be inspected by Ofsted

3.14. We are improving the accountability framework to ensure that schools are recognised for the progress they make with every child – gaining full credit for pupils' achievements even if they start from a low base (see chapter 7).

3.15. We will also work with Ofsted to introduce 'improvement periods': where a school is judged to require improvement and a new headteacher steps forward to lead that improvement, the school will not face re-inspection until around 30 months after the previous inspection, unless the headteacher chooses to request an earlier visit. Similarly, when a poorly performing maintained school is replaced by a sponsored academy, a new school opens or a new sponsor is needed to drive further improvement in an academy, the school will not normally face inspection until its third year of operation. This 'breathing space' will – by providing the time and certainty to embed change and deliver improvement – encourage leaders to take on the challenge of working in the schools where they are most needed.

3.16. Having taken these steps to remove barriers, we will then invest in targeted initiatives to boost leadership capacity in challenging areas, creating opportunities and career pathways for good leaders to work where they are most needed.

We will introduce the new National Teaching Service to support elite teachers and strong middle leaders to move to work in some of the nation's most challenging areas, aligning this with existing targeted leadership programmes for maximum impact

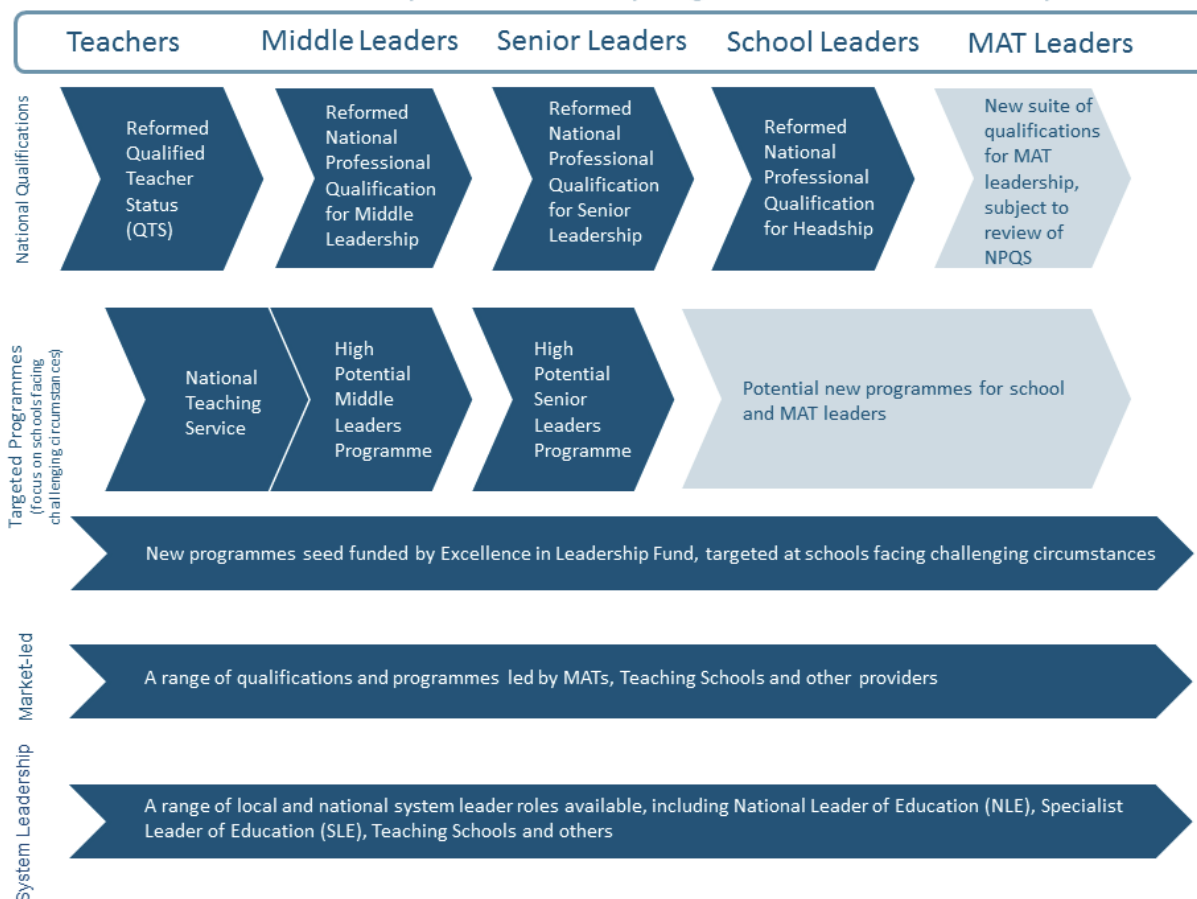
3.17. The most significant of these new programmes will be the National Teaching Service (NTS), through which underperforming schools in challenging areas will be able to request support from elite teachers and middle leaders for up to three years. These teachers and middle leaders will receive a package of support and a clear path to promotion – creating a career pathway for talented teachers and leaders working in challenging schools. We will start a pilot in the north-west from September 2016 with up to 100 participants. By 2020 the NTS will have placed 1,500 high-performing teachers and middle leaders into challenging schools across the country.

3.18. To create maximum impact, we will also continue to support the High Potential Middle and Senior Leaders programmes – which develop strong middle and senior leaders already working in challenging areas – and align these with the NTS to create critical mass, bringing together both existing and new talent to transform outcomes for children in some of the worst performing regions (see chapter 5).

We will launch an Excellence in Leadership Fund for the best MATs and other providers to develop innovative ideas to tackle significant leadership challenges in areas where great leaders are most needed

3.19. And to boost this priority further, we will also make funding available to stimulate new activity to support the development of strong leaders in challenging areas. We will invite providers with innovative new approaches to leadership development in challenging areas to bid for seed-funding for programmes that must be able to demonstrate a plan to become self-sustaining over time.

### Illustrative example of future progression to leadership





## Increasing diversity in leadership

3.20. Recruiting the best candidates into leadership positions is impossible unless you tap into the widest possible pool of talent. This is particularly important for the toughest schools, where great leaders are most needed. So we need to do more to release the full potential of our diverse leadership talent pool, including groups under-represented in leadership (like women, people from black and minority ethnic [BME] backgrounds, and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender [LGBT] teachers).

3.21. Currently, only 3.2% of heads are from black and minority ethnic groups (compared to 7.3% of all teachers) and at secondary, just 37.1% of headteachers are female (compared to 75.2% of all classroom teachers).

3.22. Several factors make these groups less likely to become leaders in education – for women, for example, these include overt and unconscious discrimination at the time of appointment; women being stereotyped into ‘caring’ pastoral roles; women’s lack of confidence in their own abilities to apply for promotion; and the real and perceived difficulties about part-time and job-share working<sup>21</sup>.

We will support schools to develop a strong and diverse pipeline of great school and system leaders, funding activity aimed at groups who are under-represented in leadership positions, like women and LGBT candidates and those from a BME background

3.23. We will strengthen our work with schools to raise aspirations and the chances of successful promotion among people with leadership potential from under-represented groups, including women and BME candidates.

3.24. We are supporting the creation of a Women in Education network to further support women with career progression, helping to overcome unconscious discrimination, sharing effective practice and coaching and mentoring. We will work with sector organisations such as the Association of School and College Leaders and #WomenEd and with schools already leading the way to ensure that this provision does not duplicate existing support for women in education.

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<sup>21</sup> Gender and educational leadership in England: a comparison of secondary headteachers’ views over time, 2007, Marianne Coleman, Institute of Education, University of London, and An investigation into women’s leadership preparation within the senior leadership team, BELMAS Small-Scale Research Projects 2014, Kay Fuller, University of Birmingham, Joanne Cliffe, University of Birmingham, Pontso Moorosi, University of Bedfordshire

3.25. As a government committed to supporting families and family life, we are also strongly in favour of flexible working and giving individuals and parents the choice to manage their careers around their caring and family commitments. But we know that less than 10% of school leaders work part-time<sup>22</sup>. Unless we change our approach to flexible and part-time working, we risk losing some of our most talented teachers and unfairly frustrating their ambitions.

3.26. Our proposals in chapter 2 to support teachers wishing to work part-time will also support schools in offering flexible working opportunities to leaders – helping to retain more of the profession’s top talent and to encourage the best candidates to pursue leadership positions.

## **Strategic leadership and oversight by skilled governing boards**

3.27. As we move to a more autonomous school-led system, it is increasingly vital that schools operate under effective governing boards. As the key decision maker and accountable body for their school(s), governing boards have a vital strategic role, which they should deliver in a dynamic and professional manner: focusing strongly on their core functions of setting the vision and ethos for their school(s), holding school leaders to account and making sure money is well spent.

3.28. The growth of MATs will improve the quality of governance – meaning that the best governing boards will take responsibility for more schools. As fewer, more highly skilled boards take more strategic oversight of the trust’s schools, MAT boards will increasingly use professionals to hold individual school-level heads to account for educational standards and the professional management of the school, allowing school-level governing boards to focus on understanding and championing the needs of pupils, parents and the wider local community. This does not mean less accountability – MATs must publish a clear scheme of delegation to set out how their governance is organised, including any functions they choose to delegate to regional or school level.

We will create stronger expectations on governing boards to fill skills gaps, including through training, with help to recruit skilled people. We will also develop a new competency framework for governance in different contexts

3.29. In recent years we have given governing boards more freedom to appoint the best possible people with the skills the board needs to be effective.

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<sup>22</sup> Source: School Workforce in England: November 2014 statistical first release published July 2015

3.30. We will expect all governing boards to focus on seeking people with the right skills for governance, and so we will no longer require academy trusts to reserve places for elected parents on governing boards. We will offer this freedom to all open and new academies, and as we move towards a system where every school is an academy, fully skills-based governance will become the norm across the education system.

3.31. Parents often have these skills and many parents already play a valuable role in governance – and will always be encouraged to serve on governing boards. We will also expect every academy to put in place arrangements for meaningful engagement with all parents, to listen to their views and feedback.

3.32. To encourage everyone involved in governance to develop their skills, we will work with schools and MATs to develop a competency framework defining the core skills and knowledge needed for governance in different contexts. We will also set a new, stronger requirement on all governing boards to ensure that individuals are properly inducted, and receive the training or development they need to develop the skills set out in the competency framework. We have extended licensed delivery of NCTL training programmes for chairs and clerks until September 2017, and will review our approach to governance training programmes in light of the new competency framework.

3.33. Clear, high quality information about performance is essential for good governance, and so we will make it easier for members of governing boards to access high quality, objective data about their school's educational and financial performance.

3.34. In March 2016 we launched a new, clearer website displaying school performance tables, making it easier for governing boards, parents and others to find key information and compare the results of schools (see more in chapter 7). We will continue to develop this in response to feedback to make it easier than ever to understand a school's performance. Where data suggests that there may be an issue within a school or MAT, we will pilot a proactive approach to alert governing boards so that they can investigate and, if necessary, take action.

3.35. We have a long and rich tradition of voluntary trusteeship and we expect the vast majority of those involved in governance will continue to be unpaid, volunteering to serve their community and give their school(s) the benefit of their expertise and commitment. As the scale of the challenge in governing large and growing MATs increases, we may see more of them seeking Charity Commission authorisation to offer payment to attract the very best people into key positions such as the chair of the board.

We will establish a database of everyone involved in governance. We intend to legislate so we can bar unsuitable individuals from being governors of maintained schools (as we can already in academies and independent schools)

The crucial role of governance makes it more important than ever to ensure that only the right individuals are involved. So we will extend Edubase to establish a database of everyone involved in governance, requiring schools and MATs to start providing information from September 2016, and we intend to legislate so that we have the power to bar unsuitable individuals from being governors of maintained schools, to mirror the existing barring power for academies and independent schools.

## Chapter 4: A school-led system with every school an academy, empowered pupils, parents and communities and a clearly defined role for local government

We want to put strong leadership at the heart of the education system by empowering great leaders and teachers to take charge of schools – reducing unnecessary complexity and duplication, and spreading high standards across the country. By the end of 2020, all schools will be academies or in the process of becoming academies; by the end of 2022, local authorities will no longer maintain schools. This change will help us to empower local communities, putting children and parents first and clearly defining the role of local government. We will:

- a. Continue to encourage high performing maintained schools to put forward applications to become academies by 2020
- b. Implement measures in the Education and Adoption Act so that all inadequate schools become sponsored academies and coasting schools are tackled for the first time
- c. Take powers to direct schools to become academies in underperforming local authority areas or where the local authority no longer has capacity to maintain its schools; or where schools have not yet started the process of becoming an academy by 2020
- d. Build sponsor capacity, speed up the process of conversion to academy status, and work with the Church of England, Catholic Church and other faith groups to support Church and faith schools to become academies
- e. Promote greater collaboration between schools, particularly through multi-academy trusts (MATs) which we expect most schools will join
- f. Ensure that the future school system is dynamic, responding to success and failure, and that RSCs intervene promptly where academies or MATs are underperforming
- g. Build on the success of the free school programme to open 500 new schools by 2020
- h. Engage MATs, sponsors, academies, dioceses and the wider schools sector to create a legal framework for academies that is fit for purpose for the long term
- i. Help parents to support their child's education and navigate the schools system, through a new Parent Portal
- j. Ensure school complaints and admissions are clear and fair for parents and children
- k. Define the role of local authorities in education: ensuring every child has a school place, that the needs of all pupils are met, and championing parents and the local community. Local authorities will step back from maintaining schools and school improvement
- l. Review the responsibilities of local authorities in relation to children, including the implications for the roles of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children, in light of the policy changes set out in this white paper



4.1. Over the last five years, the academies and free schools programmes have freed thousands of headteachers and leaders to drive improvement in their own schools and across the system. Autonomy and accountability align in academy trusts, where leaders are free to take decisions they believe will improve standards, and are held to account for the outcomes they achieve.

4.2. Before May 2010, there were just 203 academies. The Academies Act 2010 opened up academy status to every school in the country, and between May 2010 and December 2015, 3,516 schools voluntarily converted to academy status. Another 1,346 schools became sponsored academies, benefiting from the experience and expertise of strong sponsors to raise standards for pupils. The majority of English secondary schools are now academies, and almost all new schools are now academies – including free schools, free school presumption projects, university technical colleges (UTCs), alternative provision and special schools.

4.3. 2015 results show that primary sponsored academies open for two years have improved their results, on average, by 10 percentage points since opening, more than double the rate of improvement in local authority maintained schools over the same period. 2015 GCSE results show that secondary converter academies are performing 7.2 percentage points above the national average, with 64.3% of pupils achieving five or more good GCSEs, including English and maths.

Reynolds Primary Academy is a larger than average primary school for children aged 3-11, which joined the Tollbar MAT in September 2013. Over 30% of Reynolds Primary Academy's pupils are known to have been eligible for free school meals within the last six years, compared to 26% for primary schools nationally.

Tollbar MAT is based at Tollbar Academy, Grimsby, an outstanding secondary academy with more than 2,000 students. Tollbar Academy converted to academy status in September 2010, and formed Tollbar MAT in May 2012.

With Tollbar's support, KS2 performance at Reynolds Primary Academy increased by 7 percentage points in 2014, to 70% of all pupils achieving Level 4 or above in reading, writing and maths. This increase was maintained in 2015. Ofsted inspected the academy in June 2015 and judged it Good, an impressive improvement from Requires Improvement in October 2012.

Reynolds Primary Academy is not the only sponsored academy within Tollbar MAT to improve its Ofsted rating from Requires Improvement to Good in a short space of time – another school in the MAT, Cleethorpes (secondary) Academy, achieved the same improvement. The third sponsored academy in the Tollbar MAT, Somercotes (secondary) Academy, joined the Trust in November 2015 and the Trust is currently working hard to bring about improvements at this school.

## Every school an academy

4.4. Measures in the current Education and Adoption Act already clear the way for the conversion of all failing schools to become sponsored academies. Coasting schools – where data shows that a school has failed to support pupils to reach their potential for three consecutive years – will be required to produce a plan for improvement and may be taken over by a strong sponsor if they cannot demonstrate capacity to improve. Many high performing schools will also continue to convert voluntarily to academy status.

4.5. The academy system is now sufficiently mature to move to the next phase, with every school an academy. This would not have been possible in 2010, but will now help to spread high standards across the country, put great leaders at the heart of our school system, and reduce unnecessary complexity and duplication.

4.6. A system in which all state-funded schools are academies will deliver better results for all children through:

- a. Empowering great teachers and leaders – autonomy and accountability will better position people to succeed and provide more effective leadership structures
- b. Better responding to changes in performance – the system will prioritise responsiveness and clear accountability over an arbitrary requirement for all schools in a local area to be run by the same entity, regardless of its effectiveness
- c. Sustainability – schools will operate in more sustainable groups, and we will end the dual system of running schools which is inefficient and unsustainable in the long term
- d. A new role for local authorities – local authorities will move away from maintaining schools and focus on championing pupils and parents

By the end of 2020, all schools will be academies or in the process of becoming academies. By the end of 2022, local authorities will no longer maintain schools

4.7. By the end of 2020 all schools will be academies or in the process of becoming academies – we propose that:

- a. High performing schools will continue to submit applications to become academy trusts to their Regional Schools Commissioner (RSCs) – following prior discussions with their local foundation, where relevant
- b. Local authorities will have a new duty to facilitate the process of all maintained schools becoming academies
- c. In local authority areas which are underperforming or where the local authority no longer has capacity to maintain its schools we will take new powers to ensure schools become academies to a faster timescale

- d. Where schools are not academies or have not started the process by 2020, we will take steps to direct them to become academies so that by 2022 we will have brought a definitive end to the role of local authorities in maintaining schools. More details on the future role of local authorities in education can be seen below

4.8. To support the transition to this new model we will continue to provide financial support to schools applying to become an academy. We will also establish a MAT Growth Fund to invest in the people and systems needed to enable effective groups of schools to join together, and to support existing MATs to expand. In addition, we will support primary schools in becoming academies, providing guidance and 'how-to' tools based on the evidence and case studies from experiences of existing academy trusts, and working with the full range of national and local organisations that support primary schools to develop the best academy and MAT arrangements.

4.9. We will speed up the process of and reduce the barriers to conversion to academy status for all schools – for example, land issues (as set out in detail below). We will work with the Churches and faith groups, both nationally and regionally, to ensure all Church and faith schools are able to become academies.

4.10. We will continue to require that every failing school should become a sponsored academy. We also want coasting schools to demonstrate how they will improve, including how they will secure the benefits of converting into an academy and whether joining a MAT would help. RSCs may commission other support to help these schools, or require a coasting school to become an academy under a specific sponsor where the school cannot demonstrate a sufficient plan for improvement.

4.11. We think that academies are the best type of school for talented people to improve outcomes for pupils. To ensure that children continue to benefit from the expertise of the best talent in local authority teams, we expect that some individuals will leave local authorities to set up new academy trusts or to join existing ones. As with all trusts these will be subject to RSC approval, as well as an 'opt-in' for schools in the area to avoid re-creating geographical monopolies.

4.12. The majority of academies currently lease their land from local authorities, typically over a 125 year lease. To speed up the process of academy conversion and ensure that land issues do not get in the way of improving schools, when a local authority's community schools convert to academy status, land held by the authority for those schools will transfer to the Secretary of State, who will then grant a lease to the academy trust. We will also take steps to ensure that the wider education estate is safeguarded for future provision, and that the existing school estate can be used more easily for new schools and expansions where applicable.

4.13. Where a school converts to academy status, the government will not take ownership of any land owned either by schools themselves, or by any charitable trust. However, the ability for maintained schools to convert to foundation status will be removed.

4.14. We will work with the Churches and relevant faith bodies to ensure that the religious character and ethos of Church and faith schools is protected in a system where every school is an academy. We will ensure that all schools are inclusive and welcoming to the communities around them, with a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. We are agreeing new Memoranda of Understanding with the National Society for the Church of England and the Catholic Education Service for the Catholic Church which will include:

- a. An acknowledgement that the Churches will expect their academies to remain part of a diocesan family of schools
- b. Key principles to underpin and develop the strategic relationship between RSCs and dioceses
- c. Clear protocols for agreeing the arrangements required when Church schools become academies

## **Greater collaboration through multi-academy trusts**

4.15. We want schools to operate in strong, resilient structures which raise standards so that external intervention is only necessary in exceptional circumstances. This means that most schools will form or join MATs – allowing proven educational models to be scaled and the system’s best leaders to run more than one school. MATs are the only structures which formally bring together leadership, autonomy, funding and accountability across a group of academies in an enduring way, and are the best long term formal arrangement for stronger schools to support the improvement of weaker schools.

4.16. More than half of all academies are already part of a MAT, and the vast majority of new academies are created in MATs rather than as standalone academies. MATs can offer schools significant benefits in:

- a. Staffing and leadership, with improved career opportunities and support for teachers and leaders, as set out in chapters 2 and 3
- b. Excellent practice in teaching and curriculum and reduced workload, as set out in chapters 2 and 6
- c. More robust governance, as set out in chapter 3
- d. More efficient back-office arrangements that free up more funding for the classroom, as set out in chapter 8

4.17. The benefits of joining a MAT are strong both for high-performing schools and for those which need greater support – particularly small schools and primary schools, which can call on the expertise of the MAT for better governance and back-office arrangements, and to increase and improve the breadth of their curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

4.18. We know that on average MATs can begin to fully develop the centralised systems and functions that will deliver these benefits at a size of around 10-15 academies – although the real determinant of effective size is the number of pupils. Over time we expect there to be many more MATs of this size, and we will therefore encourage and support MATs to grow, ensuring that they can access the support they will need to expand sustainably.

Most schools will form or join MATs, given the benefits they offer

4.19. Because of these benefits, we expect that most schools will form or join MATs as they become academies and that many existing Single Academy Trusts (SATs) will see the benefits of setting up or joining a MAT too. The Department for Education (DfE) will publish ‘design principles’ to set out what we know about successful MATs and will explain the basis on which RSCs will expect to approve MATs and SATs. Effective schools can be SATs and schools will be able to continue as SATs apart from when they are too small to be successful and sustainable alone. Small schools will still exist, but other than in exceptional circumstances they will be part of a MAT helping to secure their long term success.

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT) was established in 2010 by an outstanding secondary and primary school. It has since grown to include 10 schools in two hubs, one in Medway and one in Portsmouth. The Trust’s aim is to work together to improve the life chances of all of its pupils, and believes they are “simply stronger together”.

All TSAT academies benefit from central services provided by the Trust. Each academy has a headteacher who is advised and supported by an Advisory Board which acts as a link to the community. Each hub has an executive principal to provide strategic leadership and support the development of academies in their areas. Responsibility for day to day oversight of the academies, including holding the leadership team to account for performance, rests with one of three Regional Governance Boards.

4.20. In the future, there will be more MATs spreading best practice across the schools system and by joining, forming, expanding or leading MATs, the best leaders, who have already proven their success, ability and skills, can play a greater role in the system and spread success more widely to benefit more children. Where appropriate, sponsors will bring extra capacity to MATs, whether to boost educational or managerial capacity.

4.21. Regional Schools Commissioners will have an important role to play in their local area, encouraging high performing schools to extend their influence and recruiting and growing MATs in their region. More information about their role can be found in chapter 7.

4.22. MATs will play a central role in the future school system. They differ from local authorities because they:

- a. Prevent geographic monopolies with different MATs operating in a given area, increasing diversity of provision and giving parents more choice and competition. If performing well, MATs can scale their success nationwide, taking effective models from one part of the country to the toughest areas in a way that no high-performing local authority ever could
- b. Provide opportunities to bring together educational expertise with business and financial skills in innovative and efficient organisations that can deliver better outcomes from the resources available
- c. Offer a clear, single point of accountability where the leader of the MAT has the powers and funding to bolster standards in the schools for which he or she is responsible, and is completely accountable for the results
- d. Direct funding for the whole group of schools where it can do most good, commissioning support and services from a variety of providers, or developing the services themselves if they think they can perform better

4.23. MATs will also ensure that there are arrangements for parents to engage in their child's education. As set out below, we will expect all academy trusts to have arrangements for listening to and understanding the views and needs of parents, employees and communities, and clear channels for complaints and redress.

## **A dynamic, self-improving school system**

4.24. It is vital that, in the new system, underperformance is tackled swiftly and successful providers can expand, replacing weak ones. A system in which academy trusts' or MATs' arrangements are frozen forever would be largely indistinguishable from the geographic monopolies of local authorities and to have a system which is slow to respond to poor performance would not sufficiently address the inconsistency in dealing with underperformance that has existed among different local authorities.

Regional School Commissioners (RSCs) will intervene promptly where academies or MATs are underperforming

4.25. Where academies are underperforming, RSCs will continue to intervene promptly, using the government's powers over failing and coasting schools (see chapter 5).

4.26. There is a range of interventions RSCs can apply, depending on a school's performance, sustainability and capacity for improvement. Where MATs are on track to deal with underperformance they should be left to do so. The default approach to tackling chronic underperformance will continue to be to broker the school into a high-performing MAT, where school leaders with a track record of success can apply proven models to improve performance.

4.27. Where external intervention happens – ultimately because the cost of turbulence is outweighed by the continuing damage to children’s education in an underperforming school – it must happen as quickly and seamlessly as possible. This is also the case where a MAT as a whole is underperforming. In that instance, RSCs should therefore be able to set schools free to join other MATs or, ultimately, should be able to wind up the underperforming MAT altogether. Where the RSC decides that a school needs to join a different MAT, we will be more transparent about this and the process of finding and appointing a MAT to support the school.

We will ensure that the new school system is dynamic, responding to success and failure

4.28. This approach means that the size and influence of MATs will vary according to performance. The best MATs will flourish, taking over and turning around weak academies; MATs which are underperforming will be challenged and, if necessary, their schools will be transferred to a stronger trust. This is essential for the system to operate effectively and to serve parents.

4.29. A dynamic system should also carefully balance unnecessary instability against the need for continuous improvement in individual schools and for the system as a whole. As part of our engagement on the legal framework for the future (see below), we will therefore test how we can develop a system with the right balance of intervention, review and stability.

4.30. We envisage this being a system which continues to allow an immediate response where there is underperformance, but which protects the arrangements of the strongest MATs in all but the most exceptional circumstances. We also want to consider whether there is a place for more routine periodic review of MAT arrangements. We would also want to ensure the system continues to allow individual schools to agree with their MATs by consensus to move to a different MAT.

4.31. We will also consider how parents at individual schools might be able to petition RSCs for their school to move to a different MAT where the school or its MAT is underperforming or in other exceptional circumstances – for instance, where there is consensus amongst parents that a MAT is failing to adequately support a school in a location isolated from the rest of the cluster. RSCs will take decisions about any changes based on what is in the best interests of children and parents and of all schools within that MAT.

4.32. Our approach to Church and other faith schools will be underpinned by our commitment to maintaining their religious character and ethos and the strong relationship between the RSC and relevant bodies, such as church dioceses.



4.33. In the rare scenario that a trust stops operating an academy at short notice (and there is no immediate, alternative provider) the Secretary of State will be responsible for the running of the school – until a long term solution is found – and she may direct a local body to do so on her behalf.

**When all schools are academies, the process by which schools move between MATs may work like this (illustrative example):**

Evans Education Endeavours (EEE) is a strong MAT of six schools. EEE is performing well in published MAT measures and each school has strong performance data and Ofsted results. EEE is overseen by a small, skilled board which sets the overall strategy and oversees staff succession planning and finance. Each school's local governing board scrutinises attainment and progress data. A strong headteacher from one of the schools has stepped up to the role of Executive Head. EEE is keen to grow to around 15 schools, and the RSC agrees that EEE has the right support and structures.

Another MAT, Shining Academies (SA), is struggling. It has nine schools, seven within the same county as EEE and two in another part of the country. SA is performing poorly in published MAT measures; six of its schools are failing or coasting; the three performing well are unhappy with the support they receive from SA.

The RSC suggests to EEE that they should take on seven SA schools, creating a MAT of 13 schools across two local authority areas. It offers funding to support sponsor growth and capacity, and suggests that the Executive Head becomes the CEO (participating in the MAT CEO development programme). EEE's central board is strengthened by a new non-executive director recruited via Academy Ambassadors. Parents' views are sought throughout this process. The board restructures governance and leadership by establishing two 'raising achievement' boards, each holding an executive principal to account for a cluster of 6-7 schools, leaving school level bodies to focus on listening to and engaging parents. EEE uses its expertise to improve the newly joined 7 schools, improving outcomes for thousands of children.

## **Supporting the creation of new free schools and university technical colleges (UTCs)**

4.34. As well as taking action to transform underperforming schools, it is important to support the establishment of new schools to drive up standards, stimulate competition, and ultimately allow parents and communities to demand more for their children.

We will build on the success of the free school programme to open 500 new schools by 2020

4.35. These 500 new free schools and UTCs will contribute to achieving educational excellence everywhere by meeting the need for more school places in areas of basic need and ensuring our school system offers greater choice, innovation and competition in areas where educational standards are currently lower than they should be or where parents and the local community want a new or better school.

4.36. Stimulating competition to provide a new school will find the best possible providers – existing local schools, expanding to spread their success; parent and community groups wanting to provide a particular kind of school; or successful educationalists from elsewhere in the country, spreading great practice to new areas.

4.37. Some of these new free school places will be in areas of basic need, but not all. Some will be set up in areas of poor educational standards as ‘challenger’ schools, bringing new energy, capacity and choice into the country’s lowest-performing areas, or will provide alternative models that better deliver the type of education which parents and the local community want. They can also help social integration, bringing pupils from different backgrounds together. We will ensure these benefits are felt across the country, with new free schools enabling new providers to compete with existing providers on an equal basis. This will continue to encourage innovative models of education, which is especially important in the alternative provision and special educational needs sectors.

Exeter Mathematics School opened in September 2014 as a sixth-form maths specialist college for 16 to 19-year-olds, which will offer 120 places at capacity. Alongside King's College London Mathematics School, it is one of only two specialist maths colleges sponsored by high quality universities in the country, both of which were opened through the free schools programme. It works hard to attract students from across the south west, offering boarding facilities for around 30% of its students to widen access.

The college is sponsored by the University of Exeter and Exeter College and every student receives mentoring support from the University of Exeter. Setting high standards and high aspirations, all students need to display a high aptitude for maths via an admissions test and interview.

All students at the college take three A levels – mathematics, further maths and physics or computer science – and a fourth A level chosen from 40 options at Exeter College. All pupils take the Exeter Mathematics Certificate, a programme devised by university and EMS staff to prepare students for university study.

Preliminary data from the first set of AS results reported by Exeter Mathematics School shows that 100% of students achieved a pass rate in the first set of AS results across all subjects. The school also reports that 91% of students achieved either an A or B in Maths and around 80% attained an A or B in Physics. The school reported ALIS Value Added score placed the school in the top 1% of post-16 providers for progress across all subjects.<sup>23</sup>

4.38. To ensure sufficient new schools can be established where they are needed, we will continue to work with local authorities and other public sector bodies to secure sites for new free schools and introduce measures that will enable the Secretary of State to require the use of local authority land for new free schools, as well as clarifying and strengthening how the free school presumption works. DfE will also consider providing funding for schools that are part of housing developments to be built in advance of contributions from developers being paid, to bridge the gap between places being required and funding being available.

4.39. UTCs are a type of free school. They enable businesses to take the lead in establishing and running schools, with significant input from world class universities.

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<sup>23</sup> The Advanced Level Information System is a measure produced by the Centre for Educational Measurement (CEM). The ALIS is not published, other than by schools which choose to release their own data.

4.40. We are committed to ensuring there is a UTC within reach of every city so that increasing numbers of young people can benefit from this type of technical education. We will strengthen the programme through reforms to help UTCs with pupil recruitment and improve their educational and financial viability, including: targeting future UTC locations in areas without such provision within reach; flexibilities in admission arrangements; and an expectation that all UTCs should be part of strong partnerships with high performing secondary schools, such as MATs.

Marine Academy Primary (MAP2) is a new primary free school based in the centre of Plymouth. The school opened in September 2013 and was set up by Marine Academy Plymouth (MAP), an existing 11-19 school rated Good by Ofsted in October 2012.

The school is sponsored by the University of Plymouth (lead sponsor), Cornwall College and Plymouth City Council and is based on the same campus as a nursery and Marine Academy Plymouth. MAP2 offers a broad and balanced curriculum which aims to ensure pupils achieve high academic outcomes, excellent literacy and outstanding communication skills, a love for knowing how to learn and an eagerness to find out more. The school's curriculum, like that of the secondary school, involves a 'marine' element to reflect the city's nautical history. The school day starts with breakfast club at 7:45am and ends at 6pm each evening with after school club.

In June 2015, MAP2 was graded 'Outstanding' in all areas by Ofsted.

## **A legal framework fit for the long term**

4.41. We must ensure that the legal framework for academies is fit for purpose for the long term. At present, the basis on which academies operate depends entirely on when they became an academy.

We will engage MATs, sponsors, academies, dioceses and the wider schools sector to ensure that the legal framework for academies is fit for purpose for the long term

4.42. We will engage with existing sponsors, academies, dioceses and the wider schools sector to redesign the legal framework for academies so that it:

- a. Protects and promotes autonomy, alongside robust and proportionate accountability
- b. Ensures that ministers are able to make and evolve policy that will apply equally to both past and future academies, particularly in urgent situations
- c. Facilitates a clear and transparent mechanism by which successful academy providers can expand, and unsuccessful ones can shrink or leave the system

4.43. Doing this will require us to strike the right balance of freedoms for and controls over academies. In some cases – like curriculum and staffing – academies should receive assurance that they will be free to innovate without central interference. At the same time there are occasions, particularly with regard to safeguarding, when government needs the flexibility to take urgent action to place new requirements on schools or to balance the interests of individual schools with those of parents and pupils. We will engage with the sector to define the right model of freedoms and controls.

## **Empowering pupils, parents and communities, with a clearly defined role for local government**

4.44. This devolution of power to the school-led system means that the traditional roles of central and local government will change. Our approach enables school and system leaders to make high quality, local decisions; putting the needs of local communities first and helping to build a more diverse, innovative and autonomous school system.

4.45. In making these changes to improve outcomes for children, it is important to support parents. We want to make it much easier for every parent to navigate the schools system, to choose the best school for their child, to support their child to succeed and to help them make the choices that will best prepare them for adult life in modern Britain.

4.46. We will also establish a clearly defined role for local government. Local authorities will step back from running schools and will focus instead on delivering and strengthening core functions – becoming one of the key partners working to deliver educational excellence everywhere.

## **Putting children and parents first**

4.47. Children are at the heart of these reforms, and at the heart of our vision for the education system – to provide world class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background.

4.48. Every parent in this country has a stake in the quality of our education system and our schools; every parent wants the best for their child. Yet parents have not always been at the heart of the system and they have not always had the information they need to challenge schools to improve. This must change.

4.49. The role of parents is crucial; from supporting their child to holding schools to account. Our approach puts parents and children first, not through symbolic representation on a governing board, but through engagement with schools, a voice in the key decisions about their child's school, and clear information that means parents can support their child's learning and demand more from the school. The free schools programme also empowers parents where they feel a new school would better deliver the type of education they want for their children.

We will help parents to support their child's education, making it easier for them to understand and navigate the schools system, including by launching a new Parent Portal

4.50. Many parents find it difficult to understand the school system or to navigate it successfully. There are too many barriers preventing parents from fully supporting their child's education or from holding their child's school to account.

4.51. As a first step, we will work closely with parents to ensure that they can easily understand the school system and have the tools and information they need. A new online Parent Portal will set out clearly the key things a parent needs to know about schools. This will help parents to support their child and strengthen parental choice.

4.52. We will launch the portal in 2017, designing it around the needs and priorities of parents, such as the areas of the curriculum a child should have mastered by a particular age, the range of extra-curricular activities offered by different schools, other parents' views on schools, and how parents can support their child's education and development from early years to the very end of their school career.

4.53. The portal will give parents the information they need to set high expectations and demand more for their child – for example, not only with helping their child to reach their full potential but also alerting them to the signs that their child is falling behind so they can talk to the child's teacher and challenge the school if necessary. The portal will highlight the critical and respected role of the teacher, and set expectations for parent-teacher interactions, enabling parents and teachers to work together to help children achieve their best.

4.54. Complementing all the information schools provide to parents directly, the Parent Portal will work alongside a new performance tables website (see chapter 7), where it will be easier for parents to find out how well their child's school is performing and to compare schools across a range of key measures. Ofsted will continue to provide valuable, in depth information about individual schools' performance (see chapter 7).

4.55. We want to ensure that parents are not only informed about their child's school and its performance but also able to influence decisions. Parents with much needed skills have a valuable contribution to make to the effective governance of schools. Governance needs to be informed by parents' views, but governance structures themselves are not the right vehicle for gathering those views. So as set out in chapter 3, we will introduce a new duty on academies, as they shift towards fully skills-based governance, to ensure that they listen to the views and needs of all parents, particularly when key decisions are made about the school.

We will ensure complaints and admissions processes are clear and fair for parents and children

4.56. If parents and pupils feel their voices aren't being heard, they need clear and appropriate channels for complaints. We will provide guidance on handling complaints to help ensure a common approach for all schools and MATs so that all parents know where they can go if a problem arises.

4.57. Schools and their governing boards are best placed to respond to these concerns. All schools have complaints policies and procedures, either informal or formal, and in the majority of cases these procedures resolve issues quickly to everyone's satisfaction.

4.58. Where these procedures fail to resolve an issue, parents need a clear route of escalation beyond the governing board. We will make it simpler for parents and the local community to escalate complaints to DfE, and beyond that to a public service ombudsman. As now, parents can also escalate their complaints about whole school education concerns to Ofsted after following the school's complaints procedure.

4.59. As set out above, we will consider how parents might be able to petition RSCs for their child's school to move to a different MAT where there is underperformance or other exceptional circumstances, and RSCs will want to take parental views into account when a change of leadership is proposed for their child's school.

4.60. We also want parents to share their views of a school regularly, not just during inspection, and for prospective parents to be able to find out what parents think of a school. In autumn 2016, Ofsted will launch an improved Parent View website. We will look at going further than this, for example, by regularly canvassing and reporting parents' views through the new Parent Portal or school performance tables websites.

4.61. We intend to make a number of changes to make it easier for parents to navigate the admissions system. We will also seek views on making admissions processes clearer and simpler, including proposals to better support parents who want to delay entry of summer-born children so they can start reception at age 5, and clarifying that those children can remain with that cohort as they progress through school. We will streamline functions of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator so objections to admission arrangements are resolved more quickly. We will also relax restrictions on school sixth form admissions to align them more closely with other post-16 provision by removing them from the scope of the Code, whilst retaining certain key requirements including the assured route of transition between year 11 and year 12 for students at the school.

4.62. To ensure the admissions system continues to work for parents in a school-led system, we will seek views on requiring local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions so parents have a clear route for securing a school place and children do not fall through the gaps. We will look to ensure that admission appeals are resolved in a timely and professional manner by discussing with the sector the feasibility of requiring local authorities to handle the administration of the independent admission appeals function, and creating a single route for escalating any complaints about the maladministration of appeals to a public service ombudsman.



4.63. As discussed in chapter 6, we have taken steps to make sure that parents of children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) have a stronger role in deciding the best support for their child. Through the SEND Code of Practice, we have strengthened the requirements for schools to engage parents in determining the type of support their child receives and the outcomes they can expect for their child. Local authorities must publish a local offer of services for children and young people with SEND, which they are required to co-produce with local parents and young people.

4.64. The government funds Parent Carer Forums in every local area to work with local authorities and other statutory services to improve local SEND provision. Parents continue to have a right to appeal to the SEND tribunal in certain circumstances relating to their child's Education, Health and Care needs assessment and plan, and in relation to disability discrimination claims.

## **Local authorities supporting communities**

4.65. Devolving power to individual school and system leaders sits squarely within this government's devolution agenda.

4.66. That means that the role of local authorities in education will change. We will establish a clear role for them, focusing on the right functions for local authorities to fulfil in a system where every school is an academy and ensuring that they can provide support to parents and children.

4.67. This role will mark a clear break with the past, when local authorities were directly responsible for all state-funded education provision in their area: maintaining schools, providing school support and improvement services, and often employing the staff.

4.68. There was considerable variation in how well local authorities performed these duties – some pushed their schools to achieve high standards and supported them to improve, others did not. As provision was automatically arranged into geographic monopolies, parents had little meaningful choice – state-funded schools in a certain area were overseen by the same local authority.

4.69. The academies programme broke these monopolies by allowing schools to become independent within the state sector and allowing the entry of different providers.

4.70. Over the last five years, many local authorities have actively supported their schools to become academies. The Education and Adoption Act places a duty on local authorities to facilitate the conversion of all failing and coasting schools in need of a sponsored academy solution. As discussed above, local authorities will be under a duty to facilitate the process of all maintained schools becoming academies.

4.71. Beyond the removal of their duties to run schools, as set out above, responsibility for school improvement is moving away from local authorities to the school-led system (chapter 5), and local authorities' role in allocating local funding will be overtaken by the National Funding Formula (chapter 8).

Bromley local authority has already made the commitment that all of its schools should become academies. It has been working closely with the DfE and its maintained schools to encourage them to apply for academy status.

As at March 2016, 79% of Bromley's schools are academies. DfE officials are in regular contact with Bromley local authority to discuss the progress of schools applying to become academies. This work includes defining the most appropriate MATs for schools to join, and meeting small groups of governing boards and headteachers to discuss governance and explain the process of academy conversion.

No Bromley maintained school is currently in an Ofsted category of concern. DfE officials continue to work closely with Bromley to support any vulnerable schools to join strong MATs, helping to drive up standards for children across the Bromley area.

4.72. We therefore intend to legislate to change local authorities' powers and duties. Instead of running schools or school improvement, local authorities will focus on delivering their core functions, working as partners with the schools system of the future and champions for parents and the local community.

4.73. In the short term, local authorities will continue to have responsibilities which include: employment of staff in community schools; ownership and asset management of school buildings; and responsibilities relating to the governance, organisation and curriculum of maintained schools. Those responsibilities will shrink as each school in their area becomes an academy; when every school has done so, they will fall away entirely.

4.74. There will be a number of other responsibilities for which local authorities will retain responsibility, including oversight of testing arrangements.

Local authorities play an important role in the education system: ensuring every child has a school place, that the needs of all pupils are met and championing parents and families. They will step back from running schools and school improvement

4.75. Local authorities are currently bound by a wide range of statutory duties covering education, childcare and children's social care – with particular responsibility for ensuring the needs of vulnerable children and young people are met. They also take a lead on local inter-agency cooperation on education, health and social care, for example to support children with special educational needs or disability.

4.76. Local authorities also have a number of growing functions relating to the education of 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds. They are responsible for delivering 15 hours per week of early education for disadvantaged 2-year-olds and all 3- and 4-year olds. From September 2017, local authorities will deliver an additional 15 hours to working parents of 3- and 4-year olds.

4.77. In future, local authority education duties will be focused on three areas:

- a. **Ensuring every child has a school place:** including that there are sufficient school, special school and alternative provision places to meet demand. Local authorities will retain responsibility for this in a fully academised system. The government will support them by continuing to provide substantial funding to allow them to deliver sufficient places, as well as by creating places through the free schools programme. As in the past, we expect that they will use their strong relationships with local schools to deliver the places needed in a local area, including planning ahead where necessary to support applications through the central free schools programme or to seek proposals for presumption free schools. Where local authorities are failing in this duty, the government will not hesitate to intervene. Local authorities will also work with schools and parents in developing local school transport policies, giving schools the opportunity to provide school transport services where that makes sense locally; and take a lead in crisis management and emergency planning
- b. **Ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met:** including identifying, assessing and making provision for children with special educational needs and disability and looked after children; promoting school attendance and tackling persistent absence; ensuring that alternative provision is available for headteachers to commission for children and young people excluded from school or otherwise unable to attend a mainstream school, as discussed in chapter 6; leading on safeguarding responsibilities for all children, including those in unregulated settings, educated at home and children missing education, as well as children at risk of radicalisation; working with schools to ensure that they understand and discharge their safeguarding duties; and supporting vulnerable children, as set out in chapter 6 – for example, acting as the ‘corporate parent’ for looked after children, using the statutory Virtual School Head role to work with schools and other agencies on promoting their educational achievement and progress, and deciding how to spend the Pupil Premium Plus
- c. **Acting as champions for all parents and families:** including listening to and promoting the needs of parents, children and the local community – working alongside elected mayors; supporting parents in navigating the system through a continuing role in admissions; supporting children, young people and parents to navigate local SEND arrangements (such as providing information, advice and support) and engaging them in designing and co-producing local SEND policies, service commissioning and delivery; and championing high standards locally for all pupils, for example, by encouraging high performing providers to establish new school places and where necessary calling for action from the Regional Schools Commissioner to tackle underperformance

4.78. This important role will complement local authorities' wider responsibilities for local economic growth and prosperity. Just as a local authority already encourages employers to create more jobs in their area, or attracts businesses to fill empty retail units on their high streets, so too it can use its democratic authority to encourage top-performing MATs to set up new schools in their area, or encourage popular, high-performing schools to expand.

4.79. Local authorities will continue to use the range of powers already available to them to tackle any safety, welfare or extremism concerns that arise in their areas.

In light of the policy changes set out in this white paper, we will review the responsibilities of local authorities in relation to children, including the implications for the roles of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children

4.80. Our review of local authorities' functions and responsibilities will include consideration of the roles of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children, appointed for the purposes of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority, as set out in section 18(2) of the Children Act 2004. This will also provide an opportunity to consult on any changes to statutory guidance.

## Chapter 5: Preventing underperformance and helping schools go from good to great: school-led improvement, with scaffolding and support where it's needed

We believe a school-led system is the best way to improve outcomes for children. To strengthen this system and enable it to deliver excellence everywhere, we will provide extra support to stimulate activity in areas of the country where schools are falling behind, building capacity to deliver long term, sustainable self-improvement where it is most needed. We will:

- a. Enable the best leaders to play a wider role by transferring responsibility for school improvement from local authorities to school and system leaders to spread expertise and best practice
- b. Ensure all schools in all areas can choose to access support, collaboration and best practice through full coverage of system leaders across the country
- c. Improve how we designate system leaders (teaching schools and NLEs) by introducing a more sophisticated approach based on timely and accurate data rather than relying heavily on Ofsted judgements
- d. Ensure that the work of system leaders is focused, purposeful and evidence-based, and the right incentives and brokerage are in place to encourage them to work with vulnerable schools
- e. Provide targeted funding for system leaders to build capacity through school-to-school support and for RSCs to intervene in failing and coasting schools
- f. Ensure that there are enough strong academy sponsors available where they are needed, and build sponsor capacity for the long term
- g. Place a sharp new focus on 'Achieving Excellence Areas' – where too few children have access to a good school and there are insufficient high quality teachers, leaders, system leaders and sponsors – to enable the school-led system to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement

5.1. As set out in chapter 1, supported autonomy will both enable the best headteachers to extend their influence beyond their own schools and help them to raise standards across the system. Good schools will lead school improvement across the country, spreading the interventions and approaches which really work, taking charge of their own improvement and collaborating with others in a genuinely school-led system.

5.2. We have already seen in the last Parliament that this approach has led to significant gains in many areas; but not yet in all. Although this country now has more good and outstanding schools than ever before, areas remain where schools are underperforming.

5.3. Our aim over the next five years is to spread the excellence in many parts of the country to all as a matter of social justice. As such, we will do more to support improvement by building capacity and creating the conditions that will allow schools in all areas to use their freedom effectively, rather than just intervening in the case of failure. In particular, we will target our support for schools and leaders on parts of the country where standards are not yet good enough and where there are not yet enough high quality teachers, school leaders, system leaders, sponsors and MATs to drive improvement, strengthening the school-led system where it is most needed.

5.4. Most obviously, and effectively, this will involve encouraging the best schools to play an enhanced role by forming and managing MATs, sharing the excellence they have built in their own schools.

5.5. But we will also significantly expand the number of teaching schools and national leaders of education – with a targeted approach focused on areas where they are most needed – to create a comprehensive national network of school-led support for leaders to draw on as they choose. Funding for school improvement will be increasingly routed through these system leaders, who will be held to account for the quality and impact of the support they provide.

5.6. This approach aims to build on the most successful elements of previous school improvement programmes – in particular, London Challenge – and to reproduce them across the country. Many of the approaches piloted by London Challenge – from Teach First, National Leaders of Education, teaching schools and sponsored academies, to the use of targeted support for failing schools and rich comparative data on the performance of similar schools – are now embedded across the country, used and led by teachers. We will continue to build on these approaches to deliver excellence everywhere.

## **Greater collaboration between schools to drive up standards**

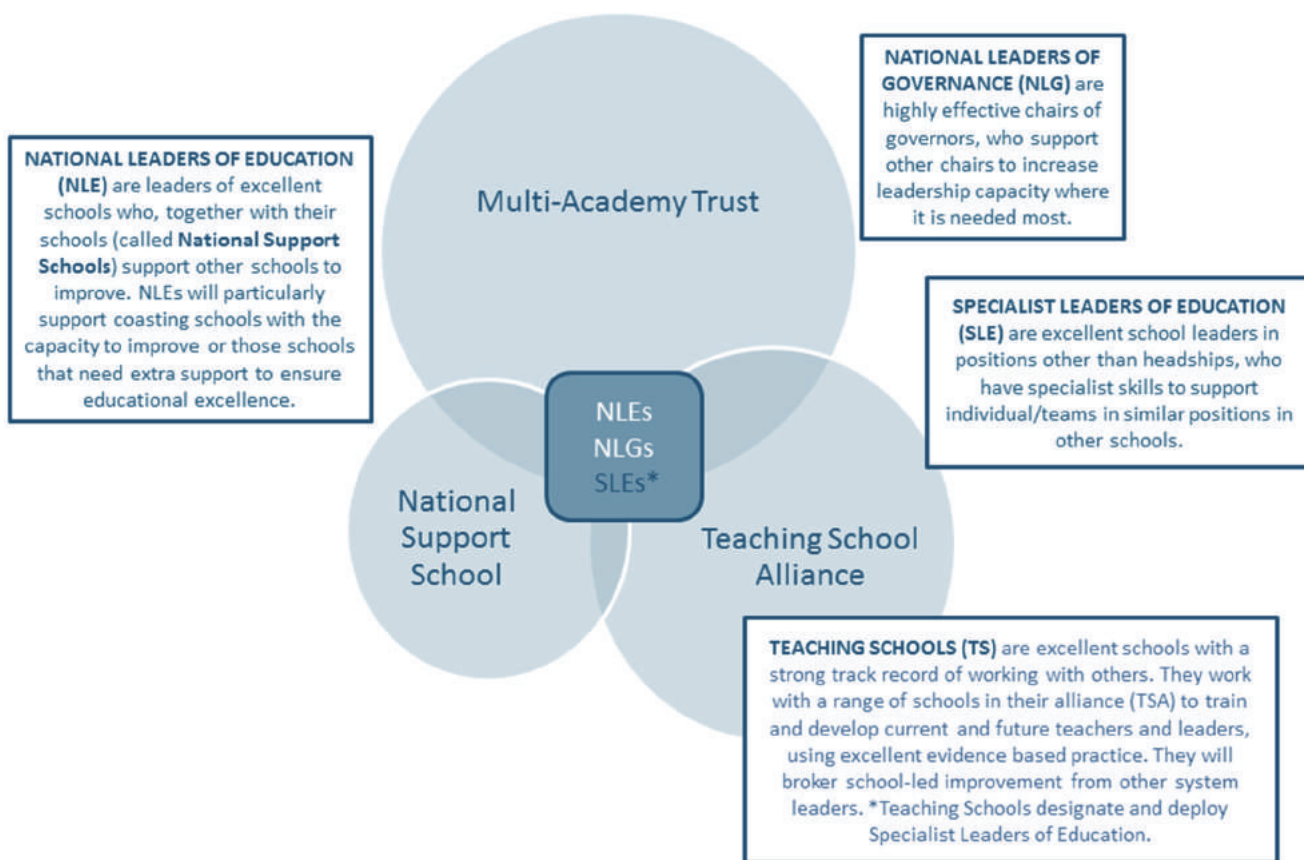
We will enable the best leaders to play a wider role by transferring responsibility for school improvement from local authorities to school and system leaders to spread expertise and best practice

5.7. Many of the country's best leaders are already working together to spread excellent practice based on evidence of what works. We therefore intend to legislate so that responsibility for school improvement will sit squarely with the best leaders and the best schools – meaning that those with experience of turning schools around and achieving high standards will be able to drive change across the system.



5.8. This change will also allow schools to form clusters and draw on support based on their school’s specific needs and requirements. It will be a dynamic system, where schools choose the partnerships that will deliver continuous improvement for their own school and for others. As set out in chapter 4, most schools will join or establish a MAT and in many cases, they will draw school improvement support from the MAT. But we do not want to create monopolies – schools will also be able to choose to access support from other sources, including teaching school alliances and system leaders with high standards in their own schools.

## System Leadership



## Creating a comprehensive national network of teaching schools and NLEs

5.9. To make a reality of excellence everywhere, it is important that schools in all areas can choose to draw on expertise and best practice. So we will ensure full coverage of teaching schools and NLEs across the country by designating new system leaders where they are most needed.

We will ensure all schools in all areas can access support, collaboration and best practice by ensuring full coverage of system leaders across the country, with up to 300 more teaching schools and 800 more NLEs targeted where most needed

5.10. There is a clear appetite from strong schools to play a bigger leadership role in the school system. Since 2010, the number of NLEs has grown from around 400 to over 1,100; the number of teaching schools has grown to almost 700.

5.11. These system leaders spread best practice and high quality professional development, including direct mentoring for new senior and middle leaders. Recent evaluation of these programmes suggests clear benefits<sup>24</sup>.

5.12. However, as the maps below<sup>25</sup> demonstrate, these system leaders are not spread evenly across the country. In particular, it is often areas where performance is weakest that do not yet have sufficient access to teaching schools and NLEs – the capacity to improve is lacking where it is most needed.

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/503333/Evaluation\\_of\\_Teaching\\_schools\\_FINAL\\_FOR\\_PUB\\_25\\_feb\\_final\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/503333/Evaluation_of_Teaching_schools_FINAL_FOR_PUB_25_feb_final_.pdf) and  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/485609/DFE-RR488\\_Analytical\\_Associate\\_Pool\\_-\\_summary\\_of\\_projects.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485609/DFE-RR488_Analytical_Associate_Pool_-_summary_of_projects.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)

# Primary School Access to System Leaders

(Estimated NLE and Teaching School coverage in relation to underperforming primary schools)



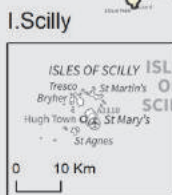
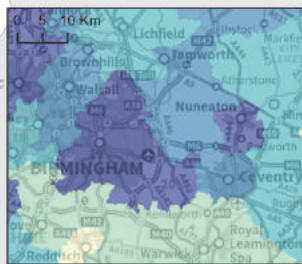
Department for Education

## System Leader Coverage

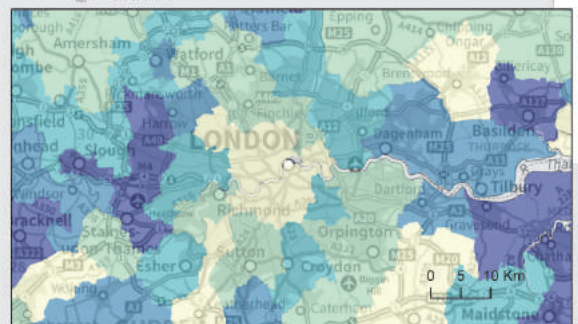
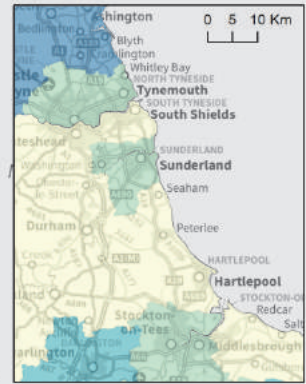
- 1. High Coverage
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RSC Regions

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**Data Sources**  
 DfE, 2015 KS2 results, School and college performance tables, Ofsted, Maintained schools and academies: inspections and outcomes, Aug 2015  
 NCTL, Teaching Schools, Feb 2016  
 NCTL, National Leaders of Education, Feb 2016





# Secondary School Access to System Leaders

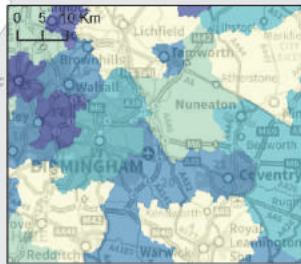
(Estimated NLE and Teaching School coverage in relation to underperforming secondary schools)

## System Leader Coverage

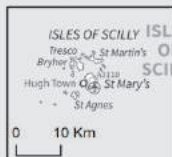
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— RSC Regions

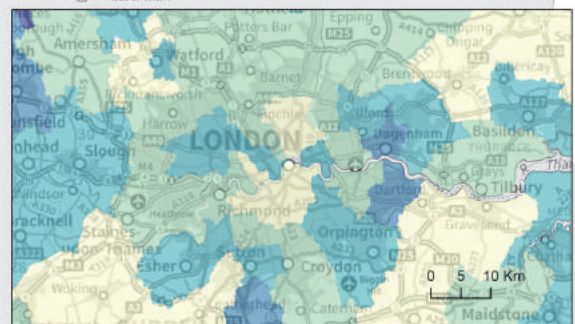
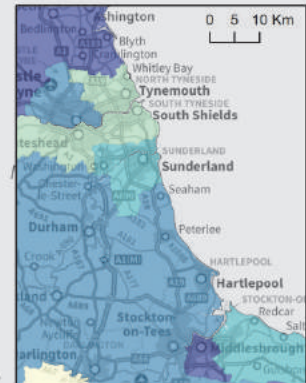
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## I. Scilly



**Data Sources**  
 DfE, 2015 KS4 results, School and college performance tables, Ofsted, Maintained schools and academies: inspections and outcomes, Aug 2015  
 NCTL, Teaching Schools, Feb 2016  
 NCTL, National Leaders of Education, Feb 2016



5.13. To avoid the situation where the strong get stronger and the weak fall further behind, we will invest in a targeted way in up to 800 more NLEs and up to 300 more teaching schools, ensuring full coverage across the country. We will work with the Teaching Schools Council and existing system leaders to support and develop the network – for example, by partnering schools with the potential to become strong system leaders with existing teaching schools and NLEs.

We will improve how we designate system leaders (teaching schools and NLEs) by introducing a more sophisticated approach based on timely and accurate data rather than relying heavily on Ofsted judgements

5.14. It is also vital that we recruit people with the right skills to become system leaders and put in place the right incentives. We will therefore develop a more sophisticated and balanced approach to designation for teaching schools and NLEs.

5.15. Instead of relying heavily on Ofsted judgements, as we do now, our approach will be based on more timely and accurate data so that more of the most effective leaders and schools can apply. This is an important shift. It will recognise that those headteachers who have turned around failing schools are often well placed to support others; and will ensure that the Ofsted Outstanding grade can remain focused on the quality of education offered to the school's pupils, rather than also serving as a proxy measure for a school's potential to play other important roles in the education system.

5.16. This will help expand the pool of potential system leaders, particularly where they are most needed. We will pilot this new approach in spring 2016.

Haselworth Primary School is a small school in Gosport, Hampshire, where 37.5% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school was keen to raise standards of writing for their year 1 pupils and to review their phonics teaching. Since 2013, they have been supported by the Pioneer teaching school alliance, led by Harrison Primary School.

One SLE worked with the Early Years Foundation Stage and key stage 1 teachers on pupils' writing opportunities, while another worked alongside staff to improve teaching at key stage 2, raise standards and ensure that resources were targeted effectively. Haselworth staff observed excellent practice in other schools across the Pioneer alliance, while Harrison staff attended strategy meetings at Haselworth.

Since receiving this support, the proportion of children at Haselworth Primary School achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of primary has increased from 47% in 2012 to 67% in 2013, 71% in 2014 and 76% in 2015. Haselworth improved its Ofsted rating from Requires Improvement in 2008 to Good in 2015, and Ofsted's 2013 monitoring report explicitly recognised the benefits that Haselworth has received from the support of the Pioneer teaching school alliance.

We will ensure that the work of system leaders is focused, purposeful and evidence-based, and the right incentives and brokerage are in place to encourage them to work with vulnerable schools

5.17. We will entrust system leaders with responsibility for supporting schools to deliver educational excellence everywhere by leading school improvement to:

- a. Tackle underperformance: providing support for coasting schools that identify the need for additional support as part of their school improvement plan agreed with their Regional Schools Commissioner
- b. Prevent underperformance: supporting vulnerable schools by working alongside school leaders who choose to draw on additional support to prevent failure
- c. Go from good to great: supporting good schools that want to move to the next level and seek help to address particular needs to enable them to do so

5.18. To enable this to work effectively, teaching schools will be centres of excellence, taking on a more focused role that prioritises:

- a. Co-ordinating and delivering high quality school-based ITT (chapter 2)
- b. Providing high quality school-to-school support to spread excellent practice, particularly to schools that need it most
- c. Providing evidence-based professional development for teachers and leaders across their network (chapters 2 and 3)

5.19. Teaching schools will also adopt an important role as brokerage 'hubs' for other system leaders, facilitating access to improvement support by coordinating the supply and activity of NLEs and SLEs. They will be responsible for providing or brokering effective support for schools that need extra help.

5.20. To complement this, we will also explore the development of an online matching portal to enable schools to find the specific partners and system leader support they need, without depending on local or central government. To encourage effective improvement activity, we will also work with schools and others over the coming year to develop intelligent accountability for system leaders.

We will provide targeted funding for system leaders to build capacity through school-to-school support and for RSCs to intervene in failing and coasting schools



5.21. From September 2017, school improvement funding will be increasingly routed through teaching schools in line with their core functions outlined above. In turn, they will be held to account more effectively for the quality, reach and impact of the support which they broker. This new fund will focus on building capacity across the system and ensuring the most vulnerable schools improve and do not fail.

5.22. Complementing this, we are also establishing a new Intervention Fund for RSCs to commission school improvement support from within the system for failing and coasting schools.

5.23. As most intervention will take the form of bringing in a new sponsor for an underperforming school, this fund will include activity to identify and attract new sponsors and encourage existing sponsors to grow, particularly in the areas where they are most needed; match sponsors to projects; and provide start-up funding for new sponsored academies and re-brokerage. When RSCs want to commission support for underperforming schools, they will generally do so through the teaching school hubs, although RSCs will be able to commission different support where they see fit.

## **High quality sponsors, where they're needed**

5.24. As set out in chapter 4, most school improvement will take place within effective MATs. High quality sponsors can raise standards in underperforming and coasting schools, bringing fresh vision, strong leadership and clear accountability, and providing the support and expertise which struggling schools need to improve – from strengthening collaboration with other schools, to delivering economies of scale and stronger financial sustainability, and improving the recruitment and retention of high quality staff.

5.25. We want many more schools to benefit from the expertise and experience of existing sponsors; and we want to recruit many more high quality sponsors.

5.26. Sponsors come from different backgrounds and some who have been involved from the start of the academies programme have brought in substantial expertise from other sectors. These include charitable trusts set up by a business (including BAE Systems and Rolls Royce), individuals (such as Lord Harris, whose MAT now runs 37 schools) or a group of like-minded leaders and educators (like those who set up Ark, a successful network of sponsored academies).

5.27. Over time, we have seen an increasing number of outstanding schools become successful academy sponsors, such as Outwood Grange, Tudhoe Learning Trust and REACh2. High performing schools now make up the majority of sponsors.

5.28. Many sponsors are augmenting their own expertise and experience in education with business expertise on their governing board, recruited through programmes such as Academy Ambassadors, which places experienced business people onto the boards of MATs. More than 100 Academy Ambassadors have now been recruited, providing support with leadership and management to trusts around the country.

## Expanding sponsor capacity

5.29. We will ensure national coverage of high quality sponsors, building on the growth of great leadership in recent years from outstanding schools spreading their reach and support through MATs. This map<sup>26</sup> provides an illustration of sponsor capacity by showing the estimated national variation between lead or outstanding schools in sponsor chains and proximity to pupils in failing maintained schools:

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<sup>26</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)

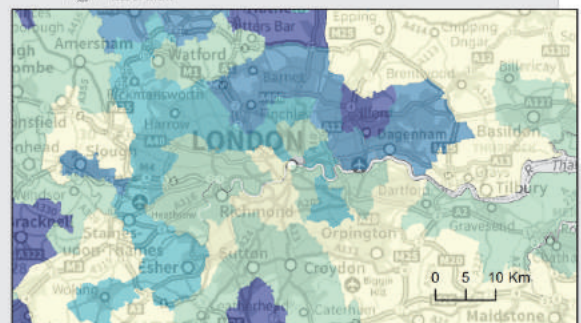
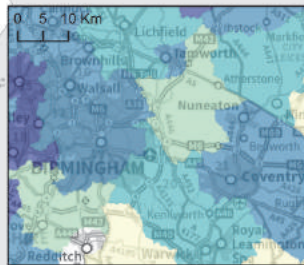
# Access to Sponsors for Underperforming Schools

## Sponsor Coverage

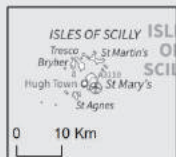
- 1. High Coverage
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5. Low Coverage

— RSC Regions

0 10 20 Km



## I. Scilly



**Data Sources**  
 DfE, 2015 KS2/KS4 results, School and college performance tables, Ofsted, Maintained schools and academies: inspections and outcomes, Aug 2015  
 DfE, Edubase, Feb 2016

We will ensure that there are enough strong academy sponsors available where they are needed, and will build sponsor capacity for the long term

5.30. We will support new sponsors to be established and existing sponsors to grow, targeting funding where there are too few sponsors and funding access to high quality information, advice and training for sponsors. We will:

- a. Recruit new sponsors, including high-performing schools and more sponsors from business, charity and philanthropy, extending the success of programmes such as Academy Ambassadors
- b. Encourage more sponsors to expand, increasing incentives and minimising barriers. RSCs will work with sponsors in their region to maximise growth
- c. Build capability and capacity, introducing a range of resources and support to help MATs grow sustainably. We will develop tailored information and leadership training and provide greater opportunities for MATs to involve business expertise
- d. Respond to local need, working with sponsors and MATs to meet the needs of individual local areas and schools

5.31. To retain expertise in the system and ensure children continue to benefit from the best talent in local authorities, we expect that some individuals working in local authority teams will leave to set up new trusts or join existing ones and become academy sponsors (see chapter 4).

5.32. We have also invested £10 million through the Northern Sponsor Fund, a targeted intervention to build new clusters of sponsors in the north of England, particularly in areas without any high-performing sponsors at the moment.

5.33. As set out in chapter 7, we will also publish data on how well MATs are performing to show the value added by a MAT, helping to improve transparency and accountability, drive improvements in MAT performance, improve the matching of schools with good MATs, and enable everyone in the system to gain a better understanding of what makes effective MAT practice.

5.34. We are investing in the leadership of MATs to ensure that they have the skills and expertise needed to drive real, sustainable improvement as sponsors (see chapter 3). Following a successful pilot in 2015, Future Leaders is delivering leadership development programmes for CEOs of MATs, offering tailored training and coaching on governance, financial management, accountability and school improvement. We are supporting other institutions interested in joining this market, including university business schools, and expect to see more and more varied provision in the next year.



5.35. We have established a Sponsor Capacity Fund to which sponsors can apply to grow their MAT, pay for executive leadership training, or help them cover the costs of starting to sponsor. In total, we awarded over £30 million of funding to over 400 sponsors between 2012 and 2015. RSCs already target this fund to encourage growth in areas of greatest need, as part of their work to expand capacity in their regions.

## **Identifying and focusing on ‘Achieving Excellence Areas’**

5.36. Our reforms are deliberately ambitious and designed to strengthen and support the school-led system to improve outcomes everywhere.

5.37. In many areas, this is already happening, but it is inevitable that different parts of the system develop at different rates. There remain parts of the country where performance is weak and the school-led system is not yet mature enough to address it.

5.38. This challenge is illustrated in the map below, based on a combined measure of local school performance and ability to access the key ingredients needed to sustain improvement – high quality teachers, leaders, system leaders, and sponsors. This demonstrates that some parts of the country currently suffer from acute problems, where low standards are exacerbated by a lack of capacity to drive improvement. We will work with external experts to review the methodology and finalise the measure in the coming months<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Experimental analysis: the methodology and underlying data for this experimental analysis is available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments\[\]=department-for-education&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments[]=department-for-education&publication_type=transparency-data)

# Identifying Achieving Excellence Areas

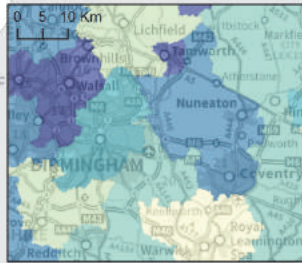
(Overall indicator, based on local performance and capacity to improve)

## Combined standards and capacity assessment

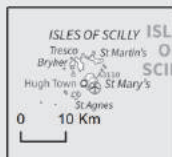


— RSC Regions

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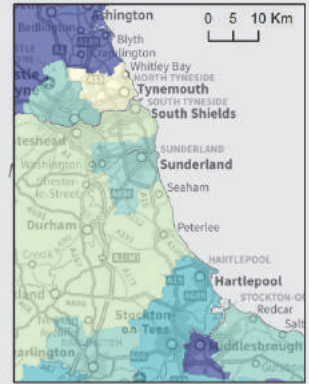
Indicators - see accompanying methodology guide for details

**Standards:**

- KS4 Attainment 8, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS4 Progress 8, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS2 Attainment Reading, Writing, and Maths, 2015 (10% weight)
- KS1-2 Value Added, 2015 (10% weight)
- Access to a good secondary school, 2014 (10% weight)

**Capacity:**

- Primary NLE / Teaching School Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)
- Secondary NLE / Teaching School Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)
- Quality of Primary Leadership, 2015 (8% weight)
- Quality of Secondary Leadership, 2015 (8% weight)
- ITT Provider Coverage, 2015 (8% weight)
- Academy Sponsor Coverage, 2016 (8% weight)





5.39. Over the next five years, we want to eradicate the pockets of underperformance in our school system. So while strengthening the school-led system across the country, we are also targeting support on the areas with the most serious problems, where children have been falling behind for too long.

We will place a sharp new focus on 'Achieving Excellence Areas' – where too few children have access to a good school and there are insufficient high quality teachers, leaders, system leaders and sponsors – to enable the school-led system to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement

5.40. In these areas, we will not establish new top-down initiatives or bureaucratic action plans. Instead, we will target our programmes to secure sufficient high quality teachers, leaders, system leaders, sponsors and members of governing boards on these areas of greatest need, starting with the National Teaching Service.

5.41. Working with local leaders, we will pilot this targeted approach to 'Achieving Excellence Areas' from September 2016. Learning from ongoing evaluation, we will roll out this approach more widely from September 2017 to deliver educational excellence in areas which have lagged behind for far too long.

### **An illustrative example of what activity may look like in an ‘Achieving Excellence Area’:**

An isolated coastal town and its surrounding area in the East of England is identified as an ‘Achieving Excellence Area’ because it is affected by both low standards and limited capacity to improve. The percentage of good and outstanding schools is significantly lower than the national average and in 2015 the area was one of the weakest performing nationally for primary school attainment.

There is limited system leadership capacity, with no active teaching school or NLE. More than 1 in 3 pupils attend a school rated by Ofsted as Inadequate or Requires Improvement for quality of leadership and there is insufficient access to high quality ITT (with no local access to a leading SCITT).

As a designated ‘Achieving Excellence Area’, the Department for Education will prioritise the area in its national programmes, to help build capacity for improvement in the local system.

Schools in the area will be given priority access to the National Teaching Service, enabling them to draw on a pool of elite teachers and middle leaders. To build a critical mass of strong leadership, these schools will also have access to places on our targeted middle and senior leadership development programmes to develop the talent already in the area. And to tackle specific additional challenges – such as a significant lack of diversity in leadership positions – the area will be prioritised for programmes bidding to the Excellence in Leadership Fund.

High quality sponsors will be encouraged to expand to work in the area, with targeted funding to support Achieving Excellence Areas ensuring that the people with real expertise in transforming schools are incentivised to work where the need is greatest.

To enable schools in the area to draw on additional high quality school improvement support, our new, more sophisticated approach to system leadership designation (separated from Ofsted ratings) will enable two high quality local leaders to be designated as NLEs. These leaders will be linked to a high performing school in the area with the potential to become a teaching school and which will be partnered with an existing teaching school in a neighbouring area. In time, this new teaching school will seek to be designated as a SCITT, to provide high quality school led ITT for schools across the area.

During this process, we will engage closely with the people who know the local area best – the education leaders who work there – to ensure that the support provided through the targeting of these programmes can deliver lasting improvement.

## Chapter 6: High expectations and a world-leading curriculum for all

We want every child, wherever they live and whatever their background or needs, to receive a 21st century education that equips them with the knowledge and character necessary for success in modern Britain. We will:

- a. Continue to equip schools to embed a knowledge-based curriculum as the cornerstone of an excellent, academically rigorous education to age 16; establishing the national curriculum as an ambitious benchmark that autonomous academies can use and improve upon
- b. Increase support for teachers to deliver this stretching curriculum effectively, including by encouraging greater use of evidence-based teaching materials to raise standards and cut unnecessary workload
- c. Reform primary assessment to help ensure every child leaves primary school with the essential building blocks to succeed at secondary
- d. Continue to embed reforms to assessment and qualifications, including more robust and rigorous GCSEs and A levels; and the expectation that the vast majority of pupils will study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)
- e. Ensure a knowledge-based curriculum is complemented by the development of the character traits and fundamental British values that will help children succeed, and make available funding so that it is easier for 25% of secondary schools to extend their school day to include a wider range of activities, such as sport, arts and debating
- f. Publish a strategy for improved careers provision for young people and further support The Careers & Enterprise Company
- g. Help schools provide the right support for children of all abilities: stretching their lowest-attaining and most academically able pupils and focusing on the outcomes and experiences of all children and young people with special educational needs and disability
- h. Reform the alternative provision (AP) system so that mainstream schools remain accountable for the education of pupils in AP and are responsible for commissioning high quality provision

6.1. We are unapologetically ambitious for every child, no matter what their background, prior attainment or needs. The best possible education for adult life in 21st century Britain is one that equips children and young people with the knowledge, skills, values, character traits and experiences that will help them to navigate a rapidly changing world with confidence.

6.2. In the last Parliament, we introduced a new, more ambitious national curriculum and reformed qualifications and assessment standards; this Parliament, our reform programme is well underway. Once these changes are complete, our aim is to give schools and colleges as much curriculum stability as possible to deliver these ambitious reforms.

6.3. Cognitive science has shed fresh light on long-running debates about whether a school curriculum should focus more on ‘knowledge’ or ‘skills’. It shows that knowledge and skills are partners,<sup>28</sup> and that attempts to teach skills without knowledge fail because they run counter to the way our brains work.

6.4. In one reading study, two researchers demonstrated that when tested for understanding of a text about baseball, poor readers with high knowledge of baseball did far better than good readers with low knowledge<sup>29</sup>. No matter how skilled they are as readers, children cannot fully understand what they are reading unless they know the meaning of the words and references in the text. Moreover, new knowledge is acquired through situating it within existing knowledge; the more a child knows, the more they are capable of learning.<sup>30</sup>

## **A national curriculum for the 21st century**

6.5. This cognitive science formed the background to the new, more ambitious national curriculum published in 2013. It sets out a core body of knowledge in a format designed to maximise pupil understanding and minimise confusion, giving teachers professional autonomy over how to teach.

We will continue to equip schools to embed a knowledge-based curriculum as the cornerstone of an excellent, academically rigorous education to age 16

6.6. The new national curriculum is forward-looking while equipping children with core knowledge about the best that has been thought and written – balancing three Shakespeare plays and the study of a broad sweep of British history, for example, with a world-leading computing curriculum that makes England one of the first G20 countries with computer science in the curriculum at both primary and secondary.

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<sup>28</sup> Willingham, D. (2009) *Why Don't Students Like School: A Cognitive Scientist Answers Questions About How the Mind Works and What It Means for the Classroom*. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco.

<sup>29</sup> Willingham, D. (2006) *How Knowledge Helps*. *American Educator*, Spring 2006

<sup>30</sup> Willingham, D. (2006) *How Knowledge Helps*. *American Educator*, Spring 2006

6.7. The government believes strongly that culture should be an essential part of every child's education and the new national curriculum aims to broaden access to the arts for all children. Since 2012, we have invested £460 million in a range of musical and cultural education programmes including the Music and Dance Scheme, the BFI's Film Academy, the Heritage Schools programme, and music education hubs.

6.8. Academy status includes freedom over the curriculum as long as a 'broad and balanced' curriculum is taught – and academy leaders are free to go further than the national curriculum within the existing framework of qualifications, assessment and accountability. So the national curriculum will no longer be a decree, but a benchmark. It will serve an important role in setting out the sort of knowledge-based, ambitious, academically rigorous education which every child should experience.

6.9. If autonomous academies or MATs wish to deliver the national curriculum in their schools, they can do so confidently. But we also want academies to use their freedoms to innovate and build more stretching and tailored curricula, to meet the particular needs of their pupils or their local area or the particular ethos of the school. Some MATs or academies, for example, will choose to follow an even more challenging maths curriculum.

6.10. While setting stretching expectations for the knowledge and skills that each child should acquire, we have given teachers much more professional freedom to choose how to teach that material and how to assess it in the classroom.

We will increase support for teachers to help them deliver a stretching, knowledge-based curriculum effectively, including by encouraging greater use of evidence-based teaching materials to raise standards and cut unnecessary workload

6.11. As set out in chapter 2, we will increase support for teachers to deliver a more ambitious curriculum successfully, including through improved initial teacher training and better access to high quality, evidence-based teaching materials.

6.12. Where we are worried that there is a shortage of these materials, we will take action to fill the gaps. We are working with the publishing industry and with schools, MATs and others to encourage them to develop and share a new generation of teaching materials, textbooks and resources to help teachers deliver new curricula effectively. This helps to reduce workload by saving teachers in every school from having to reinvent the wheel.

6.13. We will work to raise standards in continuing professional development (CPD; see chapter 2), introducing measures to support teachers in particular curriculum areas. In mathematics, for example, 35 school-led maths hubs have been established across the country to act as expert leaders in mathematics, pedagogy and curriculum. Learning from practice in those regions around the world – notably the Far East – where pupils achieve the highest levels in mathematics, maths hub teachers have taken part in exchanges with teachers from Shanghai, and are trialling English adaptations of Singaporean mathematics textbooks in primary schools. Maths hubs are popularising ‘mastery’ approaches to mathematics designed to ensure that no pupil’s understanding is left to chance, and each step of a lesson is deliberate, purposeful and precise.

6.14. We have also funded:

- a. the Network of Teaching Excellence in Computing to build a national network of 300 ‘Master Teachers’, supported by ten regional university centres, to deliver face-to-face CPD to teachers
- b. 44 school-led science learning partnerships, providing targeted professional development and support to improve the quality of science teaching in schools

## **World-leading assessments and qualifications**

6.15. Alongside the new national curriculum, we are reforming national assessments and qualifications so that they are as challenging as those in the highest performing countries around the world.

6.16. For too long, qualifications in this country suffered from grade inflation – from 2000 to 2012, GCSE grades rose steeply, but assessments benchmarked internationally showed no corresponding rise in mathematics, reading or science performance. Reviews by Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, found that standards in mathematics and science had fallen,<sup>31</sup> while research by the Royal Society of Chemistry and the University of Durham found that students of similar ability were being awarded higher grades than their equivalents in the past.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ofqual (2012a) Review of Standards in GCSE Biology 2003 and 2008; Ofqual (2012b) Review of Standards in GCSE Mathematics 2004 and 2008; Ofqual (2012c) Review of Standards in GCSE Chemistry 2003 and 2008

<sup>32</sup> The Royal Society of Chemistry (2008) The Five-Decade Challenge – a wake-up call for UK science education?

Coe, R. (2007) Changes in standards at GCSE and A level: Evidence from ALIS and YELLIS – Report for the ONS by Robert Coe – CEM Centre, Durham University, April 2007



6.17. This risked undermining the credibility of each young person's achievements. Ofqual has taken steps to halt this inflation and since 2012, examination results have remained stable – ensuring that young people, parents, universities and employers can have confidence in the integrity of our system as a whole, and in the validity of individual results.

6.18. From 2017, Ofqual is also introducing a new National Reference Test (sampling pupils in year 11) to support the setting of grades awarded at GCSE by providing additional evidence on changes in performance over time in mathematics and English language.

We will reform primary assessment to help ensure every child leaves primary school with the essential building blocks to succeed at secondary

6.19. Assessment allows teachers, parents and the government to have an overview of pupils' success and to focus efforts where necessary. We introduced a phonics screening check at year 1 in 2012 to ensure that all pupils are taught the building blocks of literacy according to the evidence of what works best, and from 2016 we have made the national key stage 2 assessments more demanding to reflect the new national curriculum.

6.20. As part of our reforms to primary assessment, there will be a new multiplication tables check in year 6 to set up all pupils for success in mathematics, and re-sits in year 7 for those pupils who have not achieved the expected standards at the end of key stage 2. These measures will help schools to support pupils who would otherwise be at risk of falling behind because they are not equipped to succeed at secondary school.

6.21. We are also looking carefully at the assessment of pupils with special educational needs to ensure it helps teachers to support their progress effectively.

We will continue to embed recent reforms to assessment and qualifications, including the introduction of more robust and rigorous GCSEs and A levels; and the expectation that the vast majority of pupils will study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

6.22. Our reforms to GCSEs and A levels are making these qualifications more rigorous and knowledge-based to match the qualifications used in the best education systems in the world, while reducing the treadmill of constant assessment and allowing more time for teaching. We have set a new gold standard for reformed GCSEs, which will be more academically demanding; our reforms to A levels will make sure that students are well prepared for undergraduate study. These new qualifications will command the confidence of students, employers, and further and higher education institutions. Qualifications which are not subject to these rigorous requirements, such as international GCSEs, will not count in performance tables.

6.23. The EBacc performance measure shows the proportion of pupils in a school entering and achieving a good GCSE in English, mathematics, science, history or geography, and a foreign language. The proportion of pupils entering the EBacc has risen from 22% in 2010 to 39% in 2015, and the proportion of pupils achieving the EBacc has risen from 15% to 24% over the same period. We believe that the vast majority of pupils should study these subjects. Our ambition is that 90% of pupils in mainstream secondary schools will enter the EBacc.

6.24. The EBacc represents a core academic curriculum – it should not (and does not) squeeze out wider study. The proportion of pupils in state-funded schools entering at least one GCSE in an arts subject has increased from 47% in 2010 to 50% in 2015 – even as more pupils study an academic core, arts subjects are also becoming more popular.

6.25. At A level, our reforms aim to ensure that qualifications prepare students for undergraduate study and the world of work. We have moved away from regular modular exams to a focus on summative assessment, allowing more time to develop deep knowledge and understanding.

6.26. We want to encourage schools and colleges to focus on the subjects that lead students to the best possible outcomes. In 2012 we introduced a performance measure at A level showing how many students achieve top grades in the facilitating subjects that open the door for pupils to attend the best universities.

6.27. Since 2010 there has been a 27% increase in pupil entries for further maths, a 15% increase in pupil entries for physics, and a 15% increase in pupil entries for chemistry. Maths is now the most popular A level – in 2015, 28.6% of students who took an A level entered A level maths.

6.28. We will continue to address the gender gap in STEM subjects – supporting our ambition to narrow the gender pay gap – and are committed to increasing the proportion of entries by girls in science and maths subjects by 20% during this Parliament through our support for high quality teaching, the employer-led Your Life campaign and a wide range of STEM programmes in schools.

6.29. Just as we are raising the quality of academic education, so too we are lifting standards in technical education. Following Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education<sup>33</sup>, several thousand low-value qualifications for 14–19 year-olds have been removed from performance tables. Rigorous new standards for technical and applied qualifications have been introduced, ensuring that schools and colleges prepare pupils well for the next stage of education, training or employment and that the qualifications are recognised by employers and universities.

6.30. We have appointed the Independent Panel on Technical and Professional Education, chaired by Lord Sainsbury, to make recommendations to government on how to put our reformed technical education system on a par with the best in the world. We will set out further details on our plans to improve technical education later this year.

We will publish a strategy for improved careers provision for young people and further support The Careers & Enterprise Company

6.31. Finally, it is essential that all young people leave education ready for the world of work. In 2015 The Careers & Enterprise Company was launched, strengthening links between employers, schools and colleges, and careers and enterprise organisations to inform and inspire young people about the opportunities offered by the world of work. It has already launched a nationwide Enterprise Adviser Network, a £5 million careers and enterprise fund and published a toolkit based on evidence of what works.

6.32. Later this year, we will publish a strategy for improved careers provision for young people, setting the direction for work to transform the quality of the careers education, advice and guidance offered to young people, including further funding for The Careers & Enterprise Company to continue the excellent work it has started.

## **Building character and resilience in every child**

6.33. A 21st century education should prepare children for adult life by instilling the character traits and fundamental British values that will help them succeed: being resilient and knowing how to persevere, how to bounce back if faced with failure, and how to collaborate with others at work and in their private lives.

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<sup>33</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/180504/DFE-00031-2011.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180504/DFE-00031-2011.pdf)

6.34. These traits not only open doors to employment and social opportunities but underpin academic success, happiness and wellbeing. The country's leading state and independent schools already demonstrate a concerted focus on instilling these kinds of character traits throughout school life. Although we want that for all children, there are many different methods and the government has no intention of mandating a particular approach.

We will ensure a knowledge-rich curriculum is complemented by the development of the character traits and fundamental British values that will help children succeed

6.35. Many schools across the country already offer a wide range of imaginative, character-building opportunities to their pupils and our vision is for schools to increase their range of activities, based on strong relationships with local and national businesses, and voluntary and sporting organisations. Parents of current and prospective pupils should be able to find information about a school's curriculum and extra-curricular activities on the school's website, helping them to choose the right school for their child.

6.36. To further support schools, we will work with the Behavioural Insights Team and What Works Centres to develop tools that schools can use to identify the most successful approaches to building character in their pupils, and to track how well those approaches are working. We will also work with expert organisations to provide a platform where teachers can share best practice about character development, evaluate new ideas, find professional development materials and contribute data to build the evidence base.

6.37. We will ensure evidence-based approaches to character development are built into initial teacher training programmes; and work with networks like teaching schools to spread the most effective approaches to developing character in schools. Finally, we will deliver a new round of Character Awards, recognising the schools and organisations which are most successful in supporting children to develop key character traits.

We will make available funding so that it is easier for 25% of secondary schools to extend their school day to include a wider range of activities, such as sport, arts and debating

6.38. We know that many schools already offer a school day that includes additional activity to help develop young people's character. They provide high quality instruction and coaching in sports and the arts, alongside activities such as debating, scouting and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This kind of activity should be available not just to those lucky enough to go to a school that prioritises it as part of their school day or whose parents have the means to access it outside school.

6.39. To ensure that more children are able to benefit from a rich provision of high quality activity, we are making available significant additional funding so that 25% of secondary schools can develop new provision for all of their pupils. We will prioritise funding for those schools whose pupils will benefit the most. Funding will be provided direct to participating schools which will design provision that is in the best interests of their pupils.

School 21 is a pioneering new free school in Newham, London, that believes in educating the whole child: developing the head (academics), heart (character strengths) and hand (creativity) to thrive. They do this through:

- a. A unique oracy/spoken curriculum so all children can find their voice
- b. A character and wellbeing curriculum that develops the potential of each child
- c. Project-based learning so every child produces extraordinary work through craftsmanship: poetry, sculpture, writing, products using deep scientific and mathematical understanding
- d. Mastery lessons so that students are fluent writers, avid readers, and thoughtful problem solvers

The school has students from a wide variety of faiths and backgrounds, including Bengali, Somali, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Latvian, Lithuanian, European, Algerian, Nigerian and Afro-Caribbean students.

We will expand the National Citizen Service (NCS) and expect schools to give every pupil the opportunity to take part

6.40. The NCS is a life-changing programme<sup>34</sup> which gives children the chance to benefit from character education no matter their background or where they live. During the programme, participants take part in adventure challenges, stay away from home in university-style accommodation, complete social action projects and, crucially, mix with other young people from different backgrounds.

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<sup>34</sup> Evaluation has found that the NCS improves participants' attitudes to people from other backgrounds; gives them better confidence in their own abilities; raises their aspirations and gives them a greater feeling of responsibility to their local community. National Citizen Service 2013 Evaluation, Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute (August 2014)

6.41. Every child should be able to access the NCS: the government will provide it with over £1 billion over the next 4 years so that, by 2021, it will cover 60% of all 16 year-olds, becoming the largest programme of its kind in Europe. We will review the national curriculum's citizenship programme of study and clarify the role of the NCS in helping schools meet their duties to promote the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. We will also publish school-level NCS pupil participation data and encourage schools to give pupils the opportunity to take part.

6.42. Good mental health and wellbeing are also important to success and while teachers are not mental health professionals, schools can play an important role in promoting wellbeing as well as helping to prevent and identify mental health issues.

6.43. We have established an advisory group to look at how to equip schools to set up effective peer support programmes, using proven approaches to improve children's and young people's understanding of mental health and create a more supportive environment for discussing emerging issues.

We will work with a group of leading headteachers and practitioners to produce an action plan for improving personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) provision

6.44. In the coming months this group will produce an action plan with recommendations for improving the quality of PSHE and a toolkit for schools to help them plan, develop and deliver their own PSHE curriculum, and assess learning and impact.

6.45. We have invested in eight projects to prevent and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying in schools by improving school policies and training, increasing confidence to deal with it, and raising awareness about the harm that bullying and prejudice can cause. These eight projects are training around 20,000 teachers and school staff to better tackle HBT bullying and providing direct support to students.

6.46. A 21st century education also promotes integration so that young people can play their part in our society. Schools and other education providers have an important role to play in promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual tolerance and respect of those with different faiths and beliefs, while developing the knowledge, critical thinking and character traits that enable pupils to identify and challenge extremist views.

6.47. We are providing more support, advice and resources for schools, including a landmark new website, Educate Against Hate,<sup>35</sup> aimed at parents, teachers and school leaders, with practical advice on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation and building resilience.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.educateagainsthate.com>

## Stretching both the lowest-attaining and most able

6.48. It is important that schools unlock the full potential of every child, including both the lowest-attaining and the brightest pupils.

6.49. Compared to other advanced economies, England has a long tail of low achievement: in 2012, 22% of our 15-year-old students failed to reach the benchmark level 2 in the PISA mathematics assessment, a larger share than in Canada (14%), Poland (14%), the Netherlands (15%) or Germany (18%).

6.50. At the other end of the spectrum, there is a body of research<sup>36</sup> highlighting the importance of the most academically able in boosting a country's economic development and growth.

6.51. International comparisons show that while the proportion of high-performing pupils in this country compares well to others at the end of primary school, we remain a long way behind the Far East; and are outstripped by the end of secondary.<sup>37</sup>

6.52. Ofsted recently suggested<sup>38</sup> that secondary schools could be doing more to support bright pupils; to encourage the brightest students to apply to prestigious universities; and to broaden the horizons of bright pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

6.53. Our reforms over the last few years have increased opportunities for schools to stretch all their pupils, including supporting the study of Mandarin and funding enrichment activities aimed at high-attainers – like Isaac Physics, a joint project between the Department for Education and the University of Cambridge.

6.54. From May 2016, all pupils will take tests at the end of primary with more challenging questions. More rigorous GCSEs have a new grading structure which will provide greater differentiation and stretch at the top end, and the new focus on progress measures in performance tables will reward schools that stretch their brightest pupils. Ofsted's 2015 Common Inspection Framework explicitly highlights the need to ensure effective teaching, learning and assessment for the most academically able pupils.

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<sup>36</sup> For example, Rindermann et al. 2009, Rindermann and Thompson 2011, Ahmad et al. 2014

<sup>37</sup> PIRLS 2011, TIMSS 2011 and PISA 2012

<sup>38</sup> The most able students: an update on progress, Ofsted, March 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-most-able-students-an-update-on-progress-since-june-2013>



6.55. Children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds can already achieve great results. Villiers Park Educational Trust in Cambridgeshire, for example, runs a four-year Scholars Programme for able students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with residential courses and personalised mentor support. According to the Trust, in 2015, 49% of pupils taking part achieved A\* or A grades at GCSE and 74% of A level grades were A\*–B. The equivalent national figures were 22% and 53% respectively. 79% of participants gained a place at university; 90% said the scheme had boosted their self-confidence and communication skills, and 87% said their enthusiasm for learning had increased.<sup>39</sup>

6.56. But we want to go further to open doors for the most academically able from all backgrounds.

We will ensure that all schools can stretch their lowest-attaining and most academically able pupils by increasing the focus on, and supporting approaches aimed at, boosting their attainment

6.57. As set out in chapter 7, we have already reformed our accountability system to avoid schools overlooking their lowest-attaining pupils – and the supported autonomy approach in this white paper will tackle areas where underachievement is most entrenched. Over this Parliament, we will work closely with schools and school leaders to better understand what more can be done to reduce the long tail of underachievement.

6.58. To identify and spread what works for the most able, we will investigate, fund and evaluate approaches to help the brightest students in state schools to fulfil their potential. This could include developing new, prestigious challenges and competitions at key stages 2 and 3, like the UK Mathematics Trust challenges. These would be open to all able pupils – wherever they go to school. And they could aim to provide both additional content that stretches these children beyond their school’s regular curriculum; and opportunities for further stretch outside school. We will also look for opportunities to extend the approaches used in Isaac Physics and the Cambridge Maths Education Project to other A level subjects.

6.59. As set out in chapter 2, the new core ITT framework will now include a specific focus on stretching the most academically able pupils and cutting edge evidence on how these pupils can be challenged and stimulated to achieve the very highest standards.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.villierspark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Impact-Report-AW-2015-FINAL.pdf>

## Improving support for children with additional needs

6.60. Our reforms are based on the principle that every child deserves a high quality education, no matter where they live or what their background or needs. We are committed to ensuring that an increasingly autonomous school system remains inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils wherever they are educated. That means that some children will need extra help and support.

6.61. Recognising that their experiences before entering care often have a significant impact on looked-after children, we will explore with local authorities how to measure the educational progress of children in their care, to encourage high aspirations for these children that help them reach their full potential. We will also work with Virtual School Heads, who have a statutory role to promote the educational achievement of children who are looked after, and with schools to increase aspirations and support for these pupils, including by making best use of the pupil premium.

6.62. Many children adopted from the care system will also have suffered trauma and abuse. The emotional impact of this can continue to prevent them from making progress at school – indeed, recent school performance data confirms that adopted children significantly underperform compared to children who have never been in care. We will therefore consider changing legislation to extend the current role of Virtual School Heads and the role and responsibilities of the school designated teacher for looked-after children so that they continue to support children who have left care under an adoption order. These changes, coupled with the recent extension of the pupil premium and priority school admission, will enable adopted children to retain the educational support they had whilst they were in care and help improve their educational outcomes.

6.63. For other vulnerable children who have challenging home circumstances or are on the edge of care, our priority must be getting them the right support for their needs. For some of these children, boarding school can provide a very appropriate alternative to care and give them the stability that enables them to thrive. To that end we have set up a ministerial working group with a range of organisations to raise awareness of the opportunities and benefits that this support model can provide and promote boarding as an option for vulnerable children to Local Authorities. Independent schools and charities such as Springboard, RNCf and Buttle UK also offer a range of bursaries to assist with fees for these children and substantially reduce the cost to Local Authorities. We are also continuing to assemble evidence to assess the impact of boarding schools for children identified as 'in need', including part funding 40 placements in state boarding as part of a research project undertaken by Buttle UK and the Education Endowment Foundation.

We will focus on the outcomes and experiences of all children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND)

6.64. We also want to ensure that all children and young people with SEND achieve well in the early years, at school and at college; and are well prepared for happy and healthy adult lives. 15.4% of pupils (just over 1.3 million) have special educational needs with a wide spectrum of types and severity of need.<sup>40</sup>

6.65. Reforms brought in by the Children and Families Act 2014 represent the biggest change to the SEND system in a generation and are transforming the experience of children and young people with SEND, and their families.

6.66. New statutory duties give children, young people and their parents more protections and rights, and ensure that local authorities, schools, health and social care services work better together. 'Local Offers' have been published, setting out in one place information about the provision available across education, health and social care, and schools are required to publish information reports showing what they are doing for children and young people with SEND.

6.67. For children with more complex needs we have introduced information, advice and support services and Independent Supporters, to help families navigate the system and access the support they need. We have also introduced more streamlined needs assessment processes, coordinated across education, health and care; integrated Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans; and the right for young people and parents of children who have EHC plans to request a Personal Budget.

6.68. We are closely monitoring the implementation of these reforms and have provided over £212 million since 2014 to support implementation. Progress so far is encouraging, with parents reporting they have received better support and that their views are being taken into account more fully.<sup>41</sup> Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission will begin to inspect local area implementation from May 2016, focusing on how well the needs of children with SEND are identified and met, and how well local agencies (including health and social care) work together to do so.

6.69. We intend to review what is happening in practice for all children with SEND, not only those with statutory plans, and what more can be done to improve these children's attainment, outcomes and experiences.

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<sup>40</sup> As at January 2015

<sup>41</sup> The evaluation of the SEND Pathfinder Programme found that families were more likely to state that their views had been taken into consideration in assessment and reviews (84% Pathfinder families; 73% comparison). The full report can be found here [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/448156/RR471\\_SEND\\_pathfinder\\_programme\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/448156/RR471_SEND_pathfinder_programme_final_report.pdf)

6.70. As well as improving initial teacher training (chapter 2), in 2016/17 we will invest in supporting professionals in schools and colleges to achieve better outcomes for pupils with SEND, including by ensuring that they have access to training and support on specific impairments such as autism or dyslexia, and to improve our evidence base and develop our understanding of how we can best support them.

## Reforming alternative provision

6.71. By every objective measure, pupils who have spent time in alternative provision (AP) do considerably worse than their peers. Very few achieve the qualifications that will help them succeed in adult life and they are considerably more likely to become NEET (not in education, employment, or training). This is not about funding levels, as AP is typically very expensive – we need to reform provision in order to deliver better outcomes and better value for taxpayers.

6.72. Some AP is outstanding, but too often we see:

- a. Pupils in AP whose specific needs would be better addressed in a mainstream school
- b. Pupils entering AP without an agreed plan for their educational success
- c. Teachers without the knowledge and skills expected in mainstream schools
- d. Weak lines of accountability for commissioners and providers
- e. The most challenging pupils being placed with the weakest providers
- f. Those leaving AP struggling to find post-16 provision that helps them to continue their progress

We will reform the alternative provision (AP) system so that mainstream schools remain accountable for the education of pupils in AP and are responsible for commissioning high quality provision

6.73. Our vision is of a world-leading system of AP where the best teachers work with the children who need them most. Mainstream school headteachers will commission expert provision for pupils with needs and behaviour that have become unmanageable within a mainstream setting.

6.74. So that mainstream headteachers can commission the right services, local authorities will retain a role in ensuring sufficiency of AP in their area. New, innovative and specialist provision will be developed through the free schools programme.

6.75. AP will meet defined needs including significant behavioural problems; complex medical or mental health conditions; and extreme vulnerability due to personal and social issues. We will expect the AP provider to work with the mainstream school to put in place a tailored plan for each pupil to support them to achieve the high quality qualifications they need for adult life.

6.76. We will change accountability arrangements so that a pupil's mainstream school will retain accountability for their educational outcomes and will take a lead role in commissioning their provision, including when they have permanently excluded the pupil but the pupil has not subsequently enrolled at a different mainstream school. Mainstream schools will support AP providers to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum and high quality teaching by sharing subject specialists and facilities that smaller alternative providers would otherwise find hard to access.

6.77. Schools will be responsible for the budgets from which AP is funded. As they will also be responsible for commissioning and accountable for educational outcomes, they will have stronger incentives to take preventative approaches and to achieve value for money when identifying the best and most suitable alternative provision for any child that needs it. We will also:

- a. Encourage high quality sponsors (including MATs) to meet the need for new AP through the free schools programme
- b. Establish a minimum curriculum standard and a clear expectation that all pupils in AP will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- c. Review accountability for AP and agree with Ofsted how providers will be inspected in future, establishing clear data to support commissioning decisions
- d. Support new research into how pupils arrive in AP and develop and disseminate new evidence on what works
- e. Launch an innovation fund to test new approaches to support pupils who move directly from AP to post-16 education, exploring opportunities for social impact bonds and other innovative funding models

## Chapter 7: Fair, stretching accountability, ambitious for every child

We are backing great teachers and great leaders to drive up standards in schools, so fair, robust, ambitious accountability is vital to monitor those standards, identify schools and areas that need extra support, and ensure children receive the education they deserve. We will:

- a. Embed reforms to primary, secondary and 16-19 accountability that focus on the progress of all pupils, and their destinations. These reforms will ensure our measures are fair – highlighting where a school is doing better for a child than the same child would have done elsewhere
- b. Work with Ofsted to ensure inspection is fair and increasingly focused on underperformance, where it can add most value. Inspection of schools graded Good or Outstanding will be increasingly proportionate to a transparent assessment of risk, and Ofsted will consult on removing the separate graded judgments on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to help clarify that the focus of inspection is on outcomes and to reduce burdens on schools and teachers
- c. Launch new accountability measures for MATs, publishing MAT performance tables in addition to the continued publication of, and focus on, inspection and performance data at individual school level
- d. Publish improved and more accessible school performance data to inform school choice and help parents and governing boards to hold schools to account
- e. Ensure Regional Schools Commissioners are able to commission support and intervention for schools identified as underperforming. Headteacher Boards, which will continue to comprise top headteachers elected by their peers and appointed for their track records, will provide an important check and balance for academy leaders to scrutinise and challenge the decisions of RSCs

7.1. As set out in chapters 3, 4 and 5, our reforms are designed to give school and system leaders freedom to raise standards. But because autonomy is not the same as abdication, that freedom makes it even more important that we have fair, robust and ambitious accountability measures to hold those leaders to account for the way in which they use their freedoms. A more autonomous, school-led system depends even more on an effective accountability system.

7.2. This approach is backed by high quality international evidence: the OECD has found “autonomy and accountability go together: greater autonomy in decisions relating to curricula, assessments and resource allocation tend to be associated with better student performance, particularly when schools operate within a culture of accountability.”<sup>42</sup>

7.3. An effective accountability system ensures all children receive the education they deserve and plays several important roles:

- a. informing parents about school performance so they can make informed choices and scrutinise the performance of their child’s school
- b. informing schools (and governing boards) about their own performance, so that they can take action to tackle problems and build on strengths
- c. identifying, independently and objectively, where a school’s performance is too low so that support and, if necessary, intervention can be commissioned
- d. informing the public about the national picture of England’s schools – enabling them to hold government to account for the system’s performance

7.4. Our accountability system combines independent inspection with data about each school’s performance. It must be fair, accurate, challenging and proportionate – giving schools reasonable time to deliver sustainable improvement or prove an innovation while reacting in time to avoid chronic failure that irredeemably damages any child’s education. It must incentivise activity that drives up standards and remove perverse incentives. It must recognise the risks and challenges teachers and headteachers take on when relocating to work in the toughest schools – so as not to unduly disincentivise them from doing so. And it must reflect the achievement and progress the school helps all pupils to make – without being unfairly influenced by the school’s intake.

7.5. When a school is performing well, there should be minimal interference by central government. The school’s governing board remains free to drive improvement, provided it meets national expectations of propriety and outcomes.

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisainfocus/48910490.pdf>



## Focusing on the progress of all pupils

7.6. Whilst previous accountability measures unduly focused on small groups of children, such as those on the borderline between C and D grades, our reformed accountability system will recognise the progress made by all pupils, whatever their attainment. It is a fundamental change that is fairer for children, fairer for parents, fairer for teachers, and fairer for schools. It ensures those schools that help children make exceptional progress receive the recognition they deserve, while shining a light on those not doing as well as they could with a high-attaining intake. Without such a change, schools are too often judged on their intake, rather than their performance – and that is both unjust, and a barrier to our best teachers and leaders working in our toughest schools.

We will embed reforms to primary, secondary and 16-19 accountability that focus on the progress of all pupils, and their destinations. These reforms will ensure our measures are fair: highlighting where a school is doing better for a child than the same child would have done elsewhere

7.7. Our new accountability measures provide a fair reflection of progress, and measure outcomes while giving teachers professional autonomy to decide how those outcomes should be achieved:

- a. At primary, a new floor standard will be introduced from 2016, including a new measure of the progress made by pupils from age 7 to the end of primary school. A school will be above the floor if at least 65% of pupils achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics or its pupils make sufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics
- b. At secondary, from 2016 we will introduce a new measure, Progress 8, showing pupils' progress from the end of primary across eight subjects. By comparing their progress to that of other pupils with the same starting point at the end of Key Stage 2, it will highlight schools which are really helping their pupils to reach their full potential and those that are not. We will also publish Attainment 8, comprising average attainment across the same eight subjects. These measures complement the EBacc, which ensures that curricula include a strong core of academic subjects (English, mathematics, history or geography, the sciences and a language)

- c. For 16-19 providers, we will introduce new headline performance measures from this year. These will look at the progress (including specifically in English and maths for students who have not already achieved a good pass at GCSE), attainment and retention of students. We are also working with HMRC and the Department for Work and Pensions to improve the data we publish on students' destinations after leaving education. This will show how well schools and colleges set pupils up to succeed and whether they are guiding them to make the right choices

## **Robust, independent inspection**

7.8. Whilst accurate, timely performance data forms the foundation of an effective accountability system, data alone cannot provide a full picture. There are crucial areas where little data exists, such as safeguarding and children's wider wellbeing – and we don't impose national tests that cover the full extent of the taught curriculum.

7.9. So a strong, effective inspectorate has an important role to play. Ofsted inspections evaluate how well schools are safeguarding young people, how they prepare pupils for adult life in modern Britain and promote fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual tolerance and respect of those with different faith and beliefs.

7.10. Although teachers and leaders currently recognise the value of inspection, some feel that it creates an unnecessary burden. We also know that some teachers and leaders think that inspection outcomes can be inconsistent, or worry that schools need to prepare particular evidence in particular formats for inspectors.

7.11. During the last Parliament, we focused inspection on schools' core functions, reducing the number of separate judgements made by inspectors from 27 to 4. We targeted inspection where it was most needed, exempting outstanding schools from routine inspections while they continue to perform well.

7.12. A slimmed down school inspection framework was introduced in January 2012 and later that year, Good became the acceptable standard for schools, while Ofsted replaced the Satisfactory grade with Requires Improvement – changes that signalled an important shift in expectations. Ofsted also published clarifying documents to address myths that had developed about inspection, and to make clear what inspectors are and are not looking for when they visit schools. It also took steps to further improve the consistency of judgements.

7.13. Changes introduced in September 2015 went further to decrease burdens and improve the reliability and consistency of inspections, including introducing: short inspections for good schools and colleges; a single inspection framework for early years, schools, FE and skills; and the use of school and college inspectors directly appointed and trained by Ofsted. The majority of Ofsted's school inspectors are now serving head teachers and senior leaders drawn from effective schools and colleges.

7.14. Ofsted's new complaints handling arrangements ensure that education professionals with no involvement in inspecting for Ofsted examine and rule on complaints alongside inspectors. For the first time, they can scrutinise inspection judgements and, should the judgement be found wanting, overturn it.

7.15. All these improvements are helping to reduce unnecessary burdens on teachers, ensure judgements are fair, and focus inspection where it is most needed. We intend to go further to improve the school inspection regime and, critically, to reduce any unnecessary burdens on schools. In the years ahead, we will work with Ofsted to ensure:

- a. School inspection is increasingly focused on what is essential to make valid judgements about school effectiveness, looking at outcomes, and judging areas which can be most effectively assessed through inspection
- b. The inspection regime is increasingly focused on underperformance, and the inspection of schools graded good or outstanding is increasingly proportionate to risk, informed by factors such as parental complaints or a drop in pupil outcomes
- c. The inspection system does not disincentivise our best sponsors and leaders from working in challenging schools

We will work with Ofsted to ensure the inspection regime is fair, increasingly proportionate and focused on underperformance

7.16. Since September 2015, schools graded as Good at their previous inspection receive a short inspection. Rather than a full inspection with a team of inspectors, most Good schools will just see one inspector for one day to check the school remains Good. The school will no longer be judged against the full inspection handbook, but will discuss with the inspector their school's strengths and weaknesses.

7.17. Short inspections of Good schools will take place around every three years; and we will work with Ofsted to ensure the timing of inspections of Good schools is increasingly proportionate to risk – that schools which are more likely to be doing well are inspected later, so that inspection is focused where it is most needed, and heads have more space to get on with their job.

7.18. Mainstream Outstanding schools are already exempt from routine inspection.<sup>43</sup> Once a school has been judged Outstanding, Ofsted will only re-inspect if there is cause for concern. As a result, the vast majority of schools graded Outstanding are not inspected and have the space to get on with improving the education they provide to their pupils and working with other schools to support their improvement. We will work with Ofsted to ensure their risk assessment process is clear and transparent.

7.19. And as set out in chapter 3, to ensure the accountability system is not a disincentive to taking on the leadership of a more challenging school, we will work with Ofsted to introduce ‘improvement periods’ that allow time for improvement when a school is taken over as part of a planned intervention.

7.20. When a poorly performing maintained school is replaced by a sponsored academy or a new sponsor is needed to drive further improvement in an academy, the school will not normally face inspection until its third year of operation. Where a school is judged to require improvement and a new headteacher steps forward to lead it, the school will not face re-inspection for around 30 months, unless the headteacher wants an earlier visit. These measures will give headteachers the time and stability to put in train sustainable improvement.

Ofsted will consult on removing the separate graded judgments on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to help clarify that the focus of inspection is on outcomes and to reduce burdens on schools and teachers.

7.21. Despite recent reforms and clarifications, such as Ofsted no longer judging the quality of individual lessons and confirming they do not have a preferred teaching style, some schools continue to tell us that they feel they are judged on whether or not they follow particular styles of teaching.

7.22. High quality teaching is, of course, vital. Teaching, learning and assessment are a school’s core business. However, as set out in chapter 2, we believe that it is for schools and teachers to decide how to teach – and that schools should be held to account primarily for the outcomes their pupils achieve.

7.23. So Ofsted will consult on removing the separate graded judgements on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors will still report on the impact of teaching, learning and assessment through the other graded judgements, but will no longer separately grade the quality of teaching.

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<sup>43</sup> Outstanding nursery schools, special schools and PRUs are not exempt from routine inspection

7.24. In consulting on and implementing this change, Ofsted will also consider how best to further streamline the handbook so that inspection is focused closely on what matters most – outcomes not processes.

7.25. As set out in chapter 5, we will also use Ofsted’s judgements in a more sophisticated way. These judgements provide an important indicator of a school’s success for its pupils, valued by parents and the public, and we want to maintain this. But in the past we have relied on some elements of these judgements – particularly the Outstanding judgement – as an indicator of aspects of schools’ effectiveness that aren’t the focus of a school inspection, which increased the stakes further. We will make more sophisticated use of Ofsted’s judgements in future, alongside other evidence, when determining issues such as eligibility for designation as a system leader.

## **Multi-academy trust accountability**

We will launch new accountability measures for MATs, publishing MAT performance tables in addition to the continued publication of, and focus on, inspection and performance data at individual school level

7.26. School-level data and inspection is important to ensure a strong performance averaged across the MAT doesn’t mask weaknesses in an individual school – and conclusions about the performance of the MAT can best be drawn by looking at the performance of each school within it.

7.27. With MATs taking on an increasingly important role, we will also publish new performance tables that shine a light on how well they are leading their schools.

## **Accountability to parents and governing boards**

7.28. Accountability is not just about the government holding schools to account; schools should be primarily accountable to parents and governing boards. To make the accountability system more useful for parents and boards, as well as teachers and leaders, government will improve how we collect and disseminate data.

We will publish improved and accessible school performance data to inform school choice and help parents, governing boards and other users of data to hold schools to account more effectively

7.29. We have modernised the School Performance Tables website<sup>44</sup> to make it simpler for parents, governing boards and other users to search for and compare schools across a range of key measures, including the progress and achievements of pupils, absence, workforce and school finances. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback on the new website to help improve it further. We will also introduce a new website for parents aiming to make it easier for them to access information about their child's education (chapter 4).

7.30. We will work to ensure that performance information is available as early as possible so that leaders can use it to drive up standards. To increase the quality of GCSE and equivalent data, for example, we will work closely with awarding organisations to reduce the number of late results received by the Department for Education (DfE), and work with schools to improve the use of the June checking exercise.

7.31. Making this data more accurate will reduce the burden of data-checking normally placed upon schools in September, and will allow us to publish an increased amount of school-level performance data in October. We also hope to bring forward the publication of the main secondary school performance tables from January, to make data available more quickly for the use of parents, governing boards and leaders.

7.32. We will also trial new, more efficient ways of collecting data. These new methods will enable schools to focus resources on using their data to improve classroom practice rather than completing bureaucratic returns, and help schools to share data efficiently, where appropriate, to drive school improvement.

## **Regional Schools Commissioners holding trusts to account**

7.33. Within an increasingly school-led system, the responsibility for taking action to improve outcomes lies with the governing board or academy trust. But when an academy trust is failing to improve a school that has been identified as failing or coasting, it is important that Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) are able to take action.

7.34. The eight RSCs are leaders in their field. Accountable to the National Schools Commissioner and acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, they are responsible for commissioning interventions when academies and new schools in their area are underperforming. It is never the role of RSCs to provide school improvement support – that would be a conflict of interest. Rather, they commission it and ensure appropriate action is taken.

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<sup>44</sup> [www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk](http://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk)



7.35. Regional headteacher boards comprise top headteachers, elected by their peers and appointed for their track records. They influence, aid and challenge RSCs, injecting additional educational expertise, insight and scrutiny into decision-making – to ensure effective action is taken. They provide an important check and balance for academy leaders to scrutinise and challenge the decisions of RSCs: where a headteacher board disagrees with an RSC’s decision, it is escalated to the National Schools Commissioner and Ministers.

7.36. RSCs and Ofsted have very different roles. As the inspectorate, Ofsted independently assesses schools’ performance and provides assurance that they are performing to the required standards. Where Ofsted assesses a school to be inadequate or requiring improvement, it will also monitor its progress more closely.

7.37. RSCs act on Ofsted’s judgements to guide their decisions on whether and how to intervene. In keeping with the principles of the school-led system, RSCs have no responsibility for the performance of, or powers over, academies that are not coasting or failing. They are not, and will not become, responsible for administering schools; nor will they limit or constrain the autonomy of individual school leaders to manage their schools, unless those schools are eligible for intervention.

7.38. RSCs, working with their headteacher boards, also approve the governance arrangements for new academies, ensuring trusts have the leadership and capacity to succeed and MAT growth is sustainable. Where there are financial concerns about an academy, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) takes the lead.

7.39. The EFA monitors the financial health of academy trusts and is developing an increasingly differentiated approach to make sure the majority of trusts who are effectively managing their responsibilities for public money are supported without interference. If the EFA becomes aware of financial management, control or governance concerns, it will intervene. Intervention will be swift and rigorous in academies that are not managing public money effectively.

7.40. RSCs also provide local intelligence to DfE on any due diligence and counter-extremism cases and wider safeguarding cases, working with local authorities, Ofsted and others to ensure that any concerns are identified and reported.

7.41. To ensure schools can access the support they need, RSCs also work to build capacity in their local area. They encourage high performing schools to extend their influence, recruit and grow sponsors and MATs in their region, and work with teaching schools on the supply and priorities of system leaders.

We will ensure Regional Schools Commissioners are able to commission support and intervention for schools identified as under-performing. Headteacher boards comprising top headteachers, elected by their peers and appointed for their track records, will provide an important check and balance for academy leaders to scrutinise and challenge the decisions of RSCs

7.42. As set out in the Education and Adoption Act, RSCs will take on new, strengthened powers of intervention in maintained schools. This will ensure a consistent approach to all underperforming schools. The RSC, working with their headteacher board, will promptly intervene, turning all failing maintained schools into academies with strong sponsors and matching failing academies to new sponsors where appropriate.

7.43. RSCs will also be responsible for notifying maintained schools and academies that they are coasting, and considering what action to take if the school does not produce strong plans which will lead to improvement, through its existing academy arrangements or plans to join a MAT. Local authorities and RSCs can work together to agree where a warning notice should be issued to a maintained school, although ultimately RSCs' powers to intervene will take precedence. When all schools in a local authority area have become academies, local authorities' powers in this area will fall away (see chapter 4).

7.44. As set out in chapter 5, from September 2017, RSCs will be able to use an Intervention Fund to meet the cost of converting failing maintained schools to sponsored academy status, re-brokering failing academies, and to commission school improvement support where schools are unable to do so themselves.

7.45. We will ensure RSCs have the resources necessary to deliver their remit. RSCs currently draw on resources from across DfE and work through others, such as teaching schools, NLEs and academy sponsors. We will monitor this system closely and will ensure that DfE is organised effectively to enable RSCs to respond to the increase in their responsibilities.

7.46. As we move to a system where every school is an academy, we will ensure that local communities are provided with the information they need to understand and engage with the work of RSCs. We will also set out a clearer process for how the local community can get in touch and raise concerns about RSC decisions.

## Chapter 8: The right resources in the right hands: investing every penny where it can do the most good

We want fairer and clearer funding of schools based on the needs and characteristics of pupils, and the best use of these funds. We will:

- a. Introduce new, fair national funding formulae for schools, and for allocating high needs funding to local authorities for special educational needs and alternative provision
- b. Improve the effectiveness of pupil premium spending by encouraging schools to adopt evidence-based strategies, drawing on evidence from the EEF
- c. Support schools to improve their financial health and efficiency through tools, guidance and direct support such as training and better national frameworks for procurement
- d. Improve and maintain the school estate (buildings and grounds) to ensure that those responsible for school buildings get a fair share of funding and have the right incentives to make effective use of the school estate. We will continue to rebuild and refurbish schools in the worst condition across the country

8.1. No pupil should suffer because their school arbitrarily receives less funding than a school with similar costs and pupils. The funding system should not be based on historical allocations, but matched to pupils' educational needs.

8.2. The Spending Review settlement and Budget secured a good deal for education, and every penny needs to be invested where it can do the most good. We will reform the funding system to be fair and clear, based on pupils' needs and characteristics, and enabling everyone to see how much funding follows each pupil, including disadvantaged pupils.

8.3. Fair allocation of funding supports every other part of our education system. Schools will only be able to achieve high standards for every pupil, everywhere, when the resources they receive are matched to the challenges they face.

8.4. We will reform how we allocate and deliver funding so that it is ready for a system where every school is an academy, removing complexity and ensuring school leaders have control over their own budgets.

8.5. As with other public services, headteachers and governing boards should ensure that their schools are efficient and financially sustainable through proactive and robust financial planning, so that resources are targeted where they are needed most. The pupil premium should be used to raise standards for all disadvantaged pupils and schools should be able to demonstrate its impact in a clear and robust way.

## Fairer funding through a national funding formula

8.6. Fair, transparent funding is essential for school leaders – but for too long, headteachers have struggled with funding systems which are both unfair and opaque.

8.7. The amount of money each school and local authority receives is largely based on data over a decade out of date. In that time, local populations have changed – for example, since 2005 the proportion of children receiving free school meals in Manchester has fallen by 31%, while in Blackpool it has increased by 19% – but schools' funding has not kept up.

8.8. The current system prevents headteachers from planning and budgeting effectively. Because local authorities have been able to design their own funding formulae for schools, individual areas fund schools in very different ways. A secondary pupil with low prior attainment would attract over £2,000 in additional funding in a school in Birmingham, for example, but only £35 in Darlington.

We will introduce new, fair national funding formulae for schools, and for allocating high needs funding to local authorities for special educational needs and alternative provision

8.9. On 7 March 2016 we launched a consultation on a new, fair national funding formula for schools to create a formula that is fair, objective, transparent and simple, which provides opportunity and stability, and gets funding to the professionals who use it.

8.10. It should be clear how much funding is following each pupil and this should be the same everywhere. We intend, from 2019, to move to a system whereby individual schools' budgets are set by this national formula – rather than by 152 locally devised formulae.

8.11. This is not about moving everyone to an average – disadvantaged pupils will attract more funding, and disadvantaged areas will receive more per pupil, than the average, to reflect their additional needs. Matching funding to pupils' needs will give headteachers a level playing field to drive up standards for all children and deliver educational excellence everywhere.

8.12. We propose four building blocks for this formula. The first would be a basic per-pupil formula, weighted by age (reflecting that costs increase as pupils move from primary through secondary). The second is funding for additional pupil needs – whether pupils come from deprived backgrounds, if their prior attainment is low, and if they have English as an additional language. The third is a lump sum payment, with extra funding for small schools in sparsely populated areas which find it more difficult to reduce costs. Finally, funding would recognise that schools' costs are affected by their geographical location, especially in and around London – so the formula would adjust funding in recognition of this.

8.13. We are committed to supporting schools, headteachers and local authorities for as long as it takes to transition to the new system. To ensure a smooth transition, we propose a two year period in which local authorities will continue to set a local formula – after that, we will shift to a single national formula determining each school’s funding. We propose to keep a minimum funding guarantee and to offer practical support to schools that need particular help, including the measures set out below.

8.14. We have also proposed a formula for allocating high needs funding for special educational needs and alternative provision – motivated by fairness and transparency.

8.15. The Children and Families Act 2014 reaffirms the role of local authorities in assessing the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) in their area, and securing effective provision for those with high needs. In future we will ensure that the budgets for AP are held by the people commissioning and accountable for performance. We will consult on any consequential changes to AP funding arrangements (see more on alternative provision in chapter 6).

8.16. We will continue to allocate high needs funding to local authorities, given their central role for children and young people with SEND, and are consulting on doing so via a transparent, fairer formula.

8.17. These reforms will support local authorities to perform their responsibilities for these children and young people and their parents, and for making alternative provision. Schools and colleges will continue to be funded to support those with less expensive needs. We propose a gradual transition to avoid disruption to the education of children and young people with SEND, with support for local authorities where needed. Further details of our plans to reform both school and high needs funding are available in the consultation<sup>45</sup>.

8.18. These changes will benefit children, parents and schools: children will attract funding which reflects their individual needs; parents will have confidence that their child will be treated fairly, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances; headteachers will be able to plan and budget more effectively, strengthening the financial health of their schools and focusing every penny on improving the quality of pupils’ education.

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<sup>45</sup> <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula/> and <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/high-needs-funding-reform>

## Evidence-based support for the most disadvantaged through the pupil premium

8.19. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds face significant barriers to achieving their potential. To tackle this problem we introduced the pupil premium in 2011, giving schools £6.23 billion in extra funding over the course of the last Parliament to provide extra support for children from the most deprived backgrounds, looked after children, and those who have been adopted from care or left care under special guardianship or a child arrangements order.

Parkfield Community School in Birmingham is a national pupil premium award winner for its relentless focus on raising standards for disadvantaged pupils. In 2015, 92% of its disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at key stage 2 – far above the national average of 80% for all pupils. Led by headteacher Hazel Pulley, Parkfield systematically identifies the challenges their pupils face, focusing on academic achievement and encouraging aspiration and parental engagement.

Analysis showed pupil premium pupils without a computer at home were falling behind in mathematics, and finding it difficult to complete homework. A maths breakfast club for these pupils has significantly increased attainment. The school is recognised as a local maths leader, having established a “Maths Academy” to work with other schools in the region to provide maths education and CPD to enhance confidence in teaching maths.

Because many parents have English as a second language, the school offers parents learning opportunities and engages them in their child’s learning, which has improved support at home and contributed to the high attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

8.20. The Spending Review in November 2015 confirmed the manifesto commitment to protect the pupil premium for the rest of this Parliament, with no change to the current criteria setting out which children are eligible. The pupil premium will continue to be paid alongside our national funding formula for schools, and on top of the funding for disadvantaged children and disadvantaged areas.

8.21. Looked after children and those who have been adopted from care or left care under special guardianship or a child arrangements order will continue to receive pupil premium plus funding, and we propose to increase targeted support for both groups through the pupil premium plus, as part of our national funding formula proposals. For looked after children, this funding will generally be managed by their Virtual School Head (VSH), with a focus on supporting the child’s educational progress and helping them to achieve the aspirations identified in their personal education plan.

We will improve the effectiveness of pupil premium spending by encouraging schools and Virtual School Heads to adopt evidence-based strategies, drawing on EEF evidence



8.22. The National Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee recently concluded<sup>46</sup> that the pupil premium has increased school leaders' focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, with evidence of many schools using the funding on effective interventions. The attainment gap has narrowed at both primary and secondary since the introduction of the pupil premium and more disadvantaged pupils than ever before are leaving primary school having mastered the basics in reading, writing and mathematics.

8.23. More needs to be done to ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively in all schools, for all children – including the most able. As the Sutton Trust's Missing Talent report has shown, more able disadvantaged pupils are at much greater risk of falling behind compared to their peers<sup>47</sup>.

8.24. Schools that are most effective in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils identify the barriers faced by pupils and choose evidence-based interventions to address them. These interventions are kept under regular review as part of a process of continuous improvement.

8.25. We will support all schools to learn from this approach and put in place an effective pupil premium strategy. We will:

- a. Publish a model framework encouraging schools to set out the barriers to learning for their disadvantaged pupils, the most appropriate evidence-based interventions, and how impact will be measured. This pupil premium strategy should be published online to spread effective practice
- b. Support governing boards to challenge schools' pupil premium strategies constructively through the new model framework and updated advice in the Governance Handbook
- c. Encourage a culture where schools regularly review the effectiveness of their pupil premium strategy, drawing on expert support where necessary
- d. Work with the Teaching School Council and the EEF to update guidance on pupil premium reviews, reinforcing the need for an evidence-based approach – for more on the EEF, see chapter 2
- e. Expect schools to complete a pupil premium review robustly and rapidly, when Ofsted identifies that their use of the pupil premium is weak. Ofsted will follow up on the improvements made by schools in subsequent inspections

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Funding-for-disadvantaged-pupils.pdf>  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmpubacc/327/327.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Missing-Talent-final-june.pdf>

8.26. As in chapter 5, RSCs will act to transform failing schools and to challenge coasting schools to improve. The RSC may commission a pupil premium review if a coasting school's disadvantaged pupils show weak performance, and the school will be expected to raise standards for these pupils as part of its improvement plan.

## **The importance of strong financial health and efficiency**

8.27. Good financial health is essential to delivering educational excellence. Many schools already manage their budgets well, using their resources expertly to deliver high standards for pupils; but some struggle, and schools with similar characteristics and levels of resource currently achieve very different outcomes for pupils.

8.28. The government has protected funding for schools in real terms, so that it will rise as pupil numbers increase. However, like other public services, schools will face additional pressures in the next few years and there is more need than ever for schools to improve their efficiency to ensure their budgets deliver the best value for money. As described in chapter 4, greater collaboration between schools will play a big part, especially through MATs, in helping schools to share expertise and reduce costs.

8.29. Best practice highlights the factors which support good financial health in schools:

- a. Ensuring that financial planning is based on delivering educational outcomes, not a separate bolt-on consideration
- b. Strategic financial planning – setting a 3-5 year budget based on a clear vision for delivering school improvement
- c. Prioritising the most effective and efficient use of staff
- d. Benchmarking spend on back office and procurement
- e. Ensuring that staff managing school finances, such as finance directors and school business managers, have the right skills
- f. Putting in place financial systems and processes across the school that are transparent and encourage constructive challenge from governing boards and head teachers

8.30. School leaders and governing boards need to build financial health and efficiency into wider planning, ensuring school leaders have the right skills, tools and support to improve their financial management and manage their budgets well. As set out in chapter 3, training and professional development for school leadership may need to change to reflect the changing nature of these roles.

8.31. We want to help all schools to run efficiently. Schools can already draw on excellent practice in other schools and a wide range of training and tools offered by organisations in the sector to support them.

8.32. In a school-led system, schools will work directly with other schools to achieve greater efficiencies, whether through MATs or through individual schools working together to negotiate deals and share services.

At the end of 2013 Simon Oxenham, Director of Resources at Southend High School for Boys and NASBM National Lead on School Finance, produced a 3 year financial forecast which showed that the school faced significant financial challenges.

The school first reviewed its support functions to see if any savings were possible without become inefficient. It then looked at how well it was using data on the timetable and teaching staff. It routinely starts planning its curriculum and staffing before Christmas, ready for the following September.

The school's staffing model now shows, by staff member and department, where there is a surplus or shortage of teaching periods. It maintains a list of teachers' qualifications by subject so that it can use excess periods in one subject area to plug a shortage in another. Teachers deliver just over 2,400 lessons over a fortnight and there are fewer than 10 residual periods remaining across the entire teaching staff.

As headteacher, Dr Robin Bevan, summed up: "whilst it might be challenging, schools need to become efficient in order to survive but must, at the same time, put as much resource as possible towards raising pupil outcomes. In every decision we make, pupil outcomes are and will always be our first priority. Getting your curriculum offer and staffing as tight as possible is not a luxury but a necessity in these fiscally challenging times. Being informed and honest about those challenges, being creative and putting the jigsaw pieces together, is the key."

We are providing tools and guidance for schools to become more efficient, and direct support such as training and better national frameworks for procurement

8.33. Working with the sector, we have published a new collection of tools and guidance<sup>48</sup> to help school leaders, governing boards and business management professionals to improve their schools' financial health and use their budgets more effectively.

8.34. It will help schools to improve their efficiency and financial health:

- a. To review their level of efficiency using an Efficiency Metric, which provides schools with an indication of their relative efficiency compared to similar schools

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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>

- b. To investigate their levels of spend using a list of top ten governing board checks and a Benchmarking Report Card, which has been sent directly to schools to encourage them to undertake more and regular benchmarking comparisons
- c. To address issues emerging from this assessment by encouraging schools to contact the other schools listed in the report card to learn from best practice

8.35. We know there is more to do to support schools in this area. So we will:

- a. Define a series of financial health check offers for schools and a single point of access to identify the suppliers who can provide them
- b. Publish a school procurement strategy developed with external experts to research and better understand current procurement behaviours in schools, and setting out a specific set of actions to help school leaders improve their buying and save money, such as through ways to improve the use of procurement frameworks
- c. Develop a package of support on workforce efficiency, including new training materials for governing boards, case studies of schools achieving efficiencies in their staffing structure, and development of new training for school leaders on curriculum-based financial planning and achieving workforce efficiencies

## **Making best use of school resources and the school estate**

8.36. Making the best possible use of resources also means investing in improving and maintaining the condition of the school estate. Keeping school buildings in good condition is an essential element of a successful education system and we want to make sure that all school buildings are in an acceptable condition for effective teaching.

We will improve and maintain the school estate to make best use of resources and continue to rebuild and refurbish schools in the worst condition across the country

8.37. In line with our guiding principles (see Annex A), we believe that as far as possible, funding should be allocated directly to the bodies responsible for school buildings, so they can make the best possible use of it, and to ensure that those with responsibility for condition funding have the incentives and capability to invest in and manage their buildings as effectively as possible. We are already using our property data survey of all schools carried out between 2012 and 2014 to target funding at the schools in the worst condition.

8.38. We are investing in improving the condition of the school estate, including directly funding schools and those responsible for their maintenance.

8.39. We are continuing the two phases of the £4.4 billion Priority School Building Programme (PSBP), rebuilding or refurbishing over 500 of the worst condition schools in the country by 2021. The average cost of delivering schools through the PSBP is a third less than through the previous school building programme, Building Schools for the Future (BSF). Under BSF it took three years for construction work to start, under the PSBP construction work started in just one year. As more schools become academies, responsibility for managing condition budgets will move from local authorities to academies. In the interim, local authorities will continue to manage capital allocations for maintained schools – when those maintained schools have become academies, this duty will fall away.

8.40. Larger MATs already manage capital budgets successfully, while smaller MATs and single academy trusts currently bid to the Education Funding Agency for capital funding from the condition improvement fund. We will continue to operate a capital system that gives larger MATs autonomy over their capital funding, and provides extra support for smaller MATs and standalone academies with buildings in poor condition.

8.41. Given the scarcity of specialist provision in some areas and the importance of parental choice, we will ensure that there are sufficient special school places available to match local need. We are encouraging applications for special free schools, and have already seen positive results, with 19 special free schools now open across the country and over ten approved to open in 2016 and beyond.

8.42. But we want to go further. So we will also make available capital funding to support the expansion of existing provision, as well as the development of new schools to create new specialist places. At least £200 million will be available, and we will say more about how this will be distributed later in 2016.

## Conclusion

9.1. This white paper has set out our vision to deliver educational excellence everywhere, so that parents and pupils across the country are able to benefit from the outstanding education that is already available in many schools.

9.2. It has also made an important promise to hardworking professionals: this government won't shy away from seeking the best for every child, wherever they are. But we understand how hard it is to deliver those high standards – especially in our most challenging schools, colleges and communities. So our supported autonomy approach will do more to offer support and build capacity where it's most needed. And government will be disciplined in resisting the temptation to make additional requests: this white paper sets out our approach for the Parliament, and promises a focus on stability so that it can be delivered.

9.3. Delivering this ambitious programme won't be easy. But the prize is worth the challenge: children only get one chance. The government's manifesto promised that a good education is not a luxury; it should be a right for everyone and, as such, an engine of social justice. The approach outlined in this white paper represents our best chance of achieving the educational excellence that every child and young person deserves.



# Annex A: Department for Education Strategy Overview 2015–20

**Provide world-class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background**

DfE Vision

**Safety and wellbeing**  
All children and young people are protected from harm and vulnerable children are supported to succeed with opportunities as good as those for any other child

System goals

**1 Recruit, develop, support and retain teachers**

- Attract enough talented individuals to teach where they are needed
- Strengthen university and school-led training and accreditation, including increasing the rigour of ITT content and the proportion of ITT that is school-led
- Ensure teachers can access sufficient, high-quality CPD and teaching materials
- Foster a world-leading teaching profession, including by reducing bureaucracy, establishing a College of Teaching and increasing teachers' access to and use of high-quality evidence

**2 Strengthen school and system leadership**

- Support the system to strengthen training and development of executive, senior and middle leaders
- Incentivise great leaders to work in challenging areas and pilot the National Teaching Service
- Provide a clear framework for system leadership (including Teaching School Alliances and Leaders of Education) to enable effective school-to-school support across the country – preventing underperformance, promoting collaboration and spreading best practice
- Ensure each part of the country has enough high-quality sponsors and governors

**3 Drive sustainable school improvement**

- Embed a school system appropriate for the long term that prevents underperformance, helps all schools to improve and extends the reach of high-performing schools and leaders – while increasing the pace of academisation and clearly articulating the roles of RSCs, LAs, MATs and schools
- Intervene promptly in underperforming schools to ensure our toughest schools are run by our best leaders, especially in areas of long-term or chronic underperformance

**Children and young people first**  
Ensure children and young people, along with their families and carers, are satisfied with the quality of the education system and children's services

Principles

**Educational excellence everywhere**  
Every child and young person can access high-quality provision, achieving to the best of his or her ability regardless of location, prior attainment and background

**4 Embed clear and intelligent accountability**

- Reform inspection to improve its reliability and utility for parents, schools and staff, and the wider education system – while reducing burdens and perverse incentives
- Implement new accountability measures across schools and post-16 that are driven by the progress and attainment of all pupils
- Provide parents and governors with clear, accessible information to support school choice and help them to hold schools to account

**5 Embed rigorous standards, curriculum and assessment**

- Embed reforms to GCSEs and A-levels so that they are recognised as gold standard qualifications, and ensure that schools are able to deliver the National Curriculum where they choose to do so
- Improve literacy and numeracy for all, including through strengthening primary assessment measures and delivering reformed Key Stage 2 tests
- Ensure pupils are offered more stretching programmes of study; increasing the take up of STEM study, the EBacc and facilitating A-levels
- Ensure schools help all pupils progress, particularly stretching the most able pupils and supporting low attainers

**6 Ensure access to quality places where they are needed**

- Deliver 500 new free schools, with a UTC within reach of every city
- Ensure sufficient supply and maintenance of high-quality school, specialist and post-16 places where they are needed

**Outcomes, not methods**  
Set stretching, well-measured outcomes and empower professionals to determine how to achieve them, through innovative local solutions

**High expectations for every child**  
We are unapologetically ambitious for every child and young person, and will ensure there are no forgotten groups or areas

**Prepared for adult life**  
All 19-year-olds complete school, college or an apprenticeship with the skills and character to contribute to the UK's society and economy, and are able to access high-quality work or study options

**7 Deliver fair and sustainable funding**

- Reform school, high needs, early years and disadvantage funding by introducing fair National Funding Formulae and improve the effectiveness of pupil premium spending
- With CLG and BIS, ensure sustainability of funding in children's services and 16-19 provision
- Support all our institutions to improve financial management and efficiency

**8 Reform 16-19 skills**

- With BIS, deliver 3 million high-quality apprenticeship starts
- Create clear, high-quality technical and professional routes to employment that are accessible for all and aligned with Britain's economic needs
- Reform the provider base to ensure every area is effectively served by a sustainable, resilient and responsive system of schools, Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges

**9 Develop early years strategy**

- Extend free childcare to 30 hours for working parents of 3 and 4-year-olds
- Ensure the market works efficiently and effectively, so it provides *sufficient* places for all parents to access the childcare offers to which they are entitled
- Design reforms that increase the *quality* of the early years education and childcare offered across the country, focusing on developing the workforce

**Supported autonomy**  
Align funding, control, responsibility and accountability in one place, as close to the front-line as possible; ensure institutions can collaborate and access the support they need, to set them up for success

**Responsible to need and performance**  
Ensure institutions respond to changing user needs and performance – autonomy can be earned and lost, with our most successful leaders earning their autonomy, extending their influence and vice versa

**10 Strengthen children's social care**

- Attract talented individuals, improve training and introduce clear professional standards to create a stronger social work profession
- Build a culture of excellence in children's services by encouraging innovative, evidence-led delivery practices and strengthening governance and accountability
- Support reforms to local delivery arrangements and intervene to tackle failure through new independent social care trusts, combined authority arrangements and City Deals
- Reform adoption services, including rolling out new regional agencies, to find loving homes for vulnerable children promptly, and improve support for children in and leaving care

**11 Support and protect vulnerable children**

- Run a proactive, inquisitive counter-extremism function and work with the Home Office and other agencies to protect children from radicalisation
- Support schools to help children and young people build good mental health and access support where they need it
- Embed current reforms and review our strategy to improve special education needs and disabilities provision – to empower parents and children and improve educational outcomes
- Implement reforms to the alternative provision system to improve quality and outcomes for pupils

**12 Build character and resilience**

- Support schools to develop pupils into well-rounded, confident, happy and resilient individuals to boost their academic attainment, employability and ability to engage in society as active citizens
- Facilitate access to high-quality, inspirational careers support and work experience

**Supported autonomy**  
Align funding, control, responsibility and accountability in one place, as close to the front-line as possible; ensure institutions can collaborate and access the support they need, to set them up for success

**Responsible to need and performance**  
Ensure institutions respond to changing user needs and performance – autonomy can be earned and lost, with our most successful leaders earning their autonomy, extending their influence and vice versa

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